

Security Council Open Debate on UN Peacekeeping: A Multidimensional Approach, January 21st 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Bamba, Permanent Mission of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations.

It is my honour to take the floor on behalf of the 15 States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). I would like, first, to thank the Pakistani presidency of the Security Council for the month of January for its initiative in organizing today's important debate on peacekeeping operations. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his important statement at the start of today's debate. Finally, ECOWAS welcomes the Council's adoption of resolution 2086 (2013) at the start of today's debate on peacekeeping operations.

As we all know, the Charter of the United Nations confers upon the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Peacekeeping operations are one of the key instruments used to that end, although they are not specifically mentioned in the Charter. Moreover, with the changing nature of conflict, from inter-State to intra-State, peacekeeping missions have had to adapt to that change, which increasingly places the protection of civilians at the heart of their mandates. They are dangerous missions, which have cost the lives of peacekeepers, in particular in Côte d'Ivoire. We take this opportunity to hail the memory of fallen peacekeepers who have died in the line of duty.

In addition, we must acknowledge the appearance of new non-State actors, radical terrorist groups and their transborder criminal networks that threaten the stability of States, particularly in West Africa and the Sahel. In other words, we are talking about the complex and changing character of crisis situations and conflicts that threaten regional and international peace and security, as is the case in Mali right now. In the face of such threats, the international community, in particular the Security Council, must provide appropriate responses.

When it comes to conflict management in West Africa, ECOWAS can boast of considerable experience forged over more than 20 years of engagement in the settlement of crisis situations, in particular in Liberia in 1990, in Sierra Leone in 1997, in Guinea-Bissau in 1998 and 2012, in Côte d'Ivoire in 2002, and today in Mali. The ECOWAS Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security in the subregion enables the immediate deployment of the ECOWAS Standby Force in the case of crises, following a decision of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council, and above all with the consent of the legal authorities of the country concerned.

Those two conditions were satisfied in the case of the Mali crisis. However, mindful of supporting its action in Mali on a robust international legitimate basis, ECOWAS requested the prior authorization of the

African Union and the United Nations Security Council before any deployment took place. Resolution 2085 (2012), adopted by the Security Council on 20 December 2012 to authorize the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), was obtained at the end of lengthy negotiations that reflected the full complexity of peacekeeping mandates.

But the recent offensive by terrorist groups in the south of Mali, which provoked the decisive and beneficial reaction of France in response to a request by Mali's legal authorities, as well as the deadly hostage-taking situation at the natural gas facility in Algeria by a radical terrorist group, means that the United Nations has to attempt to seriously adapt its capacity to respond more effectively to those

types of crises. In that respect, there is a need to further explore the possibilities offered by the normative framework for peacekeeping operations, in particular in the timely articulation of the provisions of Chapters VI, VII and VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

In that respect, the analysis (see S/PV.6702) conducted on 12 January 2012 during the high-level Security Council debate organized by the South African presidency on the crucial cooperation in the context of Chapter VIII of the Charter between the United Nations and regional organizations, including the African Union and ECOWAS, in the prevention, management and resolution of crises in regional theatres, needs, in our view, to be deepened.

It is often said that the job of the United Nations is not to wage war; that is true, and we agree. But in the light of the large-scale massacres of civilians, mass atrocities and human rights violations, in the light of the attempts by radical terrorist groups and transnational criminal networks to destabilize sovereign States, is the United Nations to stand idly by and passively watch as crisis situations and violence develop? The experience of recent events in Mali leads us to hope that, when the situation requires it, the Security Council will formulate more robust mandates for the imposition of peace, which would subsequently evolve into peacekeeping mandates and, subsequent to that, peacebuilding mandates.

ECOWAS believes that a multidimensional approach to peacekeeping operations is a positive development. Their scope is broad and comprehensive. Their goals are, inter alia, to restore public order and security, allow for the provision of humanitarian assistance, protect and promote human rights, ensure the protection of civilians in situations of danger, as well as of women and children, taking into account, in particular, the situation of child soldiers, support the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, assist in and facilitate electoral processes, support security sector and justice reform, and help to restore administration, the economic sector and the rule of law.

Peacekeepers therefore play a key role in the stability of all regions of the African continent. They need to have clear and viable mandates and the political support of all members of the Security Council and the international community. They must have human, material and financial resources at a predictable and sufficient level so that those operations can be successful.

We know that the military spending of the 15 biggest countries of the world in 2010 alone represents the sum of \$1.6 trillion, while the total cumulative spending of all peacekeeping operations from the first one in 1948 to 2010 was only \$109 billion, or 23 times less. Recent events involving the actions of terrorists demonstrate the global nature of the threat of terrorism as it affects all citizens of all the countries of the world. That reality cannot be ignored, and therefore requires enhanced international solidarity to strengthen the United Nations international collective security system.

In conclusion, in the light of what I have referred to, I would like to echo what was just said on the financing of AFISMA and to reiterate the formal request made on Saturday, 19 January, by President Alassane Ouattara, Chairman of ECOWAS, at the ECOWAS extraordinary summit on Mali, held in Abidjan. He called on the Secretary-General and the Security Council to quickly adopt the logistical package financed by the United Nations and to establish a special trust fund to ensure that the actions of AFISMA are effective.