

49. Items relating to the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security

A. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in stabilization processes

Initial proceedings

Decision of 20 July 2004 (5007th meeting): statement by the President

At its 5007th meeting, on 20 July 2004,¹ the Security Council held a thematic debate on the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in stabilization processes”, presided over by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Minister of Romania. All Council members made statements, as did the representatives of Mexico and the Netherlands, the Secretary-General, the Commissioner for Peace, Security and Political Affairs of the African Union, the Deputy Director-General of European Security and Defence Policy of the European Union, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Deputy Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria and Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the representative of the Chair of the African Union and the representative of the Chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The President (Romania) drew attention to a letter dated 8 July 2004 transmitting a non-paper prepared by the presidency to help guide the discussion. The focus was primarily on the enhancement of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in stabilization processes.²

¹ For more information on the discussion of this meeting, see chap. XIII, part III, sect. A.

² S/2004/546.

The Secretary-General reaffirmed the need to create a network of effective and mutually reinforcing regional and global mechanisms that would be both flexible and responsive to current peace and security challenges. He noted that the United Nations currently was cooperating with regional organizations in stabilization processes in a number of countries, because regional organizations were swifter to deploy on the ground than the United Nations. However, since not all regional organizations could sustain their deployments over a long period, United Nations operations were often needed for longer-term sustainability. While enhancing cooperation, one had to consider more thoroughly the comparative strengths of different organizations and start creating strategic partnerships. He advocated a shift from ad hoc cooperation towards more institutionalized channels.³

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico underlined the growing importance of regional organizations as United Nations partners in the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts, as well as in peacebuilding and stabilization processes. He believed that, based on complementarity, more rational and effective use of the comparative advantages of each organization could be made. He suggested that the Council, when renewing peacekeeping operation mandates, include elements that promoted long-term stability. He urged the identification of innovative forms of cooperation with the United Nations.⁴

The representatives of regional organizations, in their statements, focused on the regional efforts of their respective organizations, their cooperation with the United Nations system, as well as prospects for future collaboration.

Speakers unanimously affirmed the need to reinforce the collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations, as well as build strategic partnerships. Most speakers were also of the view that the international security framework as defined in the Charter of the United Nations should be adapted to better address new challenges, such as internal

³ S/PV.5007, pp. 3-4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

conflicts, the existence of “failed States”, terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the trafficking in small arms and organized crime. Many specifically recognized that, in this context, regional organizations were increasingly becoming partners to the United Nations because of the need to adopt a regional approach to crises.⁵ The representative of France noted that, given the growing needs in peacekeeping, regional organizations had a pivotal role to play in backing the United Nations.⁶ This was echoed by the representative of Chile, who said that the increase in demands related to peacekeeping had exceeded the capacity of the United Nations, and added that association and cooperation with regional organizations were one way of enhancing the legitimacy of actions to maintain peace and security.⁷

While supporting the need for stronger partnership, however, several speakers called for a flexible and pragmatic approach to regional cooperation as regional arrangements had various configurations.⁸ The representative of Germany stated that the division of labour could only be successful if the following conditions were met: all relevant actors were involved, one actor took the lead in integrated planning and coordinated implementation, and funding problems were resolved.⁹

While reaffirming the prominent role provided to regional organizations in Chapter VIII of the Charter, many speakers insisted on the principle of complementarity with respect to the relationship between regional organizations and the Security Council.¹⁰ Others emphasized the principle of subsidiarity — namely, that regional organizations were expected to react to a regional conflict first and that United Nations peacekeeping operations would be deployed only in the face of an increased threat that

could not be dealt with through regional mobilization alone.¹¹ The representative of France stated that it was “certainly not desirable” for the United Nations to always be called on to come to the rescue.¹²

Several speakers emphasized that the prerogatives of the Council should be preserved and the division of labour rationalized, as the Council remained the chief forum for international conflict management.¹³ The representative of Benin, echoed by a few others, stressed the relevance of the principle enshrined in Article 53 of the Charter that Council authorization was a prerequisite to enforcement action by regional organizations. He however added that a strategy for more effective interaction should be established on the basis of the comparative advantage that regional organizations could offer in view of their capacity to intervene more rapidly in threatening situations.¹⁴ This was supported by several speakers.¹⁵ The representative of the United States added that although a regional troop contributor might share a common understanding with the host country, it might also have its own agenda. He urged caution in this regard, given the goal of long-term regional peace and stability.¹⁶

A large number of speakers urged more periodic dialogue between the United Nations and regional organizations with the aim of strengthening the relationship and welcomed the practice of high-level meetings of the Secretariat with heads of regional organizations.¹⁷ The representative of China also recalled that regional organizations were required

⁵ Ibid., p. 5 (Mexico); p. 10 (Benin); p. 13 (China); p. 14 (League of Arab States); p. 22 (Algeria); S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 5 (Angola); p. 10 (France); and p. 16 (Romania).

⁶ S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 10.

⁷ S/PV.5007, p. 8.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 25-26 (NATO); p. 26 (Pakistan); p. 32 (Spain); S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 11 (France); and p. 14 (United Kingdom).

⁹ S/PV.5007, p. 17.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 5 (Mexico); p. 7 (African Union Commissioner); p. 8 (Chile); p. 10 (Benin); p. 17 (Germany); p. 21 (Brazil); p. 22 (Algeria); p. 27 (Pakistan); p. 31 (Spain); S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 6 (Angola); p. 12 (African Union Chair); and p. 13 (United Kingdom).

¹¹ S/PV.5007, p. 7 (African Union Commissioner); p. 9 (Chile); p. 10 (Benin); and p. 23 (Algeria).

¹² S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 10.

¹³ S/PV.5007, p. 18 (Russian Federation); p. 22 (Algeria); p. 27 (Pakistan); p. 31 (Spain); S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 10 (France); p. 14 (United Kingdom); and p. 15 (Romania).

¹⁴ S/PV.5007, p. 10 (Benin); p. 13 (China); p. 21 (Brazil); and p. 27 (Pakistan).

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 7 (African Union Commissioner); p. 9 (Chile); p. 13 (China); p. 17 (Germany); p. 20 (ASEAN); p. 21 (Brazil); p. 23 (Algeria); p. 31 (Spain); S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 5 (United States); p. 6 (Angola); and p. 13 (United Kingdom).

¹⁶ S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 5.

¹⁷ S/PV.5007, p. 6 (Mexico); p. 7 (African Union Commissioner); p. 12 (European Union); p. 13 (China); p. 17 (Germany); p. 23 (Algeria); p. 25 (NATO); p. 28 (Philippines); p. 31 (Spain); p. 34 (OSCE); S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 11 (France); and p. 17 (Romania).

under the Charter to maintain close contact with the Security Council on their initiatives and actions.¹⁸

Several speakers said that the United Nations should provide logistical and financial support as well as personnel and training to regional organizations.¹⁹ The representative of the United States also urged the provision of rapid response capabilities.²⁰ This was echoed by the representative of ECOWAS, who added that his organization's policy on conflict resolution and management was actually geared towards creating rapid response and sustained peacekeeping capabilities.²¹

A number of speakers made specific recommendations. The representative of Chile encouraged the incorporation of the vision of regional organizations into Security Council debates relating to Chapter VI and Chapter VII of the Charter. He also urged the Secretariat to support and coordinate the activities of regional organizations, including coordination and facilitation of resources from international financial bodies to enhance response capacity at the regional level.²²

The representative of the European Union specifically asked to whether the assistance of the European Union in force generation or bridging operations in support of United Nations operations would come at the expense of traditional contributions by European Union members to United Nations-led operations. He further noted that, with stagnant defence budgets, the number of deployable police and military troops under United Nations command was too limited given the increasing demand. However, if there was political will, this could be overcome.²³

At the end of the meeting, the President made a statement on behalf of the Council,²⁴ by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Acknowledged the important role that could be played by regional organizations in the prevention, resolution and

management of conflicts, including by addressing their root causes;

[Noted that Member States and heads of regional organizations] stressed their interest in enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, and considered that regular dialogue on specific issues between the Council and regional organizations would bring significant added value;

Invited the Secretary-General to give consideration to the relevant views expressed in the debate preparation of the next high-level meeting;

Invited regional organizations to take the necessary steps to increase collaboration with the United Nations in order to maximize efficiency in stabilization processes;

Also invited all Members of the United Nations to contribute to the strengthening of the capacity of regional and subregional organizations.

B. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Initial proceedings

Decision of 17 October 2005 (5282nd meeting): resolution 1631 (2005)

At its 5282nd meeting, on 17 October 2005,²⁵ the Security Council held a thematic debate on "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security" and included in its agenda a letter from the representative of Romania, transmitting a discussion paper prepared by the presidency for the debate.²⁶ The paper noted that the purpose of the debate was to find ways to enhance the relationship of the United Nations with regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular in conflict management and post-conflict stabilization, and identified key discussion points to be addressed.

At the meeting, chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania, all Council members made statements, in addition to the Secretary-General, the Acting Executive Secretary and representative of the

¹⁸ S/PV.5007, p. 13.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14 (China); p. 30 (CIS); S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 4 (United States); p. 8 (ECOWAS) and p. 13 (African Union Chair).

²⁰ S/PV.5007 (Resumption 1), p. 4.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²² S/PV.5007, p. 9.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

²⁴ S/PRST/2004/27.

²⁵ For more information on the discussion at this meeting, see chap. XII, part III, sect. A, with regard to Chapter VIII of the Charter.

²⁶ S/2005/638.

Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the Chairman of the New York Committee of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Deputy Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, the representative of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Security Policy of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of American States and the Secretary-General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The representative of Greece made a statement on behalf of the Chairman-in-Office of the South-East European Cooperation Process.

The President (Romania), speaking in his national capacity, said that his country had taken up the issue of cooperation with regional organizations because the regional dimension was a hallmark of its long-standing foreign policy. He expressed his country's conviction that the right degree of "complementarity" and "subsidiarity" between the United Nations and regional action could generate a pool of resources assigned to peace and security.²⁷

The Secretary-General emphasized the dramatic growth in the range and types of partnerships between regional organizations and the United Nations, in the peacekeeping and peacemaking fields, such as the transition from regional to United Nations peacekeeping operations, the provision of support to United Nations operations, the coordination of separate missions side by side and the provision of United Nations support to operations of regional organizations.²⁸

Most speakers agreed that cooperation with regional organizations should be strengthened, including through a closer working partnership with the Security Council and through a more structured approach in the areas of democracy, development, security, conflict prevention and peacebuilding. They also favoured the strengthening of institutional cooperation and information-sharing. Most speakers welcomed the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission, the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the sixth high-level meeting of the United Nations and

regional organizations as positive steps towards increased cooperation.

Representatives of regional organizations elaborated on their respective activities in connection with their relationship with the United Nations, and highlighted their comparative advantages for maintaining regional peace and security. The existence of these unique advantages for regional organizations in dealing with regional issues and for identifying the root causes of conflicts were recognized by many speakers.²⁹ The representative of Brazil added that regional organizations were also key players in involving civil society in peacebuilding.³⁰

A number of suggestions were made regarding the need to reinforce the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations. Some speakers proposed the establishment of a framework agreement with the United Nations.³¹ The representative of OAS suggested that the Security Council should consider inviting regional organizations on an annual basis to present key findings from their respective peacebuilding and post-conflict initiatives.³² The representatives of CIS and Greece urged closer cooperation in the political and military spheres as these areas were brought into play in the peacekeeping and stabilization processes.³³ The representative of Japan, echoed by others, welcomed the increased involvement of regional organizations in the work of the Security Council, such as briefings by regional organizations to the Security Council on their activities and the holding of meetings with regional organizations during the Security Council's mission to the field; and called for a stronger role of regional organizations in peacekeeping missions through the development of rapid deployment capacities.³⁴ The representative of the Philippines suggested that the United Nations enhance its support to regional

²⁷ S/PV.5282, pp. 2-4.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11 (China); p. 13 (Algeria); p. 19 (United Republic of Tanzania); p. 22 (United Kingdom, on behalf of the European Union); p. 27 (Brazil); S/PV.5282 (Resumption 1), p. 2 (Greece); p. 3 (Argentina); and p. 4 (United States).

³⁰ S/PV.5282, p. 28.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7 (OSCE); p. 15 (Council of Europe); and S/PV.5282 (Resumption 1), p. 3 (Argentina).

³² S/PV.5282, p. 8.

³³ S/PV.5282, p. 17; and S/PV.5282 (Resumption 1), p. 2, respectively.

³⁴ S/PV.5282, pp. 20-21 (Japan); p. 23 (European Union); p. 30 (France); and p. 31 (League of Arab States).

seminars on peacebuilding and conflict prevention.³⁵ The representative of the United Kingdom, and some other speakers, advocated the sharing of early warning information by the United Nations and regional organizations.³⁶

The representative of Brazil warned against overstressing the limited resources of some of the regional organizations and said that, in strengthening cooperation with them, one should be mindful of their respective competences.³⁷ The representative of Algeria deplored the insufficient resources and sometimes lack of political will on the part of Member States in helping regional organizations to build their own capacity for intervention.³⁸ This was echoed by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, who called on the United Nations to support standby arrangements,³⁹ and the representatives of the European Union and Benin, who urged capacity-building for regional organizations.⁴⁰ The representative of China, echoed by the representatives of Denmark and Japan, pointed out that more attention was needed for Africa, as many issues on the Council's agenda related to that continent.⁴¹

The issue of improving cooperation through the development of a mechanism for coordination in stabilization processes and post-conflict peacebuilding was also raised.⁴² Some speakers called for a flexible approach to cooperation between the two sides as regional situations varied greatly.⁴³ Some speakers reaffirmed that the Security Council remained at the heart of the international machinery for collective security and that the Council had the prerogative to

sanction the use of force by the international community.⁴⁴

At the end of the debate, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1631 (2005), by which it, *inter alia*:

Expressed its determination to take appropriate steps for the further development of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security;

Urged all States and relevant international organizations to contribute to strengthening the capacity of regional and subregional organizations, in particular of African regional and subregional organizations;

Stressed the importance for the United Nations of developing the ability of regional and subregional organizations to deploy peacekeeping forces rapidly in support of United Nations peacekeeping operations or other operations mandated by the Security Council;

Stressed the potential role of regional and subregional organizations in addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons;

Reiterated the need to encourage regional cooperation;

Welcomed the efforts undertaken by its subsidiary bodies with responsibilities in counter-terrorism to foster cooperation with regional and subregional organizations;

Expressed its intention to hold regular meetings, as appropriate, with heads of regional and subregional organizations in order to strengthen the interaction and cooperation with those organizations in maintaining international peace and security;

Recommended better communication between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations;

Reiterated the obligation for regional organizations, under Article 54 of the Charter, to keep the Council fully informed of their activities for the maintenance of international peace and security;

Invited the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Council on the opportunities and challenges facing the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security;

Requested the Secretary-General to include, in his regular reporting to the Council on peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, assessments of progress on the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 22 (United Kingdom, on behalf of the European Union); p. 29 (Philippines); p. 30 (France); p. 31 (League of Arab States); S/PV.5282 (Resumption 1), p. 3 (Argentina); and p. 6 (Benin).

³⁷ S/PV.5282, p. 27.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 23; and S/PV.5282 (Resumption 1), p. 6.

⁴¹ S/PV.5282, p. 12 (China); p. 13 (Denmark); and p. 20 (Japan).

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 10 (African Union Commission); p. 13 (Algeria); and p. 16 (CIS).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 12 (China); p. 28 (Philippines); and p. 31 (France).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11 (China); p. 18 (Russian Federation); p. 22 (European Union); and p. 28 (Brazil).

Decision of 20 September 2006 (5529th meeting): statement by the President

At its 5529th meeting, on 20 September 2006,⁴⁵ the Council held a thematic debate at the ministerial level on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. All Council members made statements, in addition to the Secretary-General, the representative of the presidency of the European Union, the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States, the Chairman of the New York Committee of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.⁴⁶

The meeting was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, who drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General dated 28 July 2006 on a regional-global security partnership: challenges and opportunities.⁴⁷ In the report, the Secretary-General made a number of recommendations to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations in the fields of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, disarmament and non-proliferation. On the nature of the overall partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, the Secretary-General suggested that, as an initial step, partner organizations should consider entering into agreements on a general statement of principles as this could provide a guiding mechanism for future collaboration with and between all signatories and the United Nations.

The President also drew attention to a letter dated 6 September 2006 from the representative of Greece,

transmitting a background paper prepared by the presidency to help guide the discussion.⁴⁸ The paper suggested discussion points, including the identification of partner organizations — regional organizations acting under Chapter VIII of the Charter and intergovernmental organizations acting under other provisions of the Charter, as well as Council assistance to operations of regional organizations.

Speaking in his national capacity, the President of the Council welcomed the opportunity to discuss developments that took place since the adoption of resolution 1631 (2005) and the vision of creating a regional-global security mechanism. He said that greater involvement by international organizations in conflict prevention and management was required and that this could increase the legitimacy of the Council itself. Finally, he highlighted the need to clarify the membership and the mandate of regional and other organizations to ensure a clearer collective effort.⁴⁹

The Secretary-General specifically stressed the need for further cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations. He noted several recent positive developments such as the six high-level meetings with heads of partner organizations and noted that this could pave the way for a stronger partnership. He also noted the increased emphasis on prevention and mediation and welcomed the tangible results on the ground that the involvement of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security had achieved. He affirmed that the regional-global partnership needed to reach a new level of clarity, practicality and seriousness.⁵⁰

All speakers recognized the need to consolidate a collective approach to peace and security issues. Most of them stressed that further involvement of African organizations in peace efforts was necessary. Many speakers shared the view that regional and subregional organizations were better placed to determine the best way of dealing with conflicts in their own regions.⁵¹ Several speakers insisted on the need to encourage regional ownership in conflict management and post-conflict processes.⁵² The representative of Qatar also

⁴⁵ For more information on the discussion at this meeting, see chap. XII, part III, sect. A, with regard to Chapter VIII of the Charter.

⁴⁶ The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania was invited to participate; see S/2006/757 for his statement.

⁴⁷ S/2006/590.

⁴⁸ S/2006/719.

⁴⁹ S/PV.5529, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5 (Qatar); p. 9 (France); p. 11 (Argentina); p. 12 (Russian Federation); and p. 19 (Japan).

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 20 (Japan); p. 23 (Presidency of the European Union); and p. 33 (NATO).

noted that the interaction between the United Nations and regional organizations could even strengthen the role played by organizations in a regional context.⁵³

While recognizing that the United Nations and regional organizations had comparative advantages and unique characteristics in the areas of confidence-building, conflict prevention, crisis management and peacekeeping, many speakers urged that the partnership be based on complementarity as opposed to duplication of efforts.⁵⁴ The representative of Denmark specifically called for a practical division of labour between organizations involved in different issues.⁵⁵ While affirming that conflict prevention remained the prerogative of Member States, the representative of the Congo also welcomed the establishment of conflict prevention centres by the African Union, OSCE and the European Union.⁵⁶ Some speakers focused on the important role that regional organizations played in combating terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and transnational crime.⁵⁷ The representative of Slovakia in particular deemed very important the cooperation of regional organizations in helping States to implement national legislation in line with resolution 1540 (2004).⁵⁸

Many speakers called for a results-based and flexible cooperation that would not remain confined to a particular mechanism as organizations were different from one another.⁵⁹ In order to determine the comparative advantages of the organizations, the representative of ASEAN suggested the conduct of a region-to-region study.⁶⁰

Another focus of the discussion was the issue of capacity-building for regional organizations. Many speakers concurred that enhancing capacity at the regional level was a good way to end or prevent

conflicts, particularly in the field of regional peacekeeping.⁶¹ In this context, the representative of the Congo, speaking on behalf of the Chairman of the African Union, recalled that in order to strengthen its capacity for intervention through standby arrangements, the African Union had called for the establishment of five brigades of 3,500 to 5,000 men by the year 2010. He expressed the hope that the international community would support that initiative.⁶² The representative of Ghana, however, expressed concern at existing weaknesses in the planning and management capabilities and at inadequate financial resources that were plaguing regionally-led peacekeeping operations.⁶³

While speakers were unanimous in their call to reinforce the partnership, the representative of China, echoed by the representative of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, held that the basic principle underlying this partnership should be to ensure that the Security Council played a leading role.⁶⁴ Others recalled that interventions by regional organizations in conflicts must be done under the legitimate authority of the Security Council.⁶⁵ The representative of the United Republic of Tanzania also affirmed that it was the Security Council's prerogative to advance the cooperation with regional organizations to a higher level.⁶⁶

The representative of Ghana expressed concern at the recent lack of cooperation by a few members of the African Union with the United Nations. He called for an end of the restrictions placed on the work of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea and for the rapid deployment of a United Nations presence in Darfur as, he added, regional entities "have an obligation to strengthen the hand of the United Nations in peacekeeping" by ensuring that international peace efforts are not obstructed.⁶⁷ For his part, the representative of OIC said that it was necessary to move away from the "mono-dimensional" approach to

⁵³ Ibid., p. 5.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 6 (China); p. 7 (Slovakia); p. 9 (France); p. 11 (Argentina); p. 12 (Russian Federation); p. 17 (Congo, on behalf of the Chairman of the African Union); p. 32 (NATO); and p. 33 (Collective Security Treaty Organization).

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 10.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 17.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 7 (Slovakia); p. 10 (Denmark); pp. 12-13 (Russian Federation); p. 19 (United States); p. 26 (ASEAN); p. 29 (OSCE); and p. 30 (CIS).

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 5 (Qatar); p. 6 (China); p. 9 (France); p. 23 (European Union); and p. 35 (Council of Europe).

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 27.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 6 (China), p. 8 (Slovakia); p. 9 (France); p. 13 (Peru); p. 15 (United Republic of Tanzania); p. 16 (United Kingdom); p. 19 (Japan); p. 21 (Ghana); p. 27 (League of Arab States); and p. 33 (Collective Security Treaty Organization).

⁶² Ibid., p. 18.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 22.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 6 and p. 33, respectively.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 11 (Argentina); and p. 12 (Russian Federation).

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 14.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 21.

tackling crises, looking solely at the security element, and instead concentrate on root causes of conflicts such as political grievances.⁶⁸

Many speakers called for more systematic interaction between regional organizations and the Security Council.⁶⁹ While the representative of the Russian Federation believed that it was urgent to hold regular meetings of the Secretary-General and the leaders of regional organizations,⁷⁰ the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, echoed by others, suggested an institutionalized approach to allow for more substantive and regularized cooperation.⁷¹ By contrast, the representative of the United States believed that increased cooperation between the Security Council, the Secretariat and regional organizations should remain informal so as not to “detract from the important relationship among the Member States within the United Nations”, and feared that an institutionalized cooperation could limit the United Nations ability in a time of crisis.⁷² Similarly, the representative of the European Union considered that flexibility, pragmatism and light structures should define the cooperation.⁷³

The representative of Argentina contended that organizations needed to define themselves in terms of the Charter provisions under which they operated.⁷⁴ The representative of the Congo noted that only after determining the nature and capacity for action of regional organizations would it be possible to define their operational scope of action. He then suggested that international, regional and subregional organizations be asked to conclude a formal agreement with the Secretary-General on their cooperation with the United Nations.⁷⁵ The representative of the Council of Europe warned however against attempts to categorize organizations that could not be categorized.⁷⁶

At the end of the debate, the President of the Council issued a statement on behalf of the Council,⁷⁷ by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Recalled its previous relevant resolutions and the statements by its President on cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and its three previous meetings on the subject, held on 11 April 2003 under the presidency of Mexico and on 20 July 2004 and 17 October 2005 under the presidency of Romania;

Stressed the benefits of closer cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the brokering of peace agreements in conflict situations; in this regard, it had agreed, in the recently adopted note by the President,⁷⁸ to expand consultation and cooperation with regional and subregional organizations by inviting relevant regional and subregional organizations to participate in the public and private meetings of the Council, when appropriate; continuing to consult informally with regional and subregional organizations when drafting resolutions, presidential statements and press statements; and by drawing the attention of representatives of regional and subregional organizations to relevant resolutions, presidential statements and press statements;

Encouraged regional and subregional organizations to convey their perspectives and analysis to the Council prior to its examination of regionally relevant agenda items;

Invited the Secretariat and regional and subregional organizations to explore further information-sharing on respective capabilities and lessons learned in peacekeeping by expanding the scope of the website of the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to cover the deployment experiences of all regional and subregional organizations and all experiences of cooperation in peacekeeping between the United Nations and those organizations;

Urged the Secretariat and United Nations agencies, as well as all States and other relevant international organizations, to continue their efforts to contribute to the capacity-building of regional and subregional organizations, in particular of the African Union and African subregional organizations;

[Stated that it] intended to consider further steps to promote closer and more operational cooperation between the United Nations and regional, subregional and other intergovernmental organizations participating in the high-level meetings convened by the Secretary-General, in particular in the field of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8 (Slovakia); p. 9 (France); p. 12 (Russian Federation); p. 17 (Congo, on behalf of the Chairman of the African Union); and p. 20 (Japan).

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15 (United Republic of Tanzania); and p. 25 (OAS).

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁷⁷ S/PRST/2006/39.

⁷⁸ S/2006/507

C. Relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security

Initial proceedings

Decision of 28 March 2007 (5649th meeting): statement by the President

At its 5649th meeting, on 28 March 2007,⁷⁹ presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa, the Security Council held a thematic debate on the item entitled “Relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security”. The Council first heard briefings by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union. In addition to all Council members, statements were made by the representatives of Algeria, Australia, Benin, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Germany (on behalf of the European Union), Japan, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Namibia, Norway, Rwanda, the Sudan, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam, the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States and the Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

The President (South Africa) drew attention to a letter dated 14 March 2007 from the representative of South Africa,⁸⁰ transmitting a concept paper for the open debate. The paper recognized that regional organizations must play an important role in the maintenance of international peace and security, and that the relationship between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council needed to be strengthened. It also noted that the African Union had initiated its own missions in Burundi, Darfur and Somalia, as United Nations interventions had sometimes taken a long time to operationalize even after being authorized by the Security Council, but that further action by the African Union had been hampered by lack of resources.

Opening the debate, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa hoped that her country could contribute to better articulation and clarification of the issue of strengthening cooperation with regional organizations under Chapter VIII of the Charter, which had been reiterated at the most recent summit of the African Union and at the 2005 World Summit. She highlighted the positive synergies between the United Nations and regional organizations from ad hoc arrangements to co-deployment of peacekeeping operations. For instance, the African Union had been able to intervene in situations where rapid deployment by the United Nations was impossible, sometimes with retrospective endorsement by the Security Council. A key question to be addressed was then how the decisions of the African Union Peace and Security Council could relate to those of the Security Council as they had complementary agendas. She insisted on the need for more “predictability” and for a clearer form of “burden-sharing”.⁸¹

The Assistant Secretary-General stressed that Chapter VIII of the Charter provided clear guidance for the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations. Affirming that the partnership with the African Union was among the most intense of all peacekeeping partnerships, he highlighted the development of a joint action plan to guide this partnership with the ultimate goal of operationalizing the African standby force by 2010. Noting the enhanced cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations in Somalia and Darfur, he believed that in the future African countries would be able to play an even greater role in peacekeeping operations and that the Security Council had a vital role to play in facilitating partnerships.⁸²

Pointing to the African Union’s request for United Nations funding for African Union peacekeeping operations, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the Africa Union observed that the African Union had the right to intervene in its Member States. He argued that, with Security Council approval, the African Union would feel that it was acting on behalf of the international community, and stressed that ad hoc arrangements could not replace the mechanism in Chapter VIII of the Charter. He called for a revision of the rules for the United Nations peacekeeping

⁷⁹ For more information on the discussion at this meeting, see chap. XII, part III, sect. A, with regard to Chapter VIII, of the Charter.

⁸⁰ S/2007/148.

⁸¹ S/PV.5649, pp. 2-4.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

budgets to that end and hoped that the Security Council would establish a follow-up mechanism to pursue this question.⁸³

Most speakers welcomed the growing contributions by the African Union and the resolve of its leaders to address and solve conflicts on the African continent. The memorandum of understanding of November 2006 between the United Nations and the African Union was widely welcomed and received as a foundation for a more formal cooperation mechanism. Speakers also reiterated their support for the World Summit Outcome,⁸⁴ which recognized the important role of regional organizations in contributing to stabilizing conflict situations due to their proximity to conflict zones.

While many speakers stressed that regional arrangements would not substitute for the Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security,⁸⁵ the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya noted that there could be no question of eliminating the regional role so as to replace it with an international role, and insisted that the United Nations and regional organizations had a joint responsibility for maintaining peace and preventing armed conflict.⁸⁶

Speakers agreed that regional organizations could play an important role in helping the Council to fulfil this responsibility. The representative of France, in particular, noted that the Council had benefited from the efforts made by regional organizations in terms of managing crises in Africa and deploying peacekeeping forces there.⁸⁷ Most speakers underlined the need to strengthen cooperation with regional organizations in the areas of planning and management of conflict situations, including conflict prevention and peacebuilding, as well as in training, logistical support and financial assistance. While the representative of the Sudan called for an effective strategic partnership limited to the provisions of Chapter VIII,⁸⁸ the

representative of Uruguay noted that it would be difficult under Chapter VIII to maintain peacekeeping operations with contributions only by regional organizations.⁸⁹ The representative of Germany drew attention to the European Union's financial support for African Union peace operations and urged the United Nations to provide similar assistance.⁹⁰ The representative of the United States stressed that United Nations assessed contributions should only be used for United Nations-mandated operations, under the Security Council and well-established United Nations command and control mechanisms.⁹¹

Commenting on the challenges facing the United Nations and the African Union, the representative of the Congo, echoed by the representative of Ghana, stressed that more coherence was needed in joint actions in conflict prevention and resolution, arguing that the cost of prevention was far less than the cost of peacekeeping.⁹² Several speakers underlined the urgent need for more capacity-building of the African Union to deal with crisis situations like Darfur and Somalia. In this regard, many urged President Al-Bashir to extend full cooperation to the United Nations and the African Union in their joint efforts to bring lasting peace and stability to the Sudan.⁹³ The representative of the United Kingdom further noted that the Council should accelerate action on Zimbabwe, to match that of the African Union.⁹⁴ The representative of the Sudan stressed that the United Nations and the African Union needed to overcome regional technical and logistical shortcomings and that the expertise and capacities of regional organizations should be the focus of the discussion.⁹⁵

On improving the relationship between the United Nations and the African Union, many speakers encouraged the development of an institutional relationship between the Security Council and the

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 6-8.

⁸⁴ General Assembly resolution 60/1.

⁸⁵ S/PV.5649, p. 3 (South Africa); p. 13 (Indonesia); p. 17 (France, Panama); p. 20 (Italy); p. 24 (Peru); p. 25 (China); p. 29 (Sudan); and S/PV.5649 (Resumption 1), p. 4 (Uganda); p. 6 (Namibia); p. 11 (Viet Nam); p. 17 (Rwanda); and p. 20 (League of Arab States).

⁸⁶ S/PV.5649 (Resumption 1), pp. 9-10.

⁸⁷ S/PV.5649, pp. 16-17.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 29.

⁸⁹ S/PV.5649 (Resumption 1), p. 3.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 15.

⁹¹ S/PV.5649, p. 27.

⁹² Ibid., p. 9 (Congo); and p. 11 (Ghana).

⁹³ Ibid., p. 15 (Slovakia); p. 23 (United Kingdom); p. 27 (United States); and S/PV.5649 (Resumption 1), p. 2 (Norway); and p. 14 (Germany).

⁹⁴ S/PV.5649, p. 23.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p.29.

African Union Peace and Security Council.⁹⁶ While the representative of China insisted on the need for the United Nations to boost the training of personnel to ensure that African Union peace missions were able to play their unique role,⁹⁷ the representative of Namibia proposed that the United Nations and the African Union enter into an agreement that would provide for a defined time frame for the transformation of regional peacekeeping operations to United Nations missions, so as to avoid putting pressure on regional organizations to continue running such missions with limited logistical and financial resources.⁹⁸ The representative of Algeria welcomed the fact that the Security Council took into account the viewpoint and the decisions of the African Union in the decisions it must take relating to African conflicts and hoped this could continue.⁹⁹

Some speakers affirmed that, in the end, the best way to guarantee effective international action was to maintain a credible African standby force which could be deployed rapidly. They urged more efforts to ready the force by 2010.¹⁰⁰

At the end of the meeting, the President made a statement on behalf of the Council,¹⁰¹ by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Reaffirmed its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

Recognized the important role of regional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, and recalled that that cooperation between the United Nations and the regional arrangements was an integral part of collective security;

Recognized that regional organizations were well positioned to understand the root causes of many conflicts closer

to home and to influence the prevention or resolution, owing to their knowledge of the region;

Urged the Secretary-General, in consultation and in cooperation with the relevant regional and subregional bodies, to resolve regional conflicts in Africa by using existing United Nations capacities as effectively as possible; to support regional early warning and mediation, in particular in Africa; to assess the risk of conflict at regional level and prioritize those areas of highest risk; and to highlight possible methods at a regional level in combating illegal exploitation and trafficking of natural resources;

Invited further collaboration with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in order to help to build the latter's capacity to undertake, *inter alia*, rapid and appropriate responses to emerging situations and to develop effective strategies for conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

D. The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security

Initial proceedings

Decision of 6 November 2007 (5776th meeting): statement by the President

At its 5776th meeting, on 6 November 2007,¹⁰² the Security Council held an open debate on the item entitled "The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security", presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia. In addition to all Council members, statements were made by the Secretary-General, the representatives of Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Benin, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan (on behalf of the Collective Security Treaty Organization), Malaysia, Norway, the Philippines, Portugal (on behalf of the European Union), Singapore, Solomon Islands, Spain, Thailand, Uruguay and Viet Nam, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the African Union.

The President first drew attention to a letter dated 29 October 2007 from the representative of Indonesia,¹⁰³ transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration. The concept paper suggested that

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10 (Congo, Ghana); p. 23 (United Kingdom); p. 27 (United States); p. 28 (Egypt); and S/PV.5649 (Resumption 1), p. 9 (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya); p. 11 (Burkina Faso); p. 13 (United Republic of Tanzania); p. 15 (Benin); p. 18 (Rwanda); and p. 21 (League of Arab States).

⁹⁷ S/PV.5649, p. 25.

⁹⁸ S/PV.5649 (Resumption 1), p. 6.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁰⁰ S/PV.5649, p. 4 (Assistant Secretary-General); p. 13 (Indonesia); p. 24 (United Kingdom); and S/PV.5649 (Resumption 1), p. 2 (Norway); p. 5 (Uganda); p. 7 (Japan); p. 12 (Burkina Faso); p. 14 (Germany); p. 16 (Benin); and p. 19 (Algeria).

¹⁰¹ S/PRST/2007/7.

¹⁰² For more information on the discussion at this meeting, see chap. XII, part III, sect. A, with regard to Chapter VIII of the Charter.

¹⁰³ S/2007/640.

the discussion focus, among other subjects, on the current capacities of the regional and subregional organizations in the fields of promotion of dialogue and confidence-building measures, norms-shaping and sharing, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding, with the aim of determining how best practices drawn from the experiences of regional organizations could be shared and made useful to resolving local conflicts.

The Secretary-General noted that partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations were stronger than ever. Commenting on their comparative advantages, he suggested that those organizations could help the United Nations to respond to crises and provide lessons for the future. In that regard, he said that his proposals to strengthen the Departments of Political Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations would enhance the United Nations capability to work with regional organizations as well as improve the mediation capacity of the Secretariat.¹⁰⁴

Speakers unanimously agreed that stronger partnership could only be beneficial in resolving issues related to peace and security. While reaffirming that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rested with the Security Council, speakers believed that, because of their comparative advantages, regional organizations had a role to play in all stages of peacekeeping, peacebuilding, conflict prevention and conflict resolution, and were better suited to address root causes of conflicts. Some delegations supported, *inter alia*, the provision of financial and logistical assistance to regional organizations engaged in conflict resolution as well as capacity-building; the institutionalization of cooperation not only between the United Nations and the regional organizations but also among the regional organizations themselves; improving mediation capacities of regional organizations; the central coordinating role of the United Nations between various regional organizations; and encouraging regional organizations to also become involved in issues that did not pose a threat to international peace and security. Many speakers also reaffirmed that interaction with regional and subregional organizations

¹⁰⁴ S/PV.5776, pp. 2-3.

must follow the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter.

Divergent views were sometimes expressed regarding the institutionalization of the relations between the United Nations and regional organizations and the creation of structured funding mechanisms,¹⁰⁵ as opposed to creating pragmatic and flexible synergies and specific coordination mechanisms on a case-by-case basis.¹⁰⁶

At the end of the meeting, the President made a statement on behalf of the Council,¹⁰⁷ by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Recognized the important role of regional and subregional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts;

Emphasized that the growing contribution made by regional and subregional organizations in cooperation with United Nations could usefully support the work of the Organization in maintaining international peace and security;

Recalled its determination to take appropriate steps to further the development of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security;

Encouraged regional and subregional organizations to strengthen and increase cooperation among them, and underlined the importance of the United Nations political support and technical expertise in this regard;

Encouraged regional cooperation, including through the involvement of regional and subregional organizations in the peaceful settlement of disputes, and intended to consult closely with them on their role in future peacekeeping operations as well as political and integrated missions authorized by the Council;

Stressed the need to develop effective partnership between the Council and regional and subregional organizations in order to enable early response to disputes and emerging crises;

Underlined the importance of exploring the potential and existing capacities of regional and subregional organizations in the field of peace and security;

Stressed the potential role of regional and subregional organizations in addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and the need to take into account in the mandates

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18 (Russian Federation); p. 20 (Panama); and S/PV.5776 (Resumption 1), p. 29 (African Union).

¹⁰⁶ S/PV.5776, p. 4 (United States); p. 16 (Belgium); p. 27 (European Union); and S/PV.5776 (Resumption 1), p. 8 (Japan).

¹⁰⁷ S/PRST/2007/42.

of peacekeeping operations the regional instruments enabling States to identify and trace illegal small arms and light weapons;

Welcomed the efforts undertaken by its subsidiary bodies with responsibilities in counter-terrorism to foster cooperation with regional and subregional organizations;

Recognized the importance of promoting the identification and further development of modalities which enhance the contribution of regional and subregional organizations to the work of the Council in maintaining international peace and security;

Requested the Secretary-General to include in his report pursuant to the statement by its President of 28 March 2007¹⁰⁸ a recommendation on practical ways and means to increase and strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security;

Invited all Member States to contribute more actively to the strengthening of the capacity of regional and subregional organizations in issues relating to the maintenance of international peace and security.

¹⁰⁸ S/PRST/2007/7.

50. Civilian aspects of conflict management and peacebuilding

Initial proceedings

Decision of 22 September 2004 (5041st meeting): statement by the President

At its 5041st meeting, on 22 September 2004, the Security Council included in its agenda the item entitled “Civilian aspects of conflict management and peacebuilding” a letter dated 8 September 2004 from the representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General,¹ transmitting a discussion paper on the topic. Statements were made by the Secretary-General, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, the High Representative for the European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, as well as by all members of the Council.²

In his introductory statement, the Secretary-General stressed that, for the maintenance of international peace and security, restoration of the rule of law was vital in war-torn societies. He said that in the complex business of peacebuilding, a clear political strategy that included benchmarks for progress towards building legitimate and effective States was necessary. He expressed the view that the Council’s sustained

interest and focus was needed to address current challenges, since disinterest and division within the Council resulted in unfulfilled mandates and unsolved problems. Furthermore, the United Nations, other intergovernmental organizations, bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations should work more closely together on the basis of shared goals and priorities, since peacebuilding was interdependent and failure in one sector could result in failure in other sectors. In addition, in efforts at peacebuilding, a highly skilled cadre of civilian staff were needed that would include both technical experts and individuals who brought together diverse perspectives on conflict management, State-building, development and transitional justice. In regard to the security of United Nations civilian staff, the Secretary-General underlined that there must be a reasonable balance between the risks they took and the substantive contributions they were called on to make.³

The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union stated that the Protocol establishing the African Union Peace and Security Council outlined its responsibilities for bringing peace, security and stability to Africa. He noted that the African Union’s limited experience in Darfur with the deployment of the African Union Mission in the Sudan had revealed the need to expand the mission to include civilian components in order to address the civilian, human rights and humanitarian aspects of the crisis. He also stressed the need to devote attention to linkages with civil society organizations. Finally, he noted that the

¹ S/2004/722.

² Brazil, France, Germany, the Philippines, Romania and Spain were represented by their respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Pakistan by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Angola by the Minister of External Relations, and the United Kingdom by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

³ S/PV.5041, pp. 2-3.