



Security Council

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Letter dated 28 December 2007 from the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General

I am writing with reference to the letter from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General dated 31 May 2006 (S/2006/354), in which the Security Council informed your predecessor about the establishment of an ad hoc committee on mandate review to conduct the review of Security Council mandates called for by the Heads of State and Government in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (A/60/1) and to continue consideration of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Mandating and delivering: analysis and recommendations to facilitate the review of mandates” (A/60/733 and Corr.1).

The Ad Hoc Committee on Mandate Review has been guided in its work by the overall purpose of streamlining and strengthening the efforts of the Security Council in promoting international peace and security and thereby contributing to the effectiveness of the United Nations as a whole. The Committee has facilitated a practical, real-world review of the existing mandates of the Security Council. It has been proceeding in close cooperation and coordination with the United Nations Secretariat, which has provided to the committee invaluable assistance.

The mandate review process in the Security Council has been complementary to the Council’s existing periodic review of activities and individual mandates. It has been comprehensive, placing mandates in their broader context, including, if appropriate, on a regional or functional basis, so as to better ascertain how individual mandates contribute to the overall objectives of the Council. The main role of the Committee has been to facilitate the decision-making processes of the Security Council on individual mandates. From May to December 2006, the Committee was co-chaired by the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and the United States of America. In 2007 the positions of co-Chairs have been held by the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and South Africa.

Following consultations among Council members, the following five criteria were agreed for mandate review:

- (a) Specific recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General of 30 March 2006 entitled “Mandating and delivering” (A/60/733 and Corr.1);
- (b) Mandates that have not been examined by the Security Council in the last five years;



(c) Specific instances of duplicative or unnecessary reporting requirements (including those with shorter reporting cycles than necessary);

(d) Positions that have remained vacant or where the reason for appointment has changed;

(e) Where there are two or more senior United Nations representatives in a particular area or with potentially overlapping or duplicative mandates.

In its work, the Committee has utilized a range of useful tools and mechanisms, such as informal meetings of territorial expert groups, Committee meetings held at the ambassadorial level, update briefings provided to the Committee by members of the Secretariat on mandates older than five years and not periodically renewed, an open meeting of the Committee on a mandate of a special representative of the Secretary-General, etc. As appropriate, the Committee has been taking into account views and positions of parties concerned, as well as of relevant regional and subregional organizations. These modalities have facilitated the meaningful, effective, open and transparent work of the Committee. Therefore, the members of the Security Council intend to continue using such modalities in the future.

As a result of the work of the Committee over the past almost 20 months and following careful consideration, the members of the Security Council have agreed on the following measures:

1. Following agreement among Council members, the members of the Council would like to receive, in the appropriate mandate review mechanism, update briefings from the Secretariat, if necessary, possibly in June of every calendar year, on mandates older than five years and not subject to a periodic renewal;

2. Following careful review of the Mandate Registry created by the Secretariat in 2005, the members of the Council note that the Council has concluded its consideration of the mandates under the following agenda items:

- “The situation in Angola”; United Nations Office in Angola mandate completed on 15 August 2002; relevant Security Council subsidiary body dissolved on 9 December 2002
- “The situation in Croatia”; United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka mandate completed on 15 December 2002
- “Letters dated 20 and 23 December 1991 from France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America (S/23306, S/23307, S/23308, S/23309 and S/23317); Letter dated 15 August 2003 from the Chargé d’affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2003/818); Letter dated 15 August 2003 from the Permanent Representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2003/819); Voting on draft resolution S/2003/824”, mandate closed by Security Council resolution 1506 (2003)

3. The members of the Council take note of the position of the Secretary-General, in the light of the most recent developments and circumstances, at present not to renew the following mandates:

- Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Ethiopia and Eritrea (appointment was effective until 31 August 2005)
- Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Africa based in Geneva (appointment was effective until 31 December 2006)
- Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region of Africa (appointment was effective until 31 March 2007)

4. Consistent with paragraph 12 of the note by the President of the Security Council dated 19 July 2006 (S/2006/507) and after receiving briefings and recommendations from the Secretariat, the members of the Security Council intend to continue addressing the issue of adequate reporting intervals for regular reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council covering particular mandates, and intend to maintain regular interaction with the Secretariat in this important area. The members of the Council appreciate the input received so far from the Secretariat and encourage the Secretariat to continue updating the Council, as appropriate. Thus far, the Committee has considered, in particular, reporting intervals for the following situations on its agenda: Burundi (United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi), Guinea-Bissau (United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau), Democratic Republic of the Congo (United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo), Liberia (United Nations Mission in Liberia), Sierra Leone (United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone), and Somalia. The recommendations of the Committee on these specific reporting intervals have been reflected in the Council's consideration of the relevant issues on its agenda.

5. The members of the Council appreciate receiving weekly informal briefing notes on field operations prepared by the Secretariat and they reconfirm the high relevance of such notes for the successful discharge of the mandated responsibilities of the Council. As a general rule, these briefing notes should contain the most recent information available and should be provided to Council members in a timely fashion, without needing to cover all United Nations field operations in instances when no important developments have occurred in some of them, or material from some missions is delayed. On a case-by-case basis and as appropriate, the members of the Council would welcome receiving additional informal briefing notes or fact sheets containing the most current information from those field operations where important developments have occurred and facts that may be important for the Security Council's consideration of the relevant situations on its agenda. If appropriate, these additional briefing notes or fact sheets may complement ad hoc briefings requested by the Council consistent with paragraphs 6 and 7 of the note by the President of the Security Council of 19 July 2006 (S/2006/507).

6. The members of the Council intend to continue examining ways and means of streamlining and systematizing their mandating work, including through taking wider regional or subregional approaches to various mandates or groups of mandates, while at the same time taking into account views or positions of the parties concerned, as well as consulting with relevant regional or subregional organizations, as appropriate.

7. The members of the Council also intend to continue their interaction and dialogue with other relevant United Nations organs on the issue of mandates, including in addressing potential areas of overlaps or duplications, as appropriate, particularly as concerns reporting requirements of the Secretary-General.

8. The members of the Council agree that the Security Council Ad Hoc Committee on Mandate Review has reached the main goals for which it was established and therefore it can conclude its work. Even though the Council reviews and renews most of its mandates periodically, based on the recent experience and lessons learned, the mandate review concept remains valid and relevant for the Security Council. It is an ongoing process. Any open, unresolved or newly emerging questions related to mandate review will be further addressed in the Security Council through an appropriate mechanism.

Marcello Spatafora
President of the Security Council
