



Security Council

Fifty-second Year

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nd Meeting

Thursday, 18 December 1997, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Naranjo Villalobos	(Costa Rica)
<i>Members:</i>	Chile	Mr. Somavía
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Cabral
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Mr. Dahlgren
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Rosenstock

Agenda

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/1997/966)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/1997/966)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Norway, Pakistan, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Sacirbey (Bosnia and Herzegovina) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Fowler (Canada), Mr. Šimonović (Croatia), Mr. Eitel (Germany), Mr. Erdős (Hungary), Mr. Fulci (Italy), Mr. Wolzfeld (Luxembourg), Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia), Mr. Biørn Lian (Norway), Mr. Kamal (Pakistan), Mr. Türk (Slovenia), Mr. Çelem (Turkey) and Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), document S/1997/966.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1997/989, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1997/975, which contains the text of a letter dated 12 December 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting a letter dated 10 December 1997 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General, enclosing the eleventh monthly report on Stabilization Force operations.

Members of the Council have received photocopies of a letter dated 16 December 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Conclusion of the Peace Implementation Conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina, held in Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/1997/979.

Mr. Somavía (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to express the great satisfaction I feel at seeing you, Mr. Fernando Naranjo Villalobos, presiding over the Security Council on behalf of your country, Costa Rica. Chile being a friend of Costa Rica, it is a great pleasure for me to sit with you at this table.

As we begin the third year of the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, we can see that significant progress has been made. The latest reports of the High Representative, like those of the Secretary-General, provide information about the advances achieved without overlooking the numerous and pressing challenges we still face, primarily in the sphere of the civilian aspects of the Agreement.

Chile is completing a two-year period as an elected member of the Security Council. During this time, we have emphasized the Council's humanitarian responsibilities. We have emphasized the necessity of directing sanctions against political and military leaders, not against innocent people, and of ensuring respect for humanitarian organizations and workers and facilitating their access to this body. We have also stressed the need to respect international humanitarian law and to seek truth and justice when they are violated.

Since the Dayton Peace Agreement, the analysis of the issue in the Council has focused primarily on the normative plane, as concerns the implementation of the

Peace Agreement and its annexes. We have evaluated the application of rules. From that perspective, the focus has been the unity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with its two Entities and its three peoples.

On this occasion, I should like once again to bring to this table a human perspective, a sensitivity to what is happening to people. We would like to focus on another plane: the perspective of the men and women who live behind that collection of rules that we refer to as international agreements — those who are in the end the objects of rules that sometimes seem to them abstract and impersonal.

I should like to focus my statement on the question that is in the minds of many people: what is going to happen in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the day when the troops of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) withdraw? Today there are more than 35,000 such troops. To what extent is the peace process self-sustaining?

How deeply has the Peace Agreement penetrated into the hearts of the men and women of Bosnia and Herzegovina? How deeply rooted is the ideal of reconciliation, which is mentioned in the preamble of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina itself? In short, can there truly be reconciliation if peace depends on an international military presence?

I raise these questions because in the Security Council we are not accustomed to concerning ourselves greatly with the personal dimensions of the reconciliation process. We all know that the peace declared in the documents is not the same thing as peace in people's hearts. We are know that even the most successful implementation of political understandings that bring an end to a conflict does not erase the mistrust, doubts and resentment over atrocities committed during the fighting.

In our judgment, a true peace cannot be based only on a military presence and the mere implementation of political and legal instruments. The emphasis must be on achieving reconciliation, which is a process and the result of an internal transformation. Only the moral force of reconciliation will bring peace to the hearts of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Unfortunately, the traditional instruments of diplomacy are inadequate to the task of tackling this problem. That is perhaps why we do not speak very much about this subject in the Security Council. However, I believe that the United Nations as a whole — not just the Security Council —

must be capable of helping with specific programmes and projects to stimulate and promote national reconciliation in this type of conflict.

In this regard, civil society and the local authorities may have some lessons to teach national Governments. There have been many experiences in many countries of conflict resolution at the local level between people on a given street, in a given community, in a given workplace, to overcome racial, religious, gender or other kinds of tensions. These experiences are far from the diplomatic sphere, but they may be closer to the real life of the people, in this case of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I should like to take this opportunity to officially request the Secretary-General to place the subject of reconciliation in conflict situations on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination of the United Nations organs, over which he presides. The idea would be to advance an integrated treatment of this subject system-wide and to bring about proposals for actions by the corresponding intergovernmental organs.

In speaking of national reconciliation, we are obliged to call for a significant degree of responsibility on the part of political and military leaders.

When Serbians, Bosnians and Croats lived peacefully on the same streets, in the same neighbourhoods, in the same cities, what need was there to poison their lives with messages of hatred and confrontation as was done? Naturally there were historical problems, memories of past conflicts, and certainly discrimination in the here and now. No one denies the problems that existed.

But what leader in his right mind can believe that future peace and stability can be based on killing innocent civilians, the use of rape as a tool of war, massive expulsions of people and total disregard for human rights?

We must recognize that it is the leaders who have, to a great extent, brought the peoples of these three countries of the former Yugoslavia into conflict, and these leaders constitute — not always, but very often — an obstacle to reconciliation. One aspect of this, of course, is that we cannot forget those leaders who are responsible for war crimes and whose individual responsibility cannot be confused with that of the people to which they belong.

It is extremely difficult to hope to see love and mutual understanding in a society that has gone through the fratricidal struggle that Bosnia and Herzegovina has experienced. But such change can happen, and it must come from the power of the heart, from men and women who see the fulfilment of the peace process as a search for a higher goal for them as human beings.

Throughout our time in the Security Council, Chile has sought to untangle the ethical dimension present in each conflict as a way of contributing to the conflict's solution. Despite the obstacles, and we realize how great they are, we must have faith that ethical values can bring about important changes. Individuals have the capacity to raise themselves above their society's conditioning factors and to transform the lives of their communities. In individual change and personal action lies the origin of the true transformation of a society.

However, just as genuine forgiveness is necessary to reconciliation, the latter cannot be achieved in a society where justice is not practised. Reconciliation is not and cannot be a synonym for forgetting. I come from a country which, in other circumstances, had to meet the difficult challenge of reconciliation. Today we are beginning in my society to enjoy the fruits of that effort, having travelled a road fraught with difficulties and many tragedies.

The United Nations and the Security Council can do more to encourage those people in Bosnian civil society, in community affairs, in the schools and in the workplaces who have the inner strength to break the bonds of the present and are prepared to assume the costs involved in the search for reconciliation.

We all know that those who dare to forsake the "official culture" always run risks in any society. That is even more difficult, however, in a society in conflict, like that of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Intimidating demagoguery is unleashed against them, because those who believe in violence as a source of power deeply fear those who dare to act as sane and sensible human beings, rejecting violence and hatred in their own lives. An example of this are the media — radio, television and newspapers — in which we still see the desire to shape public opinion by discounting one's opponents and perpetuating the spirit of conflict.

I have focused on only one aspect of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina because many of us are convinced that that region is symbolic in the context of this issue and that, if the challenge of national reconciliation is met with success, it will impart very important lessons to other

peoples in other situations brought to this Council's attention. We trust that this will prove possible.

I wish to conclude my statement by referring to the ideal of change embodied by one of the greatest figures ever produced by the United Nations: Dag Hammarskjöld, who gave his life for the sake of an ideal of change. It is incumbent on us today to follow his legacy: his faith in political, economic and social change through conviction and the transforming power of the spirit, and not only as an ethical dimension of the way he lived life. As he told us in his extraordinary book *Markings*, in our times the road to sainthood necessarily leads through the world of action.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Chile for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Owada (Japan): Before I address the item before the Security Council this afternoon, permit me to offer my heartfelt welcome and deep respect to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, Mr. Fernando Naranjo Villalobos. In the name of the delegation of Japan, and also as a personal friend of yours, Sir, I wish to say how happy I am to see you preside over us in the chair of the presidency of this Council today.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is about to enter the third year of the implementation of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement and the last phase of the consolidation period. During the past two years, the United Nations presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been doing an excellent job in promoting the peace process. I would like especially to stress the significant role played by the International Police Task Force (IPTF). The basic tasks of the IPTF, such as monitoring the activities of the local police forces, restructuring and training them, promoting freedom of movement and investigating human rights abuse cases, are essential to the building of a multiethnic, multicultural and democratic society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. My delegation heartily applauds the efforts and dedication of all the unarmed men and women who are serving with the IPTF under very difficult, and quite frequently dangerous, circumstances in post-war Bosnia.

Indeed, the role of the IPTF is a key factor in the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement. My delegation therefore fully supports the draft resolution which is currently under consideration by the Security Council and which purports to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and

Herzegovina, including the IPTF. In this conjunction, my delegation would like to stress the continued importance of the security arrangements currently provided by the multinational Stabilization Force for the activities of the IPTF.

Taking this opportunity, I should like to mention that the Government of Japan welcomes the announcement made today by President Clinton of the United States that the United States will in principle take part in an international military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina beyond June 1998.

I must emphasize that the United Nations presence is making important contributions in other areas as well, such as human rights monitoring, demining and assisting the smooth conduct of elections. And it is difficult to find words that can adequately express the appreciation we have for the valuable work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in promoting the return of refugees and displaced persons. The Government of Japan fully supports the Open City initiative set out by the UNHCR.

Japan has made significant contributions to the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Within this year alone, Japan has pledged over \$190 million in the fields of economic reconstruction, humanitarian and refugee assistance, elections and other peace implementation activities. It also dispatched a substantial number of supervisors and monitors to the municipal elections held under the supervision of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in September this year and has also provided long-term advisers to the High Representative. Japan is doing so in the conviction that genuine peace and reconciliation in Bosnia should certainly be achievable and that the Peace Agreement should provide the only path towards that end.

Regrettably, however, we cannot but recognize that progress in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially in its civilian aspects, has not kept pace with the expectations of the international community. Bosnia and Herzegovina is still without even a common flag, a common symbol, a common currency and a common passport. In this regard, the international community should not tolerate an attempt by any of the parties to dominate the central authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina or to undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. Japan urges all the parties of Bosnia and Herzegovina to make maximum efforts to fulfil the obligations set out in the conclusions of the Peace

Implementation Conference held in Bonn on 9 and 10 of this month so that the peace process may be substantially expedited.

Japan is the host country of the Winter Olympic Games in February next year. The Government and people of Japan sincerely hope that a unified Bosnian team, comprising athletes from both entities and representing all the ethnic groups, will come to Nagano under a common flag and a common anthem to receive the wholehearted welcome of the international community. We call upon the parties to make every effort to achieve this goal and to revive the spirit of harmony that prevailed at the Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo in 1984.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Japan for his kind words addressed to me.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Costa Rica.

Allow me to express my country's satisfaction upon exercising the presidency of this principal organ of the United Nations. This constitutes an honour and a great responsibility for Costa Rica.

Last 14 December marked the second anniversary of the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Strict compliance with that Agreement has been the essential basis for the reconstruction and pacification of Bosnia. That Agreement is the only possible way to bring about true and just peace for all the inhabitants. The fratricidal war and indiscriminate genocide that afflicted that nation have been overcome thanks to cooperation and the implementation of the Agreement, making it possible to restore peace, separate the combatants and protect innocent civilians from criminal attacks motivated by fanatical nationalism. For this reason, the commemoration of this second anniversary is a propitious time for the Security Council to take stock of the present situation in the light of the implementation process of the peace agreements and to identify those priority areas of the implementation on which the national parties and the international community should focus their attention.

My delegation is pleased to recognize the progress achieved on the road to peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are pleased to see the growing climate of safety, which constitutes an indispensable prerequisite for

reconciliation. Likewise, we are gratified at the growing climate of tolerance, democracy, freedom and economic progress, which are indispensable for the country's reconstruction. We would especially like to emphasize the advances made in recent months with regard to national public instruments in connection with currency, travel documents and diplomatic representation, in which the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Carlos Westendorp, has played a decisive role.

Despite these achievements, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina still presents serious problems that must be overcome. The various authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina should show a firm and clear commitment to build up the governmental and administrative structures that are necessary and indispensable to guarantee democracy, respect for human rights, reform of the police force and the return of refugees and displaced persons. In this regard, those authorities should fulfil to the letter the commitments they entered into two years ago.

My delegation attaches the greatest importance to the question of respect for human rights. Mechanisms should be created and implemented to ensure that all persons living in the country enjoy fundamental rights. We are similarly concerned about the tragic situation of refugees and persons displaced by the conflict who are prevented from returning to their homes because neither the authorities of the Federation nor those of the Republika Srpska have taken the necessary legal measures to allow their return.

Likewise, Costa Rica considers that the authorities of the various entities, and in particular those of the Republika Srpska, should make every possible effort to promote tolerance, understanding and reconciliation among the various ethnic, religious and cultural groups living in their territories. In this regard, it is essential that they redouble their efforts to educate the population about the basic principles of tolerance and national reconciliation. My delegation cannot fail to mention the importance of international cooperation aimed at creating an educational programme that will inculcate those principles in the people.

A fundamental aspect of the whole process of pacification and national reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the question of combating impunity. The situation of missing persons and the carrying out of exhumations is a source of concern. The suffering of the relatives of victims because of uncertainty and because of the impunity of criminals should be the subject of the

greatest attention. My delegation acknowledges the efforts made in this regard by the Office of the High Representative and the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991. Nevertheless, it is a source of deep concern that the parties to the General Framework Agreement and some States are not fulfilling their international obligations to cooperate unconditionally with those bodies. My country believes that they should all cooperate with those international bodies without any restrictions, provide them with complete and immediate information and allow them unrestricted access to those places where there are mass graves in order to conduct the necessary exhumations.

My country also considers that the normalization and reconciliation of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be extremely limited until all war criminals are brought to justice. The authorities of the various entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina should bring suspected criminals on their territories to justice. In particular, they should cooperate with the International Tribunal by arresting indictees, facilitating the compiling of evidence and fully obeying the orders of the Tribunal. Impunity must disappear from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My delegation is pleased about the increase in the number of refugees and displaced persons who have returned to their places of origin; but we are concerned that their general situation has not improved significantly. We call particular attention to the fact that some persons have been relocated against their will to places other than their original homes. In addition, we believe that shortcomings in safety, access to personal documents and guarantees for the return of property are obstacles to the return of those refugees and displaced persons. It is essential that the authorities of the various entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina remove those obstacles.

In this context, and particularly with regard to impunity and the need to deepen the process of judicial and political reform, Costa Rica expresses its agreement with the extension of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is an essential step towards full reconciliation, and my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

All this leads us to the question that, in our judgement, should be the focus of this debate. We have taken stock of the situation prevailing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and we can underline significant and

undeniable advances in the difficult task of consolidating pacification and promoting national reconciliation. At the same time, it is clear to us that there continue to be serious and difficult obstacles. This is naturally the responsibility of the national parties, but it also falls to the international community to continue to play an active and leading role in the task of implementing what has been agreed.

We are satisfied at the recent statements of those countries with links to and interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Political commitment is essential, as is maintaining the levels of participation and international assistance in the difficult task of physical and institutional reconstruction. Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be abandoned to the incarnations of the new international economic reality at this crucial stage. The country must ensure its reconstruction with international support after the end of the conflict. Only in that way will we be able to ensure the true sustainability of the peace agreements and guarantee through them the irreversibility of what has been achieved and the country's successful integration into today's world.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Mr. Mahugu (Kenya): My delegation welcomes you, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, to our deliberations and is delighted to see you presiding over our meeting today. Kenya and Costa Rica have enjoyed warm and friendly relations over the years, and I am sure that those ties will continue to grow.

My delegation is encouraged by the progress made so far in the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Lack of commitment and political will had initially been a major obstacle to moving the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina forward. Recently, however, we have witnessed more cooperation from the authorities in the region. This has brought about positive developments in various aspects of the peace process.

The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) has played a crucial role in assisting with the municipal elections held on 13 and 14 September 1997 and with the elections for the Republika Srpska Assembly held on 22 and 23 November 1997. The improved cooperation between the United Nations International Police Task Force and the local police has facilitated the implementation of the checkpoint policy since May 1997. Significant progress has been made in the police

restructuring programme. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that by August the number of checkpoints approved had dropped from over 300 per day to 15. While welcoming this very positive development, we agree with the Secretary-General that the reduction can only be one element of a broader strategy to promote freedom of movement.

It is estimated that some 609,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina are still in asylum countries, which are seeking a durable solution. There is need to continue focusing on efforts to facilitate the return of all refugees and displaced persons to their places of origin in safety and dignity. The harassment of returning refugees and displaced persons is therefore unacceptable. It is even worse when it is done by police officers who should be protecting the returnees. In this regard, my delegation commends the action taken against the Chief and Deputy Chief of Police of Jajce as reported in paragraph 17 of the Secretary-General's report.

The presence of mines is still a serious problem. As pointed out in the United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Bosnia and Herzegovina, reconstruction projects have been delayed, refugees have been unable to return to their homes, and an average of 50 men, women and children have been injured or killed by these indestructible, hidden weapons monthly. In this regard, my delegation supports the efforts of the Mine Action Centre, the European Commission, Norwegian People's Aid, the United Nations Development Programme and other groups in this very critical area.

More often than not, economic reconstruction forms an integral part of the long-term settlement of disputes. Bosnia and Herzegovina is no exception. Economic development is an integral part of any peace process. In this regard, we commend the efforts of the United Nations system and the World Bank in trying to bring about progress in the major sectors of the economy. As the Secretary-General notes in his report, a lot has been achieved, but much also remains to be done. The support of the international community is therefore necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to consolidate the progress made so far.

My delegation welcomes the conclusions of the ministerial meeting of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council, held at Sintra, Portugal, on 30 May 1997, and of the Peace Implementation Conference held at Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997. It is our hope that their recommendations will be taken seriously by the

parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so as to expedite a political settlement of the crisis.

The presence of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been instrumental in achieving the progress we are witnessing today. As pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report, this progress is in its early stages and is still fragile. In this regard, my delegation supports the extension of the mandate of the UNMIBH for a further six months.

My delegation would like to pay tribute to Mr. Kai Eide for his effective leadership during his tenure as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We welcome the appointment of Elizabeth Rehn as his successor. We assure her of Kenya's support as she continues with this important task. We also affirm our full support for the High Representative and his staff as he facilitates the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Kenya for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes you, Sir, as you preside over today's meeting of the Security Council to conduct an open debate on the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Over the past year the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has, on the whole, been stable, and the peace process has been proceeding smoothly. That is a concrete manifestation of the political will and cooperative attitude of the parties concerned in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we welcome it. Because peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been hard-won, it should be doubly cherished and nurtured.

We believe that national reconciliation is the key to a genuine, lasting settlement of the problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina has laid down a basic framework of that purpose, and the parties concerned should implement the Peace Agreement in earnest.

Maintaining stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the fundamental interest of the ethnic communities of that country, and is conducive to peace and stability in the region. We hope that the parties concerned will take account of the fundamental interests of the people, and that

they will set aside their grudges, restore mutual trust, achieve national reconciliation and join in working to achieve development. In that connection, the parties concerned should continue their efforts to resolve outstanding issues to bring about the full functioning of common institutions.

There can be no talk of development without peace and stability, and peace and stability can be better maintained when there is development. At present, Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the phase of consolidating peace. Post-conflict economic reconstruction is a formidable task, and we appeal to the generosity of the international community to assist the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to heal their war wounds and to rebuild their homes.

We support the diplomatic and political efforts of the international community in behalf of the peace process for Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also support the work of the United Nations carried out, in its civilian aspects, in accordance with the provisions of the Peace Agreement. We believe that the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) should principally carry out tasks mandated by the Peace Agreement.

Issues relating to judicial reform and economic matters involve sensitive and complex questions, and involve high stakes. The United Nations should therefore proceed with caution in this respect.

We note that the countries contributing troops to the Stabilization Force are reviewing its future mandate. On the basis of past experience, operations authorized or approved by the Security Council have always been adjusted in response to changes in circumstances. In view of the fact that the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be stable, we hope that the countries contributing troops to the Stabilization Force will report to the Security Council in timely fashion on their thoughts about the future. We would also like to point out that the task of the Stabilization Force, as its name implies, is to maintain stability. We hope that any action taken by the Stabilization Force will be conducive to continued stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

China has always supported the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we have no self-serving designs in that country. We sincerely hope that countries in the former Yugoslavia, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, can live in harmony. We also hope fervently that, with the common efforts of the parties concerned,

Bosnia and Herzegovina can enjoy lasting peace and prosperity.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): I take sincere pleasure in taking part in this meeting of the Security Council under the presidency of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, with which Russia has long had friendly relations that were further developed during a recent visit of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation to your wonderful country, Mr. President.

A few days ago, it was the second anniversary of the Security Council's decision to lay the foundation for the implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina. Looking back and evaluating how far we have come, we note with satisfaction that although there have been some difficulties, the peace process is being implemented.

On the whole, the way the implementation of the Dayton/Paris Agreement has gone can be regarded as positive. Undoubtedly, the continued peace and the establishment of the basis for a unified State are major achievements. We have been able to move ahead in the process of forming pan-Bosnian institutions, and refugees continue to return gradually. Thanks to international assistance, some progress has been made in the economic sphere.

The Bosnian sides, as a whole, are abiding by the commitments they made in the military sphere, have carried out plans for arms reduction and are implementing confidence-building measures. In a word, as was again acknowledged at the recent Bonn Conference of the Peace Implementation Council, there is now no alternative to Dayton.

At the same time, it should be recognized that the pace of implementation of the Peace Agreement does not correspond to the level of international support given. The peace process is not yet irreversible. We see a lack of political will to ensure reconciliation and we have not overcome stereotypical thinking based on confrontation and attempts to secure advantages for one side.

To a great extent, negative trends have been kept in check by the presence of multinational forces that make it

possible to stabilize the situation and intensify efforts in civilian areas of implementation.

In this connection, we once again reaffirm our resolute rejection of attempts at an arbitrary, unilateral interpretation of the mandate of existing international structures, which is leading to a build-up of elements of military force in the arsenal of peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Russia is seriously concerned at the fact that such recidivism is continuing.

Yesterday, near the town of Vitez, sub-units of the Stabilization Force carried out a pre-planned operation to forcibly detain individuals indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. They thereby went beyond the mandate of the Stabilization Force approved by the Security Council, which ruled out such acts of force targeted at individuals.

Russia is surprised and concerned that the High Representative, Ambassador Westendorp, who is ultimately responsible for respect for the civilian aspects of the Agreement, was informed of this arrest only after the fact.

Russia frowns on any unilateral actions that might threaten the lives of the peacekeepers or jeopardize the entire process of a Bosnian settlement, and we do not intend to take responsibility for this. Justice must triumph, but only by legitimate means.

Russia is taking an active part in international efforts to stabilize the situation and in the activities of other international structures in Bosnia, in strict compliance with the provisions of the Peace Agreement and Security Council decisions. We believe that the bulk of the responsibility for the success of the peace process lies with the Bosnians themselves and the authorities they have elected.

At the same time, the situation as it stands requires the continued cooperation of the international community with the Bosnian parties. The United Nations is making a real contribution to the Bosnian settlement. We value highly the concrete work of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) in helping ensure freedom of movement, in supervising the safe return of refugees and displaced persons, in creating safe conditions in which elections can be held and in trying to reform law enforcement bodies in Bosnia. The United Nations Mission is actively involved in confidence-building on the ground and in coordinating the efforts of other United Nations specialized agencies.

An important role is being played by the United Nations Mine Action Centre. We support the further continuation of the activities of the United Nations Mission and of the IPTF in the framework of the current mandate, worked out with the agreement of the Bosnian sides, which is a combination of the relevant provisions of the Peace Agreement and the decisions of international structures on a Bosnian settlement, including the decisions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference.

This approach is reflected in the draft resolution, of which Russia is one of the sponsors.

The Russian Federation, as an active participant in the Bosnian settlement, is firmly convinced that at this current crucial stage of the peace process, all international institutions involved are required, as never before, to monitor closely the situation neutrally and dispassionately and to comply strictly with the spirit and the letter of the Dayton/Paris Agreement. In this way, the successful implementation of a lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bosnia's emergence as a unified, democratic, multi-ethnic and prosperous State can be guaranteed.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for the kind words he addressed to me, and particularly for mentioning the very welcome visit to Costa Rica of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Primakov, some days ago.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Portugal and Costa Rica are both part of the Ibero-American family, and our two countries have been taking advantage of our presence in the Security Council to step up our cooperation. For this reason, it is with great pleasure that I see Mr. Fernando Naranjo Villalobos presiding over this meeting of the Security Council.

(*spoke in English*)

Considerable progress has been made in implementing peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The holding of municipal elections in September and the maintenance of an environment of security culminated a year of combined efforts by the international community to help the Bosnian people establish a long-lasting peace.

But, while there has been progress, much still remains to be done.

The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and the International Police Task Force (IPTF) play a crucial role in the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it is clear that their tasks have been carried out effectively over the course of this last year.

It is a difficult mission and a complex one, which also requires essential input from other international actors, in particular the Stabilization Force (SFOR) led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which provides the security environment necessary for the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

In the final analysis, however, the international community's efforts in Bosnia will not amount to very much if the Bosnian parties themselves are not fully committed to peace and to cooperating fully with the United Nations, SFOR, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other international organizations, as well as with each other.

This is the only way to establish a self-sustaining peace in Bosnia. We urge the parties to make increased efforts to address inadequate progress, including in the following areas: the functioning of common institutions, the protection of human rights, the return of refugees, economic management and cooperation with the International Tribunal. Furthermore, the implementation of the results of the municipal elections must be completed, and serious problems of local administration must be addressed.

We welcome the conclusions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference, which built on the work of previous Peace Implementation Council meetings held in London and Sintra, in setting out very clearly what still needs to be done by the Bosnian parties. Taken with the Peace Agreement, they represent the blueprint for peace in Bosnia. And, as the Peace Implementation Council confirmed in Bonn, there is no alternative to the Peace Agreement. Therefore, the mandate of UNMIBH, and thus of the IPTF, should be extended so that it can continue its important work in the areas of police reform, as well as the other tasks entrusted to it and to the civilian unit of UNMIBH.

Without an adequate security arrangement, however, the work of the United Nations and others in the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement will be compromised. This security arrangement is currently provided by SFOR. But an

adequate security arrangement must be established after the end of SFOR's mandate in order to ensure the continuity of the international community's efforts in Bosnia.

Portugal has over 60 personnel serving with the IPTF and over 300 serving with SFOR. We believe very strongly in the need for adequate security.

The United Nations, in supporting the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement, also cooperates with the OSCE and with the High Representative. Their work, and that of others, is crucial to the process of consolidating peace in Bosnia. We pay tribute to the High Representative, Mr. Carlos Westendorp, as well as to United Nations and other international personnel who are working hard to help bring lasting peace to Bosnia, often in dangerous, if not fatal, circumstances. Portugal regrets the loss of life in the helicopter crash of 17 September 1997.

The efforts of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been significant, and we must not forget that, not too long ago, there was open fighting in Bosnia, and civilian populations were subjected to daily bombardments.

The time for the withdrawal of the international community has not yet come. For now, the international community must remain in Bosnia and Herzegovina to help consolidate peace. This will permit the intensification of the process of economic reconstruction and development. It is, above all, essential to ensure the true reconciliation of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the rule of law will replace the rule of war.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Portugal for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Matuszewski (Poland): Let me begin by saying how pleased my delegation is to see you, Sir, presiding over today's meeting of the Security Council.

In the light of Poland's alignment with a statement to be made by the Ambassador of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union and associated countries, my statement is intended to highlight some points which are of particular significance for my country.

Poland, like other members of the international community, attaches great importance to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With the signing of the Peace

Agreement, this friendly country has embarked upon a difficult journey towards peace and stability based on the harmonious coexistence of all component parts of its multi-ethnic society. The very future of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent country and the prospects for sustainable peace in the whole region hinge on how smooth and fast this journey is.

The progress that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made since the conclusion of the conference in Dayton, Ohio, is significant. It constitutes yet further evidence of the political far-sightedness of the architects of this complex and unique construction known as the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, indeed, does credit to the international community's multidimensional support for a peaceful and prosperous Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Having participated in the Peace Implementation Conference held recently in Bonn, Poland fully identifies itself with the Conference's assessments and conclusions. We join other members in appealing to the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to fulfil what they have repeatedly declared themselves to be committed to: to make peace in their country and to make its entities self-sustainable. To achieve this, further progress is necessary in building functioning governmental structures, to advance the process of democratization, to institute adequate protection of human rights, to reform the law enforcement institutions and the judiciary system, to create necessary conditions for the successful completion of the return of refugees and displaced persons and to cure the economy of its many diseases.

Let me focus on two issues which are, in the view of my delegation, of particular importance for the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, as a matter of fact, for the future of the whole region. The first is the problem of interested countries' cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. We regret to have to note that there are still those who seem to take lightly their obligations under the terms of the Peace Agreement and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. In our view, progress in the administration of justice is essential for the prospects of national reconciliation, peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the whole region. We join others in calling upon the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure that those indicted are tried as stipulated in the decisions of the Security Council.

The second issue that I would like to briefly touch upon is the return of the refugees and displaced persons. By the number of those who have decided to return to their original domiciles one may, in fact, measure quite accurately the progress made in any other part of the process of the normalization of the country's political, social and economic life. We understand very well the complexity of this whole problem, but at the same time we believe that more efforts will have to be made, and they should be better focused in order to achieve a genuine breakthrough in this area.

My delegation is of the opinion that the International Police Task Force (IPTF) has played an extremely important role in creating conditions conducive to a secure and durable peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We welcome the progress made in other aspects of IPTF activities, including assistance in restructuring and training the local police, as well as in promoting model democratic standards among the country's police force. As the Secretary-General pointed out in his latest report, however, much remains to be done, and the further IPTF presence is in our view indispensable. It is important, however, that IPTF monitors continue to be covered by adequate security arrangements, which at present can be secured only by a credible international military force.

The magnitude of the task in Bosnia and Herzegovina warrants a great deal of organization and coordination on the part of the international actors present in the country. We believe that their achievements deserve our deep appreciation. Today's debate and the beginning of a new phase of the implementation of the Peace Agreement coincide with the final preparations for Poland's assuming the post of Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for the year 1998. We stand ready to cooperate with all our partners in order to assist the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in building a peaceful, prosperous and stable country.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Poland for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Dahlgren (Sweden): Mr. President, let me start by saying that it is an honour for me to participate in this debate under your distinguished presidency.

Expectations were high when the Dayton Peace Agreement was reached two years ago. Here and there, they might have been too high, which has caused frustration and impatience in many quarters. Against this background, it is

important not to lose sight of what has actually been achieved.

After the success of military implementation, we have witnessed the establishment of a collective presidency and a Council of Ministers. We have seen increased freedom of movement, economic revival in certain areas and progress in the field of arms control and confidence- and security-building measures. The media situation has improved. Three major elections have been held — parliamentary in September 1996, local elections in September 1997 and, most recently, special elections in the Republika Srpska. In phases, the election processes have increased the possibilities of advancing the civilian implementation of the peace accords. Of particular importance is also the recent increase in the number of indicted held in custody by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

Although far from sufficient, recent developments have at least opened the perspective of a viable future for hundreds of thousands of individuals, and paved the way for further progress. In Bosnia and Herzegovina today, islands of normality do exist, both in political and civic life.

This progress is mainly due to the improved coordination of the international community's efforts, with guidance from the High Representative, the Contact Group, the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council and the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As regards the United Nations Mission, I want to pay a special tribute to Mr. Kai Eide, under whose skilful leadership the Mission has effectively carried out its mandate. I would particularly like to highlight its successful programmes for reform and restructuring of the local police, both in the Federation and more recently in Republika Srpska. The close cooperation and efficient distribution of responsibilities between the International Police Task Force (IPTF) and the Stabilization Force (SFOR) should also be mentioned. By extending the mandate of the United Nations Mission, including the IPTF, the Security Council will send a clear signal of its continued commitment to peace implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

When looking at the progress in peace implementation, due respect should also be given, of course, to the thousands of initiatives and decisions taken by individuals and non-governmental organizations in

Bosnia and Herzegovina. Together, they have demonstrated that there does indeed still exist a Bosnian identity, transcending ethnic lines.

Unfortunately, the contribution to the process by the leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina has so far not been convincing. It is disappointing that many of the key issues are still unresolved, mainly because the political leaders stick to old nationalistic approaches.

From the very outset of the Dayton Peace Agreement, Sweden has stressed the importance of having a long-term perspective of its implementation. After so many months of suffering and destruction, it does take time to rebuild confidence and acceptance among ethnic groups to live together again.

Although that long-term perspective cannot at all times be expressed in binding resolutions, Sweden is satisfied that, in practice, the international community increasingly acts with this perspective in mind. The determination that was expressed through the Bonn declaration last week is a clear indication of this. Among the tasks ahead is to ensure that the elections in September 1998 will be free and fair. The issues of freedom of movement and functioning nationwide communications have to be moved forward. In this connection, continued demining activities and removal of illegal checkpoints are of major importance.

Like the High Representative, Sweden believes that efforts in 1998 should be focused on free media and on a democratically controlled police. It is also essential to enable refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes, including those in so-called minority areas. The success of refugee return during 1998 will be crucial for the whole reconciliation process. Of particular importance is the call, at Bonn, for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to introduce a regional approach for refugee return, covering Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as well. In this context, we noted with satisfaction the declaration in Geneva yesterday by the representative of the Republika Srpska that

“all spontaneous minority returns from asylum countries as well as from the Federation are supported”.

I am convinced that when this is put into practice it will trigger similar movements elsewhere in the region.

The setting up of functioning common institutions as well as the adoption and implementation of key pieces of

legislation are already overdue. These matters need to be addressed fully and without further delay.

Last, but certainly not least, the indicted war criminals have to be brought to the Tribunal in The Hague. It is increasingly disturbing that some of them are allowed to continue to exercise decisive control over political life in Pale.

The time has not yet come to relax the international involvement in securing the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. My country is committed to continuing its full support for the peace process in Bosnia and in the region at large. We remain convinced, however, that the success of all our efforts in the civilian implementation, including through the IPTF, is contingent upon the continued existence of a credible international military force in Bosnia. Sweden is prepared to continue to contribute to such a force after SFOR, provided that it is still United Nations-mandated, led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and with United States participation on the ground. In this context, we warmly welcome the statement made today by the President of the United States, Mr. William Clinton.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Sweden for the kind words he addressed to me.

Sir John Weston (United Kingdom): First of all, let me join others in extending to you personally, Mr. President, a welcome here this afternoon.

Before beginning my prepared statement I should like on behalf of the British Government to welcome the latest action by the Stabilization Force (SFOR), acting under authority contained in the relevant Security Council resolutions, to detain two Bosnian Croats indicted for war crimes. We congratulate SFOR troops on a brave and successful operation. Other war crimes indictees still at large are hereby put on notice that they too remain accountable. They should surrender themselves to the International Criminal Tribunal without delay. And all the parties to the Peace Agreement should comply fully with their commitment to transfer those indicted for war crimes to The Hague. Justice is indispensable for true peace and reconciliation in Bosnia. Last night's action by SFOR underscores this.

The Bonn Peace Implementation Council set an accelerated agenda for civilian implementation for next year. It reaffirmed that the only way forward is a unified

State of Bosnia and Herzegovina with two multi-ethnic entities, sovereign and secure within its existing borders.

The United Kingdom is determined to put its whole weight behind the peace process. We strongly support the High Representative's intention to use his full authority under Dayton to drive implementation forward. Bonn reaffirmed the full backing of the international community for his efforts.

Our goal, like that of all the international community, is a democratic and prosperous Bosnia taking its place as a modern nation in Europe. The international community is putting enormous effort into this, and members of the United Nations and other international organizations engaged in Bosnia, especially Carlos Westendorp and Kai Eide and their teams, deserve our praise and support for their considerable achievements in the two years since Dayton. The tragic loss of 12 international personnel in a helicopter crash in Bosnia on 17 September bears witness to the courage and commitment of those who are trying to bring peace to this troubled country.

We have kept our side of the bargain. It is now time for Bosnia's leaders to deliver theirs. The Bonn Peace Implementation Conference made this very clear. We expect action from the Bosnian authorities on media freedoms. We expect action to allow refugees and displaced persons to return home and for property laws to be changed so that they are fair. We expect progress on consolidating the central institutions and on introducing good government practices, particularly in the area of transparency in public accounts. We hope that the new Republika Srpska Assembly and Government will meet soon and emphasize that all political institutions throughout Bosnia will be held to internationally accepted standards of democratization and accountability.

And, as I said a moment ago, we expect action from the authorities in Bosnia and its neighbours to surrender those indicted for war crimes to the International Tribunal in The Hague, as they have committed themselves to do.

We also expect the deadlines set at Bonn to be followed. We regret that the parties fell at the first fence by failing to adopt the citizenship law. We welcome the move by the High Representative to have the law applied on an interim basis until passed by the parliamentary Assembly.

The United Kingdom has welcomed the readiness this year to use SFOR directly to support civilian implementation. Continued success in this area will depend

on maintaining a secure environment. Following the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on 16 December, NATO is now examining possible options for a follow-on force to succeed SFOR when the latter's mandate expires in June of next year.

British troops have been on the ground in Bosnia since the beginning of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and remain the largest European contingent. British Ministers have made it clear that they are ready to stay for the foreseeable future if others are.

We warmly welcome therefore President Clinton's commitment in principle to contribute United States troops and United States command to a follow-on force. This will help to ensure the success of a post-SFOR mission and to consolidate SFOR's considerable achievements in advancing civilian implementation. We look forward to the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia, including the International Police Task Force (IPTF). The commitment and professionalism of the IPTF's members is a major force for change in Bosnia. The United Kingdom is a firm supporter of the strengthened role envisaged for them at Bonn, notably in training the Entity police forces so that these can serve their communities in a professional and non-discriminatory way in maintaining the rule of law. The United Kingdom is delighted that a British Deputy Chief Constable, Mr. Richard Monk, has been appointed as the new IPTF Commissioner. We shall give him every support in his important task.

We believe that the extension of the IPTF mandate for six months — on a renewable basis to bring it in line with SFOR's mandate — is strategically coherent while offering the best way of meeting operational requirements. We hope that this extension will be agreed without difficulty.

We all want to see Bosnia regain normality. No one expects it is going to be rebuilt in a day, and the United Kingdom is prepared to stay the course if others do. We have invested over £1 billion so far financially and militarily. I said at the beginning of my remarks that our goal was to see Bosnia participate fully in Europe. But that and the lasting peace which would underpin such a role is not in the international community's gift, however hard we work in Bosnia. Ultimately, it is the action of Bosnia's leaders that will determine how Bosnia meets the twenty-first century. They are accountable to history, to the international community and to their own people.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): Allow me to say how honoured we are today to be holding our proceedings under the presidency of the Foreign Minister of a country that has become a symbol of the quest for peaceful settlement of disputes and implementation of the rule of law.

We are entering the third year of the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina and are also at the mid-point of the period of consolidation.

The consolidation plan adopted last year for a two-year period rested on a new rationale — that of a conditional, contractual approach to the peace process. That approach can be summed up easily: there is no credible alternative to the Peace Agreement, and the responsibility for implementing it falls primarily to the elected authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

A simple comparison with the situation that prevailed only two years ago in Bosnia and Herzegovina fortunately enables us to see that there has been progress. The military side of the Peace Agreement has been largely completed. A considerable effort of reconstruction has been undertaken in the country, and for this we must congratulate the authorities.

The European Union is honoured to be far and away the largest contributor of aid towards the restoration of the economic structures of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, it is to be recalled that continued international assistance is linked to respect by the parties for the obligations in the Agreement. That conditionality must be perceived in a positive light: those who cooperate in good faith in the implementation of the Agreement, whether at the central, local or municipal level, can be assured of our support.

This huge effort, however, cannot lead to a lasting restoration of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina unless necessary reforms are undertaken and the central institutions are able to function in a more satisfactory manner. Respect for the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina and implementation of the physical and political conditions needed for the operation of those institutions at all levels are priorities.

Beyond these difficulties that relate to the functioning of central institutions, progress still needs to be made in many areas — strengthening of democratization, developing of pluralistic media, reform of the police and the judiciary and in the struggle against corruption. France underscores also the importance of improving the situation with regard

to respect for human rights and the return of refugees and displaced persons. To date, of more than 2 million refugees, fewer than 200,000 have been able to go home.

France unequivocally urges that all indicted persons be handed over to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. There again, the primary responsibility for handing over the war criminals being sought falls to the parties. France, which was involved in the creation of the Tribunal from the beginning, France, whose army paid a heavy price in the service of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina — 70 dead, 700 wounded — was deeply shocked by recent statements in the press questioning the conduct of States participating in the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in the implementation of the Tribunal's decisions. As recently confirmed by the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), all of the allies and the countries participating in the Stabilization Force, indeed, share the same resolve to ensure that indicted war criminals are brought to justice. The arrest in central Bosnia of two indicted persons, which has just taken place, is an example. This is a joint effort under a single chain of command and in accordance with identical rules of engagement. The policy followed in this domain is decided by the NATO Council. The French officers present in Bosnia and Herzegovina today, like others, follow those directives set jointly by the allies and strictly apply the rules of engagement laid down by NATO for the apprehension of persons sought by the Tribunal.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina calls for additional efforts by all, especially by the parties. Only one year remains before the completion of the consolidation plan and only a few months before the holding of the next general election. Thus, this is an urgent matter. The Peace Implementation Conference that has just taken place in Bonn clearly indicated the path to be followed.

The High Representative charged with the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreements will continue to play a central role in coordination in this respect. The tireless efforts of Mr. Carl Bildt and those today of Mr. Carlos Westendorp have greatly contributed to the successes achieved in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the end of hostilities. The High Representative may rely in this regard on the constant support of my Government.

The United Nations is also making an important contribution to stabilizing the situation in Bosnia and

Herzegovina and the region through the work of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and, in particular, of the International Police Task Force. France in that regard thanks the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Eide, for his efforts in support of the peace process, and we today assure Ms. Elisabeth Rehn, who is to succeed him, of our full support.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of France for his very kind words about my country.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It gives me great pleasure to preface my statement by welcoming your Excellency, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, as President of this Council. Costa Rica is a State that has constantly made constructive contributions in support of the edifice of world peace.

The Security Council meets today to discuss and evaluate the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the framework of the Council's discharge of its primary responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. This responsibility extends to include following up on the implementation of all peace agreements in all conflict areas with a view to ensuring that no setbacks occur in such areas and also to monitor the effective and balanced implementation of the provisions of these agreements in order to ensure the interests of all concerned parties in achieving security, stability and peace.

Our general debate today assumes a special importance in view of the fact that it is being held in positive circumstances of attaining many achievements in the implementation of the Dayton Agreement. Foremost among these are probably the presidential elections, followed by the municipal elections and other elections of legislative bodies. All these are indications that the implementation of the Dayton Agreement is proceeding in the right direction in some fields.

However, a thorough analysis of the balance of the implementation of the provisions of the Peace Agreement makes it clear that, despite the progress made, that implementation, in some fields, continues to be lagging to a degree which causes concern, indeed fear, that the entire Peace Agreement might collapse.

It is noteworthy that the progress made recently in implementation of the Agreement is closely linked to the efforts made to deal with and settle the question of war crimes. Despite the difficulty of dealing with this problem, the fact that the Stabilization Force (SFOR) on 10 July 1997 did apprehend one of the indicted war criminals, and the fact that yesterday evening it also apprehended two Croatian war criminals, has proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that SFOR is indeed capable of dealing with this question. This is particularly so because out of a total of 78 indictees, only 20 have been apprehended: 14 Croats, three Bosnians and three Serbs. Only two of them have been tried and sentenced. Five more are currently being tried in two different cases. It is also noteworthy here that the Bosnians were the only party that extradited all the indictees under their jurisdiction — all three of them — and that Croatia has displayed a great deal of good faith. The Republika Srpska is the only party that, until now, refuses to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal. Out of 57 Serbian indictees, only three have been apprehended, which means that a good number continues to be at large.

A thorough analysis of the statistics I have just mentioned and of the fact that major suspects, including Karadzic and Mladic, continue to be at large and even continue to exert a great deal of political influence, leads us to state that the peace process in Bosnia will not continuously progress without the apprehension of those indictees, and that the reconciliation process will not succeed without their being tried.

The Security Council bears a historic responsibility at this important juncture to mandate SFOR and the force to succeed it in the future to pursue the war criminals and bring them to trial. The Council also has the additional responsibility of providing the Tribunal with the necessary financial support in order to enable it to discharge its tasks with the requisite dispatch and efficiency.

The constitutional crisis that took place in the Republika Srpska caused the international community grave concern. It has proved that the lack of supervision of the implementation of the Peace Agreement and leaving the war criminals at large could lead to more separation rather than unification. The de facto division of that Entity into two parts, one administered from Pale and the other from Banja Luka, is concrete evidence of the results of such a situation, particularly in view of the clear struggle for power to which some war criminals are parties.

In spite all this, the parliamentary election held last November brought a glimmer of hope. It is our hope that it will lead to a rectification of the situation. However, this cannot come about without the full implementation of the results of the elections and in a manner that permits the reunification of that entity. In this regard, the international community must pursue an approach that links economic aid on the one hand and the achievement of the desired political objectives on the other, especially in Republika Srpska.

The implementation of Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement concerning the voluntary, free and safe return of refugees and displaced persons, particularly in minority areas, has become a disappointing and discouraging process. This process makes it clear that the excessive attention accorded to the political aspects of the Dayton Agreement at the expense of the humanitarian and ethnic aspects carries with it an inherent danger that threatens peace entirely in Bosnia.

Of a total of more than 2 million displaced persons at the end of the hostilities, only 381,000 — 171,000 refugees and 210,000 displaced persons — have returned to their homes. Until now, there has not been an opportunity for the rest of the refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes.

Despite the relative success of the open cities plan launched by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a plan that contributes to the delivery of economic aid to the refugees and the internally displaced persons at their current places of residence, and despite the comprehensive plan adopted by the international community for the return of large numbers of refugees, the political obstacles impeding the implementation of these plans remains great. Therefore, the need has become urgent to take decisive measures, the most important of which is the rescission of the ethnically based property laws throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and the organization of a swift return of refugees and displaced persons to their original homes, and not — I emphasize “not” — to any other place that they might be compelled to go to.

Human rights, freedom of movement and freedom of the press throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina — which have assumed increasing importance with the passage of time — must be fully respected and guaranteed.

I turn now to the implementation of the military and regional stability provisions of the Dayton Agreement. The date set for the implementation of the second phase of arms

reduction under the Agreement on Subregional Arms Control was 31 October 1997. However, Republika Srpska continues to refuse to make the deep cuts necessary to comply with the provisions of that Agreement, casting doubt on its military intentions, especially in view of the fact that the Federation’s military capabilities remain far below the maximum established by the Agreement. In this regard, the fears and concerns expressed by Republika Srpska vis-à-vis the equipment and training programme are unjustified if it has the political will to reconcile and avoid military confrontations.

The Security Council therefore bears a special responsibility for the implementation of this part of the Dayton Agreement, not only to prevent the eruption of conflict in this region in the future, but also within the context of exercising its Charter responsibility for the regulation of armaments.

As concerns the formation of the common institutions, Egypt has closely followed the results of the various meetings of the Peace Implementation Council, the most recent of which was in Bonn on 9 and 10 of this month. We would reiterate once again that the triumph of the forces of reunification will depend to a great extent on the creation of the common institutions. It is not logical, for instance, to speak of reunification at a time when there are no direct telephone contacts between the Federation and Republika Srpska; when there is no common currency; when laws of citizenship have yet to be enacted; when there is no economic capacity to create these institutions; and in an environment that does not provide the necessary freedom of movement.

In this framework, the efforts for reconstruction and economic development must be given high priority within the struggle to reunite Bosnia, in the context not only of implementing the Dayton Agreement, but also of the international community’s unrelenting efforts to help Bosnia. The donors honoured their pledge of \$1.8 billion in 1996; they have also pledged \$1.24 billion for 1997. And yet, Republika Srpska’s refusal to attend the annual donors’ conference and to respond to the efforts for integration and unification raises serious questions about the intentions of this entity at this complex stage of the implementation of the Dayton Agreement.

What is currently impeding the reconstruction and development of Bosnia and Herzegovina are considerations of political control over the economy, as well as the lack of a minimum degree of transparency on

economic questions. This is undoubtedly the result of the lack of trust among the various parties. The reconstruction efforts must therefore be linked to the responsiveness of the parties to the political efforts being made. This year's General Assembly resolution on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has sent the correct message by linking economic assistance to the responsiveness of the parties to efforts to achieve a political settlement. It is our hope that this will lead to improved responsiveness to those political efforts.

I have set out Egypt's view of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is shared by all the States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Contact Group on Bosnia and Herzegovina. We deem it extremely important that the role of the Security Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina not be confined to the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite its valiant efforts contributing to the stabilization of the situation, or to the efforts of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) to restructure the local police. All these efforts are clearly reflected in the report before the Council today. We feel that it is imperative that the Security Council set a number of guidelines to address the aforementioned problems in coordination with the Peace Implementation Council in Bosnia. We also deem it important that the Security Council assign a larger role to the Stabilization Force and the force to succeed it in June next year, in order to impose the will of the international community and of the people of Bosnia to create a unified, multiethnic State whose people live together under one roof, enjoying independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized boundaries.

In conclusion, I wish to pay tributes to the efforts made by the High Representative for Bosnia, Mr. Carlos Westendorp, especially in the current circumstances in which he is assuming his tasks. I also wish to commend the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to Bosnia; the Commander of the IPTF; the leaders of SFOR; and all the men and women working in trying circumstances to bolster peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Egypt for his kind words addressed to my country.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): I wish to join previous speakers in welcoming you, Sir, to New York to preside over this important meeting. We pay tribute to you for the consistent efforts your country has been making in the interests of peace.

Looking back over the progress that has been made in the two years since the conclusion of the Dayton Peace Agreement, we can see that, indeed, much has been achieved. Bosnia and Herzegovina is today a very different place than it was in 1995, with far greater stability, far less violence, and the promise of a brighter future. These positive developments are due in large part to the coordinated involvement of a host of international players operating in the region, including the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the High Representative and his staff, the courageous men and women of the Stabilization Force, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations specialized agencies and a range of non-governmental organizations. The Republic of Korea greatly appreciates all their dedicated efforts to advance peace and stability in the war-ravaged country and pays high tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives in that noble process.

In assessing the overall situation, my delegation recalls the High Representative's report in April of this year, which outlined three courses of action in Bosnia to be avoided or prevented: first, the military option; secondly, the option of secession; and thirdly, the option of domination by one ethnic group.

It is encouraging to note that the military option is now neither feasible nor realistic, and that no ethnic group considers it a serious or attractive alternative at this stage. However, there is a risk that some party may once again come to favour this option if the commitment of the international community to peace in Bosnia wanes or is withdrawn entirely.

The option of overt secession, we are pleased to note, also appears to have lost its appeal for all involved. A danger persists, however, of slow creeping secession and we need to continue our vigilance in this regard.

As regards potential dominance by a single ethnic group, we are also pleased to see that common institutions comprising all three major ethnic groups are now in place in Bosnia and that the danger of dominance by one over another has receded. Nonetheless, the current operation of those common institutions reveals that smooth cooperation and coordination among the leaders of the three groups has yet to take shape.

Having said that, the Republic of Korea reiterates its conviction that the implementation of the Peace Agreement is the only way to attain a comprehensive

solution. Under the direction of the Peace Agreement and the guiding principles and conclusions of the Peace Implementation Council's successive meetings, multi-ethnic political and social structures need to be created and economic rehabilitation fostered.

In this context, we wish to highlight six areas in which we believe further and more focused action is clearly warranted.

First, urgent action must be undertaken by the concerned parties to ensure that refugees and displaced persons can safely return to their homes, including to those areas in which they are the minority, and that their property rights are sufficiently protected.

Secondly, all parties must redouble their efforts to cooperate with the International Tribunal with a view to strengthening a sense of justice and the rule of law in their homeland. Peace in Bosnia cannot endure if it is not a just peace. For the sake of the victims in the region, and because of the terrible precedent it would set, war criminals must not be allowed to go unpunished.

Thirdly, full respect for human rights, irrespective of ethnicity, by all parties concerned is an essential prerequisite for the creation of a multi-ethnic, democratic Bosnian State.

Fourthly, common institutions in the central Government must function effectively in order to reintegrate Bosnian society and reconcile people of all ethnicities. The leaders of the respective ethnic groups need to show greater flexibility in taking step-by-step action to that end. At the same time, the results of municipal elections held in September of this year must be fully implemented without delay.

Fifthly, international economic assistance should continue to be linked to the degree of compliance by the various authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the obligations and conditions set out in the Peace Agreement and subsequent relevant international meetings. Economic reconstruction and the political democratic process must go hand in hand.

And, sixthly, it is essential that local police restructuring, which was so capably undertaken by the International Police Task Force (IPTF), be further pursued and that this crucial process be combined with comprehensive judicial reform. The IPTF's recent initiatives

aimed at tackling financial crime and corruption also deserve the support of the international community.

Finally, we believe that, building upon the significant progress that has been achieved thus far, the United Nations and the international community can and should do a good deal more to bring about durable peace and stability, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but throughout the Balkan region. The continuation of a credible international military presence there will be pivotal towards that end. Let us hope that the substantial time and energy we have invested will produce further dividends of peace for its war-weary people.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation would like to thank you, Sir, for being so kind as to preside over this open meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Your presence among us bears witness to the important contribution of your country, Costa Rica, to international affairs. I would like, with your permission, to take this opportunity to underscore the important role of the delegation of Costa Rica in the Security Council and to say how much we have appreciated being able to cooperate with it under the skilful and diligent guidance of Ambassador Fernando Berrocal Soto.

As we approach the Christmas holiday, which is the best time for each and every one of us to renew or consolidate family ties, I would like, on behalf of my delegation, to express our affection for the families of the 12 men and women of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) and the Office of the High Representative who lost their lives in the tragic helicopter accident last 17 September. I wish to extend the heartfelt condolences of my delegation to all those families in their suffering.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has the sad distinction of having numerous conferences and debates focused on its tragic destiny — among them those of the Security Council — aimed at finding a fair and peaceful settlement of the conflict tearing it asunder.

We have seen that the peace process is continuing, but the progress achieved has been very slow, and sometimes even modest. This means that there is a great deal yet to be done. It is obvious that the success of all the activities intended to establish durable peace in Bosnia

and Herzegovina depends essentially on the implementation of the Dayton Agreement, and that however important the role of the international community, it is up to the authorities of that country to work towards the establishment of a lasting peace. It is also up to them to work responsibly towards the implementation of the Agreement into which they freely entered. It is therefore important that all the parties commit themselves with determination to honour their commitments stemming from the Agreement, first and foremost by ensuring the proper functioning of their common institutions.

We are pleased to note today that progress has been achieved in several areas. Nevertheless, as was pointed out by the delegations that preceded us, much remains to be done in order that the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina can live together in complete peace and security.

We note with bitterness that the humanitarian situation in that country remains difficult. The future of a large number of refugees and displaced persons remains uncertain. Those people have the right to return to their places of origin if they so desire, with the assistance of the High Commissioner for Refugees, in accordance with annex 7 of the Dayton Agreement and thanks to the generous assistance of the host countries. In this regard, we commend the efforts being made by United Nations agencies, the European Union, bilateral donors and others, including non-governmental organizations that set up and carry out projects to facilitate their freedom to return if they so desire, to ensure their safety and to improve their future economic prospects.

We take pleasure in noting that the Open City initiative is continuing.

Local communities that have chosen to declare open cities should be encouraged, and should be given financial assistance. On behalf of my delegation, I wish to reaffirm our commitment to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to the enjoyment by the populations of that country of their constitutional rights.

We are concerned by the constant refusal, particularly in the Republika Srpska, to provide services to minorities; we believe that there must be no discrimination against those populations and that they should have access to basic health care. As citizens of their own country, their health should not be subject to political considerations; all those in need should have access to adequate care.

The international community has a role to play in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For its part, the multinational Stabilization Force (SFOR) has played an indispensable role in helping to create an environment that will foster the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement. We welcome the good cooperation between the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF), and the way in which they have coordinated their activities on the ground. We note with satisfaction that UNMIBH is considering improving the structure of the IPTF so that it can better focus its work on other activities — as it has done in the sphere of human rights.

We agree with the Secretary-General's analysis, as contained in his recent report, and we agree with him about the future role of the United Nations. That is why we agree with and support his recommendation to extend the mandate of UNMIBH for 12 months. An effective United Nations presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is still necessary for consolidating peace and the other achievements we have welcomed. In particular, we agree that there must be a reform of the judicial and penal system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that the fight against financial crime must be encouraged. Here again, we think there is a decisive role for UNMIBH; with additional human and financial resources it can proceed to the consolidation of peace and the economic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We welcome the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held at Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997, including the conclusion that there is a need to maintain an international military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina after June 1998. Such a presence is required for the consolidation of peace and the maintenance of the security and stability that Bosnia and Herzegovina so sorely needs. We hope that the conclusions of the recent Bonn Conference will help in accelerating and consolidating the peace process.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Guinea-Bissau for the kind words he addressed to Costa Rica and to Ambassador Berrocal Soto.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Argentina, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to

participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Petrella (Argentina) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on whom I now call.

Mr. Sacirbey (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Thank you, Sir, for honouring the Security Council by presiding over today's debate. Let me express my delegation's confidence in the work of Costa Rica as the presiding member of the Security Council for this month. We are most pleased to have had such good, cordial and businesslike relations with your delegation during this month, and on previous occasions.

In the interests of transparency, I must also thank you, Sir, for another allowance that you made for us, and must admit to something. Frankly, my delegation was neglectful and failed to give me a complete copy of my presentation to the Council, so I had to ask for my presentation to be delayed until this time. I took a look at the Permanent Representative of Chile, who had a very strange look on his face when he realized that he had to speak at a time when he was expecting me to speak. I looked away, of course, because I did not wish to respond to his look of astonishment and, maybe, anger.

But this small difficulty on the part of my delegation may actually have been a blessing in disguise, because it gives me the opportunity to take note in my statement of some of the points raised in the statements of some members of the Council.

Let me take the opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Council for having scheduled today's discussion on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It appears to some that, after having been the subject of so many debates before this body, Bosnia and Herzegovina has strangely fallen off the visible agenda of the Security Council. Some believe this may be because the United Nations has failed in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This brings me to the second point: the United Nations has not failed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, neither

has it yet succeeded. The faults that exist lie with those who could and should have done more themselves, but who left the United Nations with a job that it could never fully and gloriously complete. Under the circumstances, the United Nations could be seen as having been partially successful at best. It was left to be projected as embarrassingly inadequate, with all its flaws revealed.

Still, we would be lacking intellectual and moral perspective if we failed to note the lives that were saved through the efforts of the United Nations and its various agencies and people and, just as relevantly, if we did not recognize the commitment of the individuals involved, particularly the ones who sacrificed their lives in Bosnia.

On the other hand, the sheer fact that over 250,000 Bosnians — over 5 per cent of our population — lost their lives and that 50 per cent of Bosnia's population was displaced and made into refugees, mostly through the campaign of ethnic cleansing, reveals why the efforts of the United Nations cannot be termed a success. Furthermore, the fact that the consequences of ethnic cleansing remain intact and its perpetrators largely remain free is an even greater blemish.

But is the United Nations to blame? Clearly not alone, and certainly not as an institution. More relevantly, however, we must now examine whether the United Nations is part of a solution that is still forthcoming in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the answer is, "Yes". Increasingly, the United Nations is being asked to play an ever-more-prominent role in securing and enhancing the peace in Bosnia. Let me emphasize here that over the last two years peace has borne positive fruit, and we are confident of an improvement in dynamics.

We welcome the extension of the mandate of the multilateral force led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Bosnia and Herzegovina beyond the deadline of the summer of 1998. It will be the linchpin of concerted efforts to secure a real and lasting peace in our country, with all the beneficial consequences for a better life for all the people of Bosnia. Nonetheless, as the last two years have shown and as has been recognized by many of the leaders today, the military aspect of implementation will prove to be rather hollow without a coordinated and revitalized effort on the so-called civilian aspect of implementation.

The Office of the High Representative must receive the necessary support to most assertively implement the High Representative's mandate. Let me refer here to the

words of the Permanent Representative of Japan and take note of his invitation to our athletes. In this context, I would like to point out that at the moment Bosnia and Herzegovina does have a flag and an anthem, but they are not endorsed by all. We recognize that change is forthcoming, and we recognize that we must have a flag that is endorsed by all and an anthem and a passport that are endorsed by all. We encourage the High Representative, if in fact a flag cannot be agreed to, that one be imposed. But we must demand one flag, one anthem, one passport and one currency.

I would also like to take note of the fact that the word “fratricidal” is used around this table. I wish to draw the attention of the Security Council to such a small event as a basketball game played recently in Sarajevo. Bosnia and Herzegovina, the national team, was playing the national team of the Republic of Croatia. On the national basketball team of Bosnia and Herzegovina the best player — the highest scorer — happens to be a Bosnian Serb. We all know it, but we do not talk about it, as a matter of civilized, polite behaviour; we just cheer for him and for the Bosnian team as a whole. When the Bosnian team took the floor, this gentleman, this wonderful basketball player, received the cheers of the entire Sarajevo crowd, regardless of their ethnicity. By coincidence, on the team of the Republic of Croatia there is a gentleman of Bosnian Muslim background. As would be the case with many opponents, he was booed. I apologize to the Republic of Croatia for this incident involving over-zealous sports fans, but it shows that we are not talking here about ethnic and religious hatred. I would also like to make a happy note of the fact that the team of Bosnia and Herzegovina did defeat the team of the Republic of Croatia on that one occasion — I must be a nationalist sometimes.

The various agencies and organs of the United Nations in Bosnia will be decisive in the success of peace. The role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in rolling back the consequences of ethnic cleansing and facilitating the return of refugees from abroad is essential. The International Police Task Force (IPTF) will catalyse concerted efforts to enhance democracy, human rights and respect for the law, as well as freedom of movement and the return of refugees throughout the country. The role of this United Nations institution is determinative. We wholeheartedly support the draft resolution before us.

I am certain that here I will not be able to specifically refer to the whole range of efforts in which the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina is involved, but

I must finally mention what is, perhaps, the most critical: the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, established by the United Nations. At this time, I must take the opportunity to most humbly thank Governments, particularly those of the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, for the commitment and the courage of their troops in recent efforts — one of which actually took place this morning — to bring indicted war criminals to justice. Those Governments seem to be most sensitive to the crucial role that the Tribunal has in securing not only justice, but also reconciliation, implementation of the Dayton/Paris accords and a lasting peace. As someone who was in Dayton, I must also emphasize here that the Dayton/Paris accords, as well as relevant Security Council resolutions and our own Constitution, sanction these efforts.

However, we are concerned by recent reports, widely publicized in the press, which seem to some to indicate a lack of respect, or even disdain, for the Tribunal’s mandate. It is especially disquieting if this disregard comes from some quarters — not from countries in the region who have in the past refused cooperation, but from some officials from those countries around this table who were instrumental in bringing about the Tribunal as well as the Dayton/Paris accords. To refer to the Tribunal as a “show court” is unacceptable.

Let me make certain that we are understood. I have no fear for Judge Louise Arbour. In fact, we may even have some differences with her; I suppose that we frequently do. I am certain that in a court of law this 1.5 metre Prosecutor is a match for any man around this table; she can take care of herself.

We are concerned, however, about the lack of dignity shown to the Tribunal, about the perception of the Tribunal that this promotes and about the political consequences thereof. First, under the accords signed in Paris, the Tribunal is enshrined in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the court of highest authority in our country — it is our court. A lack of respect for this Tribunal has a direct bearing on us and on respect for our country. Secondly, the Tribunal is not a colonial court. It has not been established only to dictate justice and to have access only to a group of subject people, mainly Bosnians, Serbians and Croats. By its mandate, it has jurisdiction over all potential witnesses and suspects related to war crimes and genocide that may have been committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the former Yugoslavia as a whole.

Here I must also emphasize our concern, expressed on so many occasions by the President and Prosecutor of the Tribunal, regarding the large number of States that still have not adopted domestic legislation in line with full cooperation with the Tribunal. Again, I must highlight, we are speaking here of countries not only in our own region but, most incomprehensibly, the democracies of the world.

This brings me to the third point. In view of the lack of cooperation of some countries and parties in the region with the Tribunal, and the excuses offered with respect thereto, what kind of disquieting message — encouragement — is being offered to these parties, to these countries, if there is a lack of respect and commitment shown to the Tribunal by some officials in some democracies? I emphasize “some officials”.

Let me again try to be clear. My statement is not intended to be an indictment of any country. The quality of leadership, courage and commitment is not determined by the flag of the individual involved. While I had a rather low opinion of one military commander who came from that country and who served in Bosnia, it is also a personal opinion that the most courageous and forthright commander who served in Bosnia in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) also came from the United Kingdom. He does deserve to have his name mentioned here: General Rupert Smith. He made peace possible in Bosnia. Frankly, sometimes I am still troubled by how he has been forgotten while other less distinguished past commanders paraded before television cameras and promoted themselves. He never did.

We are also aware of the tremendous courage and commitment exhibited by so many French troops and, in particular, the inordinate sacrifices. Their sacrifices deserve to be recalled here again. We are also thankful for the timely leadership and courage of French leaders at crucial points during the critical stages of the peace process.

While political decisions, for good or bad, may have been made in capitals, it is the individual that exhibited courage or cowardice, morality or shame, legality or illegality on the ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is the individual soldier or officer that witnessed the good and the bad, the acts of compassion as well as acts amounting to crimes and genocide.

The only duty of States now, in this context, is to ensure that full evidence is provided and that the Tribunal has full access to witnesses and culpable individuals.

Finally, I ask United Nations Members to remember that, despite the many contributions their nations have made, in terms of lives and resources — and I repeat that we are sincerely most grateful — it is the Bosnians that paid the highest price, and it is Bosnians of all backgrounds that seek from the Tribunal the greatest asset that civilization can provide: justice.

So, as we approach a new and, hopefully, better turn on the road to a lasting peace in Bosnia, yes, we must underscore that the future is mostly the responsibility of Bosnians, all Bosnians. However, we cannot sit around this table and not take note of the responsibility of all our countries, all members' countries to contribute. This is especially critical in situations in which we all establish multilateral institutions, organs of this United Nations. For the sake of the victims, for the sake of this United Nations, for our common future, we cannot say one thing here around this table, but do something else at home.

Keeping in mind this primary criterion for both integrity and mutual benefit, I am certain that with the assistance of all, and particularly the United Nations, Bosnians will secure lasting peace, with all its benefits.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina for his statement and for his very kind words regarding Costa Rica, and in particular regarding the members of the Permanent Mission of my country here in New York.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kamal (Pakistan): It is my pleasure to address the Council under your presidency, Sir, as you are the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica, a country which shines as a beacon in its commitment to peace and security.

The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have witnessed the most savage and barbaric conflict since the Second World War. They were subjected to diabolic and deleterious genocide and “ethnic cleansing”. Though the war has finally come to an end, the effects of the four-year-long conflict have not yet disappeared. The scar of the bitter past in the minds of the aggrieved community is deep. The healing process is arduous, considering the deep fissures and cleavages caused to the very fabric of society.

Since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords two years ago, important progress has been achieved towards resurrecting the unity and territorial integrity of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but there still remains a lot to be done. The areas where progress has not been satisfactory include the return of all refugees and displaced persons; freedom of movement across the inter-entity boundary lines, and the effective functioning of the common State structure, namely, the Presidency, the Council of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly. While the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina has extended full cooperation in achieving these goals the Serbian entity demonstrated a lack of commitment, seriously hampering international efforts.

In the military field, the Serbs also continue to evade their obligations under the Agreement on Regional Stabilization and the Agreement on Arms Control, which are vital for ensuring regional stability. We must ensure that all parties fulfil their declared reduction liabilities and implementation of other related obligations.

On the issue of criminal proceedings against the perpetrators of genocide, the international community must ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of the Dayton Accords by all parties, particularly the Serbian entity, in apprehending the indicted criminals. The United Nations troops on the ground must also cooperate with the International Tribunal in achieving the ideal of peace with justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this regard, we welcome the role of British and Dutch troops in apprehending some indicted war criminals in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The perpetrators of mass killings must not go unpunished, be it in Bosnia, in Afghanistan or in Kashmir.

During the last two years, the United Nations troops in Bosnia and Herzegovina have contributed enormously in ensuring relative security in the entire region. We support the continued presence of the United Nations forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, providing a secure environment for the implementation of the civilian aspects of the peace plan beyond June 1998.

The International Police Task Force (IPTF) faces enormous opposition from the Bosnian Serbs in reforming the police institution, which is a matter of concern to all of us. We support the efforts of the IPTF in the restructuring and training of the police to operate according to the principles of democratic policing, carry out weapons inspections, promote freedom of movement and prevent financial crime, smuggling and corruption. These efforts will bear fruit if accompanied by a reform of the judicial system, for which we must provide adequate resources and

qualified personnel. In supplementing the efforts of the United Nations in these areas, Pakistan has provided 100 police personnel for the IPTF and has expressed readiness to provide additional police personnel whenever required. We are also implementing a programme for the training of 200 Bosnian military personnel.

My delegation supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the IPTF to pursue the work entrusted to them in accordance with Annex 11 of the Peace Agreement.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm Pakistan's unqualified moral, political and economic support for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our support has always been based on our conviction that no nation should be victimized because of its smaller size and that no peoples should be brutalized because of their ethnic origin. We also believe that no nation and no people should be denied their inherent right to self-determination and their right to wage a legitimate struggle for their liberation.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Pakistan for his kind words about Costa Rica.

The next speaker is the representative of Norway. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Bjørn Lian (Norway): Allow me first of all to thank the Costa Rican presidency for organizing this open debate on Bosnia in the Security Council, and to voice our satisfaction at seeing you, Mr. Foreign Minister, presiding over this important meeting. It is indeed an honour to take the floor under your presidency.

We see today's meeting as a timely occasion for the members of the Council and for other United Nations member countries to take stock of the situation and again demonstrate their commitment to a continued international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would also like to congratulate Ms. Elisabeth Rehn of Finland on her appointment as new Special Representative and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia to succeed Mr. Kai Eide of Norway. We can assure Ms. Rehn of our full cooperation and assistance in fulfilling her mandate.

The international community has invested heavily in the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the Peace Implementation Conference in Bonn last week it was agreed that important progress has been achieved, but also that a lot remains to be done. Norway supports a more persistent approach to ensure that the parties fulfil their commitments and take increased responsibility in the implementation of the Peace Agreement. We welcome the intention of the High Representative to make full use of his mandate in order to push the peace process forward. International involvement and support will still be needed in Bosnia. Norway will remain actively engaged, but we demand at the same time full cooperation from all parties. In our opinion, there is no alternative to the Dayton Agreement and compliance with this Agreement will continue to be a condition for Norwegian aid and assistance to Bosnia.

Norway highly appreciates the important work that the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and the International Police Task Force (IPTF) continue to perform in the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement, including in the areas of police reform, return of refugees, mine clearance and humanitarian and economic assistance.

We therefore fully support the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the UNMIBH/IPTF mandate for a further period that would add up to 12 months unless there were substantial changes in the security arrangements produced by the Stabilization Force (SFOR), and we would welcome a decision by the Security Council to this effect.

Within the framework of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), we have now also started the process of considering post-SFOR options in Bosnia. Norway firmly believes that the stabilizing presence of a NATO-led military follow-on force, authorized by a Security Council mandate, will also be required after June 1998, when the current SFOR mandate expires, in order to consolidate our gains and provide vital support to the civilian agencies involved. Together with our allies and partners, Norway will continue to participate with troops in such a common endeavour.

Continued support from a robust and credible NATO-led military force will not least be crucial to a successful completion of IPTF's efforts to restructure, retrain and reform the local police and judicial system in Bosnia in order to help them handle public security in a manner which is professionally sound, democratic and observant of human and minority rights. Norway doubts whether any

other formula can realistically function more effectively than the SFOR-IPTF cooperation.

There seems, furthermore, to be an emerging agreement that mandating the arming of IPTF personnel to take on law enforcement tasks is not a viable option. Norway remains convinced that the right way to go is, rather, to increase international assistance to IPTF's efforts. For our part, we are about to provide \$400,000 for the support of police academies and the purchase of uniforms in Bosnia, thereby bringing our 1997 contribution to over \$1 million. We also intend to step up our contributions for next year, by providing more IPTF police personnel with special qualifications, including training skills, and by making further financial contributions to the IPTF's police reform efforts.

Norway continues to be concerned about the serious landmine problems in Bosnia. We will therefore also carry on our support of mine clearance efforts, both through the programmes of the Norwegian People's Aid and the activities of the United Nations Mine Action Centre.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to the men and women working for UNMIBH and IPTF, including those who have tragically lost their lives, and to pay the same tribute to those working for other organizations and non-governmental organizations in the service of peace and a better life for the Bosnian peoples.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Norway for his kind words addressed to me.

Several speakers inscribed on my list have not yet taken the floor. In view of the lateness of the hour, with the concurrence of members of the Council I will now suspend the meeting. The meeting is suspended until tomorrow, Friday, 19 December 1997, when it will resume at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting was suspended at 6 p.m.