

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY  
AMBASSADOR ISMAEL ABRAÃO GASPAR MARTINS PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ANGOLA, IN  
HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE OF THE ZONE OF PEACE AND  
COOPERATION OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC**

**December 11, 2008**

Mr. President,

My delegation is taking the floor in its capacity as Chairman of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, on behalf of the 24 members of this important mechanism, namely, Angola, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, São-Tome and Príncipe, Serra Leone, South Africa, Togo and Uruguay.

I would like to underline that the contribution by Angola, referred to in the report, was made on behalf of the 24 members of the Zone following a decision of its Permanent Committee, and reflects our unity in this collective effort.

Let me start, Mr. President, by reiterating our satisfaction with the way you have been conducting the work of the most representative organ of the United Nations, the General Assembly. My delegation also thanks the Secretary-General for the presentation of the report, as well as for following up on the implementation of resolution 41/11, on the Zone.

The members of the Zone are particularly grateful to the delegation of Colombia and to the Department of Public Information, the Office of Legal Affairs, the FAO, the United Nations Office in Geneva, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, for their contribution to this report and their interest in the issues of the Zone.

Mr. President,

The report presented today to the General Assembly is, *per se*, eloquent on how the Zone is making gradual, but steady, significant qualitative changes by creating basic conditions for a fully operational mechanism of South-South Cooperation, where a wide range of partners can find their space.

We are particularly pleased to see how these changes are being noticed and taken into account by our partners as the replies from different bodies contained in the report have clearly referred to the implementation of the Luanda Plan of Action and the Luanda Political Declaration. As a matter of fact, the adoption of the Luanda Plan of Action as a framework for concrete actions was a turning point towards the revitalization of the Zone.

We are thankful to all the partners for the actions they have been carrying out in the different countries located within the space of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic. However, in our point of view, a regular exchange of information on the activities that partners develop within the space of the Zone is recommendable. This could be done through the Chairmanship. When possible, the Zone could also be invited, through its Chairmanship, to attend events of interest organized for groupings comprising its members. This will also make coordination possible when needed.

On our part, while stressing cooperation among ourselves by maximizing the use of our internal capacities and resources, members of the Zone will spare no effort to involve relevant partners in the materialization of our objectives, including by seeking their expertise for the successful holding of the meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Groups mentioned on paragraph 8 of the present report.

For instance, in the past, the United Nations Legal Affairs was instrumental in the holding of an experts meeting on the Law of the Sea in the Zone Member States of the Republic of Congo, (Brazzaville, 1990) and Uruguay (Montevideo, 1991). We would like to see the continuation of this sort of coordinated actions.

Another useful example would be employing the Zone to address the issue of drug trafficking, as its membership comprises countries from South America and Africa that rest on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean, a transit route used by dealers to transport drugs from the origin to the destination.

Moreover, individual partners are invited to contribute to this collective effort of the members of the Zone in different fields, as stated in paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 61/294.

Mr. President,

We fully appreciate the positive developments in the fields of peacebuilding, including in member States of the Zone, Serra Leone and Guinea-Bissau are on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, while other members like Liberia, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire have also benefitted from the assistance of the Peacebuilding Fund.

Questions of peace and security and those of development are interrelated and inseparable. This also requires a suitable international environment; the members of the Zone are therefore concerned with the negative developments in the world economy and the persistence of conflicts.

We are deeply concerned with the situation prevailing in some parts of Africa, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a member of the Zone, and we hope that no efforts will be spared to overcome this complex situation, including by combating the illicit exploitation of the natural resources of that country. In addition to that, we are alarmed by the conflict in Somalia and the consequent scourge of piracy that forces ships into the Atlantic Ocean and critically increases its traffic. It is necessary to fight this practice, and more importantly, find a solution to the long-lasting Somali conflict.

Mr. President,

The Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic was established as a mechanism to contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security and to the promotion of the principles and purposes of the United Nations in which we fully believe. The members of the Zone are therefore determined to promote the noble objectives of peace, security and development as rights to be exercised by all.

I thank you.