**SADC GROUP OF AMBASSADORS**

**ACTIVITIES OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN NOVEMBER 2015**

**Briefing by HE Ambassador Ismael Gaspar Martins**

**Permanent Representative of Angola**

**NOVEMBER 30th, 2015**

Distinguished Colleagues,

I am honored to brief the SADC Group of Ambassadors on the Security Council activities in November.

I shall focus on African issues, namely Burundi, CAR, DRC, Libya, South Sudan, Abyei, Somalia, and the Sahel Region; on the Middle East situation, including Syria, Iraq, and the Palestinian question; on terrorism and on thematic issues considered by the Council during the month, including the Arria Formula meetings held at the margins of the Security Council.

**AFRICA**

**1. South Sudan**

The Security Council considered the situation in South Sudan. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, briefed the Council on developments in the country: the peace agreement implementation, the political, security and humanitarian situation.

Council members expressed concern on the difficulties to enforce the cease fire, while violent clashes were raging in Unity State, and over the dire humanitarian situation.

**2. Libya / ICC**

The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), briefed the Council on the political, security, and institutional crises and the growing threat of terrorist groups in Libya; she requested the Council to assist her office, in obtaining the resources needed for effective investigations of the alleged crimes committed in Libya.

Security Council members expressed particular concern over the presence of terrorist’s foreign fighters; she stated that there are no conditions to conduct fair judicial process to Salif Khadafi, renewing the ICC request for his handover.

**3. Libya**

The Special Representative of the Secretary General, briefed the Council on the situation in Libya; dealing extensively with the negotiations under way, he considered that the magnitude of the dangers facing Libya should not be underestimated, while expressing some degree of hope that a political solution to the crisis could be reached.

Security Council members urged Libyan parties to endorse and sign the political agreement facilitated by the United Nations, and create conditions for the formation of a Government of National Unity.

Still related with Libya, which became the gate for human traffic and for illegal migration from Africa to Europe, the Security Council adopted a resolution, sponsored by the European Union member States, under chapter VII of the Charter, giving permission for the inspection of vessels, off the coast of Libya, suspect of human traffic, and of their disposal.

**4. Somalia**

The situation in Somalia was discussed with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia.

The progress achieved to stabilize the country; the fight against Alshabah and challenges ahead were assessed as the country moves toward the holding of elections in 2016.

The Security Council adopted unanimously Resolution 2245, on the situation in Somalia, reconfiguring UNSOA to the strategic objectives established for the country, mainly to support AMISOM and the Somali National Army in the fight against the Alshabah terrorists.

**5. Democratic Republic of Congo**

The Security Council unanimously adopted a Presidential Statement on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, expressing concern with the continuing activities of armed groups in eastern DRC; urging the Government and MONUSCO to overcome their differences; and reestablish trust in order to jointly tackle the armed group FDLR.

**6. Burundi**

The Council held two briefings, followed by consultations, convened by France, on the situation in Burundi, due to the perceived deteriorating political and security situation, marked by violence and assassinations.

The Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2248 (2015), on the situation prevailing in Burundi, putting decisive emphasis on measures to prevent the escalation of the conflict, reengaging the United nations in the country and requesting the African Union to prepare contingency planning addressing the situation in case it deteriorates dramatically.

In a briefing with UN Special Envoy to Burundi, Mr. Jamal Benomar informed the Council on his recent visit to Burundi, referring the declared willingness by the government to engage the dialogue, while the opposition refuses to negotiate and urges the dismissal of President Nkurunziza as a precondition for resuming talks.

Council members decided to visit Burundi soon. Discussions are under way with the government of Burundi to set dates and the terms of reference for the Mission.

**7. Central African Republic**

The Security Council was briefed on the situation in the Central African Republic by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and for Humanitarian Affairs.

It was informed that clashes continue between various armed groups, as well as attacks against civilians and MINUSCA personnel; the electoral process is on track, for the constitutional referendum, scheduled for 13 December and the first round of presidential and legislative elections for 27 December.

A Senegalese rapid reaction force contingent, of about 300 men, based in Côte d’Ivoire, was transferred to CAR as a preventive measure during the electoral period.

**8. Abyei**

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union briefed the Council on the situation in Abyei. The Security Council was informed on the nomination of former President Thabo Mbeki to mediate the inter Sudanese differend over the final status of the region.

**9. Sahel Region**

The Security Council held a briefing on the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel region, by Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Office in the Sahel region.

Council members expressed the need to help the countries of the Sahel region in the fight against terrorist and extremist groups operating in the region; they further condemned the nefarious activities of these groups and regretted the dire humanitarian situation and food insecurity in the Sahel.

Regrettably, Council members were unable to reach agreement on a Presidential Statement in support of Sahel Office activities and strategies for the region.

**MIDDLE EAST**

**10. Iraq**

A briefing, followed by informal consultations with Special Representative of the Secretary General Iraq was held.

The political, security and humanitarian situation were discussed, with the Special Representative highlighting how the political polarization in Iraq threatens national reconciliation efforts; the enormous challenges faced by the Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi to promote reconciliation and expand the political process to effectively fight ISIL.

**13. Syria. Chemical weapons**

UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Kim Won- Soo, presented the 25th monthly report on the Syrian program of chemical weapons, recognizing the almost total destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons arsenal, and the cooperation afforded by the Syrian Government to the process.

**14.** **Syria. Political Process**

Special Envoy Stafan de Mistura briefed on the high-level meeting held in Vienna, in 30 October, attended by 17 foreign ministers from several countries, world and regional powers, among them Iran and Saudi Arabia two key regional players in the conflict.

The result of the discussions was translated into a final Statement, embodying the understanding on a number of key issues, including the need to accelerate diplomatic efforts to end the war in Syria.

De Mistura concluded that the Geneva Communiqué remains the internationally accepted roadmap with parameters for the resolution of the conflict; that the Vienna talks are an attempt to expand these parameters, and that it was decided to confer on the United Nations to lead the negotiating process between the Syrian parties.

**15. Terrorism**

In the wake of the Paris terrorist attacks, the Security Council, at the initiative of Russia and France was quick in taking action by adopting a resolution on the fight against terrorism that marked the first step in building the global coalition against terrorism that the international community has been striving for.

What seemed a promising start, after the Vienna talks on Syria, became a very strained situation with the shooting down by Turkey of the Russian’s plane.

**THEMATIC DEBATES**

**16. UN Peacekeeping Operations and Police Components**

In a briefing on Peacekeeping Operations with the Heads of UN Police Components of UNMISS, MONUSCO and UNMIL, experiences were shared on challenges faced by UN police in their respective missions.

Council members stressed the importance of the Police Components in Peace keeping Missions, and their important contribution to the consolidation of police institutions and in assisting in SS Reform.

**17. The Future of Peacekeeping Operations**

The Security Council held a briefing on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security: The Future of Peacekeeping Operations. The UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon briefed the meeting, affirming that the demand and complexity of current conflicts imply huge financial and political costs, while the United Nations are not always able to respond rapidly and efficiently to these situations.

The debate was largely centered on the proposals by the High Level Panel on Peace Keeping Operations.

**18. Open Debate on peaceful societies and conflict prevention**

The United Kingdom, who presided over the Security Council during the month, organized an Open Debate chaired by the Secretary of State for International Development, and was attended by the Secretary-General, by the President of the Peace building Commission, and by Mrs. Ouided Bouchamaoui, 2015 Nobel Peace Prize laureate and member of the Quartet for the Tunisian National Dialogue.

Almost 90 countries participated in the debate; they expressed a number of meaningful ideas and shared views, including on the needed reforms of the United Nations system; participants agreed that preventing conflicts is cost effective in terms of human, financial, and material resources, and recognized that effective peace building must address the root causes of conflict in a sustainable manner to avoid relapse into conflict.

**19. Arria Formula: Independent Commission of Inquiry on Syria**

An Arria Formula meeting was held with the Independent Commission of Inquiry on Syria to discuss the humanitarian situation in the country.

**20. Arria Formula on the impact of the transfer of small arms and light weapons**

Angola and Lithuania co-organized an Arria Formula, on the impact of the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons in poaching in Africa; counted with the participation of all Council members and other Member States of the United Nations who participated in the discussion.

The panelists recognized that poaching also results from the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons. Those weapons, besides feeding conflicts, armed groups and banditry, in the context of the Central Africa region, the Security Council declared the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons and its association with poaching as a threat to regional and international peace and security.

**Distinguished Colleagues**

This brings me to the end of this briefing.

As this is meant to be an interactive event, I welcome your questions and comments.

I thank you for your kind attention.