



Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4472nd meeting

Wednesday, 13 February 2002, 10.30 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Aguilar Zinser	(Mexico)
<i>Members:</i>	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Ngoh Ngoh
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Norway	Mr. Strømmen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Angola.

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Angola

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Angola and Portugal, 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. Chikoti (Angola), took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Georges Chikoti, Vice-Minister for External relations of Angola.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal) took a seat at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Kenzo Oshima, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Oshima to take a seat at the Council table.

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.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Kenzo Oshima, Under-Secretary-

General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. After the briefing, I shall give the floor to the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola, Mr. Georges Chikoti, who will make a presentation. Thereafter, I will open the floor to Council members who wish to comment or ask questions.

I now give the floor to Mr. Oshima.

Mr. Oshima: I wish to thank the Security Council for providing me with this opportunity and in particular to thank you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative to convene a meeting on the humanitarian situation in Angola.

While the world's attention has been focused on the situation in Afghanistan, other emergencies, such as the protracted one in Angola, are badly in need of our attention. Under-Secretary-General Gambari, as the Council will recall, touched upon the disheartening humanitarian conditions in Angola in December, when he briefed the Council following his mission there. Sadly, not much has changed since then. Today I hope to give the Council a full account of the humanitarian situation, and I am also pleased to inform the Council that the Humanitarian Coordinator for Angola, Mr. Erick de Mul, is also present and is available to answer questions.

First, let me begin with an update on the humanitarian conditions in Angola, which remain among the worst in the world. The statistics for the country are truly shocking. Angola ranks one hundred and forty-sixth in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) human development index, out of 162 countries. Life expectancy is 44 years, and 63 per cent of all households live below the poverty line.

The status of children is catastrophic. Thirty per cent of all children die before reaching the age of 5. An estimated 100,000 children have been separated from their families, and evidence indicates that child soldiers are once again being forced to fight in the country's ruinous civil war. In addition, new cases of polio have been confirmed in eastern Angola.

The Angolan war has also created one of the largest displaced populations in the world. Since 1999, the total number of displaced persons has doubled, from 2 million to over 4 million now. This means that almost one third of the country's entire population of 12 million is displaced.

Despite being weakened by the sanctions imposed by the Council, UNITA continues to destabilize large parts of the countryside and to disrupt normal economic and social activities in all areas, except Luanda and certain coastal and western zones. Over the last two years, UNITA has shifted to guerrilla warfare, with random attacks on the civilian population and key infrastructure.

The primary victims are civilians, who increasingly are finding themselves caught up in the middle of UNITA attacks and the Government's counter-insurgency strategy. The net result has been a rapid increase in displacement and human deprivation.

The map now on the screen shows the areas of the country where displaced populations are concentrated. Insecurity and military action have forced populations to flee from rural areas into mainly provincial capitals. As the map indicates, all of Angola's 18 provinces have internally displaced persons.

In a worrisome trend, the past six months have seen an increase in the number of security incidents affecting humanitarian personnel and assets. Since July, more than 40 separate incidents involving harassment by security forces or looting of humanitarian assets have occurred.

Almost all humanitarian agencies in the country are working at full capacity. In some locations, agencies are overwhelmed by the emergency needs of the internally displaced persons, with neither the means nor the personnel to meet them. In Kuito and Camacupa, more than 62,000 displaced persons have poured into the area during the last five months. An additional 12,000 entered during the first two weeks of January alone. There is almost no space to accommodate these people, and resources have run out.

Despite the difficult situation, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations have been striving to meet the humanitarian needs of displaced and other vulnerable people. The humanitarian operation in Angola is one of the largest in the world; it includes more than 400 national and international non-governmental organizations. Approximately 1 million Angolans receive food aid. An even larger number receive health care and benefits from programmes in the areas of water and sanitation, nutritional support, education and mine action. Despite the magnitude of this assistance, only a fraction of the overall needs of the country are being met.

As the map on the screen indicates, humanitarian agencies operate in about 60 per cent of the 272 locations where internally displaced persons are concentrated.

Humanitarian coverage is limited by a number of factors, including insecurity, mine infestation, poor infrastructure, lack of capacity and lack of funding. The map now on the screen shows the areas where international agencies have unrestricted access. As members can clearly see, most of the country's interior is too insecure for agencies to launch operations.

Amid all these problems and difficulties, it is heartening to note that the Government of Angola has taken several positive steps in recent years to increase its involvement in the provision of humanitarian assistance, and this must be noted. For example, the Government has allocated more than \$50 million to the national emergency programme and has created a Fund for Peace and Reconciliation during the past two years. Working closely with the United Nations, Angolan authorities have helped close more than 35 transit centres where people were living in inhumane conditions.

I am also pleased to note that Angola is the leading country in incorporating the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement developed by Mr. Francis Deng, the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons, into its national legal framework. These Guiding Principles became an important basis for establishing minimum standards for the resettlement of internally displaced persons, developed by the Government in cooperation with United Nations agencies.

Another positive development in the Angola operation is the increasing cooperation between the Government of Angola and the humanitarian community. A protection strategy for internally displaced persons was recently developed and is being implemented in partnership with the Government. This has resulted in a number of important achievements, including joint monitoring of violations by the Government and the United Nations. In addition to this, the 2002 United Nations Consolidated Appeal for assistance was developed, for the first time, jointly by the Government and the humanitarian community. It includes an innovative rights-based humanitarian strategy that is based on core principles in the Angolan Constitution. The Government has shown its

commitment to this strategy by setting out 40 “point partnership targets” that it intends to meet this year.

While these positive achievements by the Government should be acknowledged, it is clear that much more needs to be done, and quickly, for that matter. This must also be noted and emphasized. For example, one of the major constraints to delivering humanitarian aid is the appalling state of the country’s infrastructure. Four of the airstrips used by humanitarian agencies are currently under repair, limiting the number of humanitarian flights, and in some cases putting humanitarian personnel at risk. Repairs on the Kuito airstrip, located in one of the hardest-hit areas in the country, have been delayed for more than 22 months. Damaged bridges also severely limit the use of surface routes. The combination of widespread insecurity and damaged infrastructure forces the World Food Programme, which manages the logistics network in the country, to deliver up to 60 per cent of all humanitarian assistance by air. This is one of the reasons why the Angolan humanitarian operation is one of the most expensive in the world, after Afghanistan.

In addition to urgently repairing infrastructure such as the Kuito airstrip, there are a number of steps that the Government must take to assume greater responsibility for helping to alleviate the suffering of its own people. These include securing surface routes, which would lower the cost of delivering humanitarian assistance; establishing days of tranquillity in order to allow access for polio and other immunization and for the delivery of much-needed humanitarian assistance; implementing partnership targets agreed to in the 2002 consolidated appeal, including the closure of the remaining 13 transit centres; ceasing all forms of harassment; and increasing Government funding for humanitarian programmes. Most importantly, both parties to the conflict must desist from using military strategies that directly affect civilians and ensure that humanitarian agencies have unhindered and continuous access to all affected populations.

The war is the root cause of the humanitarian crisis in Angola. We are working closely with the office of Under-Secretary-General Gambari to seek additional means of supporting the Government in its efforts to find a solution to the crisis. In this respect, as part of our United Nations plan for action on Angola, in the coming weeks I will dispatch my Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. Ross Mountain, to

Angola to prepare the way for my own visit later this spring. During my visit, I intend to take up priority issues with the Government, including, most importantly, the implementation of the agreed goals and strategies that the Government committed itself to in 2001.

Another action I would like to mention in this regard is, as members of the Council may be aware, the recent establishment of a unit on internal displacement within the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. I have asked this unit, which is dedicated to strengthening the international response to internal displacement, to address Angola as one of its top priorities this year.

I have already mentioned that there has been a rapid increase in internally displaced persons. Last year, the number of internally displaced persons was five times higher than anticipated. Despite this increase in humanitarian needs, only 47 per cent of the \$233 million requested in last year’s Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal was received. While acknowledging the need for the Angolan Government to be encouraged to implement the agreed goals and strategies, I would also like to urge Member States to remember Angola, and urge even more strongly that they give generously and immediately to the 2002 Appeal. I would like to seek the support of the Council to this end — to give generously, and to give now.

Ultimately, the solution to the humanitarian crisis in Angola is the end of the war. We know that there have been some positive developments on the political front. The window of opportunity that currently presents itself is of great importance, and every effort must be made to arrive at a durable and just solution. We look to the Security Council in particular for innovative and courageous solutions to end the war, and it is my sincere and strong hope that every possible channel is being explored in order to assist the Angolans in achieving peace. Only then will the tragic and protracted humanitarian situation in Angola begin to dissipate.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Oshima for the very useful and timely information he has brought to the Council on the humanitarian situation and the difficult conditions in Angola. I also thank him for his kind words.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is His Excellency Mr. Georges Chikoti, Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola.

Mr. Chikoti (Angola): Allow me, in the name of my Government, to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I would also like to congratulate your predecessor on the brilliant manner in which he conducted the proceedings of the Council during his mandate.

The holding of this meeting of the Security Council to address the humanitarian situation in Angola is reflective of the concern of the international community in this regard. This is the second time that I have addressed the Council within a period of two weeks in order to discuss issues concerning conflicts in Africa and their consequences. This is indicative of the deep commitment of this body of the United Nations in its efforts to find solutions to achieve stability on the African continent.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to reiterate my Government's appreciation for the efforts of the Security Council to find a solution to the situation in my country. We would especially like to thank Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General, for his personal dedication and the interest he has demonstrated in seeking peace for Angola.

My Government is aware, as are the nations represented here, of the seriousness of the humanitarian situation in our country, which, contrary to our expectations, worsened during 2001. Judging by the number of important delegations from the United Nations that visited us, we note that these developments are being followed with great interest. We will certainly remember that, in May of 2001, President José Eduardo dos Santos reiterated to the nation and to the international community the need for a resolution of the conflict based upon a peace plan.

In this context, the Government considers the following points essential to achieve peace: first, the unilateral and unconditional cessation of hostilities on the part of Jonas Savimbi's troops and the turning over to the United Nations of all of their weapons; secondly, the resolution of UNITA's internal problems by UNITA itself; thirdly, the conclusion of the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, in accordance with the evolution of the situation; and fourthly, the holding of and participation in general elections.

The Government's plan to which I have just referred calls upon UNITA rebels to respond positively so that we can put an end to this atrocious war and conclude the tasks that remain to be completed under the Lusaka Protocol as a way to restore the long-awaited peace. Instead, in response to this Government initiative, Jonas Savimbi's forces increased their terrorist acts — acts that are still fresh in the memory of many Angolans and, indeed, in that of all those who have witnessed the magnitude of those atrocities.

Allow me to take this opportunity to present images that illustrate, on the one hand, the effects of these acts of terrorism on the Angolan people and, on the other hand, the efforts of the Government to reverse the situation. Some of the images may be a little hard to watch — but that is the reality with which we live.

A videotape was played in the Council Chamber.

Mr. Chikoti (Angola): Those are some of the images that we wanted to bring to the attention of the Council.

Faced with the intransigence of Savimbi's UNITA, and UNITA's failure to respond to any of the appeals for a resolution of the conflict by means of dialogue, my Government has no alternative but to implement its peace agenda, which provides for political, economic, social and military actions.

In the political sphere, the Angolan Government finds itself in the awkward and unprecedented position of being the only country in the world where the largest opposition party maintains a presence in the Parliament while carrying out an active rebellion against the established constitutional order. In spite of all this, the Government has kept intact the pillars of our emerging democracy, ensuring its citizens' exercise of their rights while allowing national dialogue without any exclusion. In fact, discussions continue in the Angolan Parliament with regard to the adoption of a new constitutional law that takes into account proposals originating from all political parties represented in that sovereign body — a constitution that will establish the rules for the holding of the upcoming elections.

In the economic sphere, an International Monetary Fund-monitored reform programme aimed at ensuring macroeconomic stability in our country is under way.

This year, for the first time in Angola's history, our national budget allocated 21 per cent of its funds to

social and welfare-related programmes, in contrast to the 11 per cent allocated to defence and security. This reflects a significant change in national priorities and a pattern that confirms the importance that the Government attaches to the social welfare of the population.

Further, this is also a reflection of the impact of sanctions on UNITA, which have made it more difficult for UNITA to pursue its military option and to procure military hardware and other equipment. It is therefore important for the international community to maintain and strengthen the sanctions as a deterrent as well as an encouragement to return to the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol as a basis for a sustainable political solution to the crisis.

In the military sphere, to counter the terrorist activities carried out by the UNITA rebels — as we have seen in the images just shown — the Government has undertaken measures to guarantee the effective control of its national territory and the extension of the State's authority, in compliance with its constitutional responsibility to ensure the safety of all communities across the country.

A climate of relative confidence is emerging that is encouraging many people, including soldiers of the rebel group, to return to normal life. But their return has overwhelmed an already saturated public assistance infrastructure, raising by more than half a million the number of those in need of emergency aid, making an overall national total of more than 4 million displaced persons, representing approximately 25 per cent of the country's population. That places the humanitarian situation at the centre of our concerns; for that reason, as the Council is well aware, the Republic of Angola is one of the few countries that has adopted a specific law which provides rules for the resettlement of displaced persons.

In that regard, the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for 2002 contains a clear strategy that seeks to ensure that the provision of assistance takes into account the principles stated in the constitution of the Republic of Angola and the international guidelines. Educational programmes to promote respect for human rights have been conducted in close collaboration with the human rights division of the United Nations Office in Angola and have covered the various echelons of the armed forces and the national police.

The Government continues to lead and implement humanitarian support operations in close coordination with the United Nations. To that end, it has created appropriate structures at both the national and the provincial levels.

In characterizing the humanitarian situation in Angola, I would like to call attention to the major constraints that the Angolan Government and its partners face.

The first relates to food and other basic needs.

The second concerns roads and bridges. Here, it is necessary to note that, in spite of the Government's effort to rebuild roads and bridges during the short period of peace that we experienced in 1991 and 1992, most of these have again been destroyed as a result of the post-electoral conflict.

Thirdly, the poor condition of airstrips constitutes another major concern of the Government. The most serious cases have already been identified and specific measures for their repair have been taken, most notably the airstrip in Kuito because of its importance.

The fourth area is demining. We have seen an almost total halt in the mine clearance programme. This has had a negative impact on other areas, such as programmes for resettlement and for the distribution of agricultural land.

Fifthly, the response from international donors to the 2001 Consolidated Appeal represented only 46.8 per cent of the expected amount. The fact is that this constitutes an important setback in terms of our expectations.

In order to improve the quality and the quantity of humanitarian assistance through its coordination mechanisms, the Government organized a decentralized format to carry out its national emergency programme for humanitarian assistance by transferring total responsibility for implementation to the provincial governments, which were allocated resources amounting to \$12.5 million. For 2001, the Government allocated to the Ministry of Assistance and Social Reintegration \$17 million for various existing programmes, in particular for humanitarian assistance. With the aggravation of the situation during the final quarter of last year, the Government reinforced that funding with an additional \$6.5 million to acquire food and other items in the national market to assist people in newly liberated areas.

Eight days ago, my Government held an extraordinary session of the Standing Committee of the Council of Ministers to discuss the country's humanitarian situation. At that session, the Government adopted a set of measures to expand the assistance it has been granting to secure medical aid, medicine and food for the neediest populations. Moreover, and parallel to the implementation of its programme of emergency humanitarian aid, the Government will continue to implement the resettlement and demining programmes, as well as vaccination campaigns against polio, measles and meningitis and campaigns aimed at the prevention of endemic diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhoea and HIV/AIDS.

The Government is also determined to increase medical and auxiliary personnel in critical provinces, especially Bié. Another priority is the repair of infrastructure, such as bridges, airstrips and roads, in order to facilitate the timely provision of humanitarian assistance, the settlement of people and the free movement of people and goods. In the area of transportation, existing fleets will be reinforced with more trucks.

Given the large number of displaced persons, the Government approved a programme, budgeted at \$60 million, which targets the provinces of Moxico, Huíla, Uíge, Huambo, Kuando Kubango, Kwanza Sul, Bié, Lunda Norte and Malange.

My Government is aware, as are its partners, of the temporary and transitory nature that these emergency assistance programmes must assume. From that perspective, and in the light of the significant improvement in the military situation, we intend to accelerate the resettlement programmes for displaced persons with the implementation of activities that will allow the transition from a state of emergency to one of social and economic development leading to the eradication of poverty.

Among the measures to reduce poverty and strengthen national reconciliation efforts are soon-to-be-implemented pilot programmes aimed at socially reintegrating demobilized soldiers and the general population of displaced persons. The Government and the United Nations have already jointly approved terms of reference for these pilot programmes. We are currently at the stage of selecting the experts who will prepare them. This measure will implement the

recommendations contained in the latest reports of the United Nations technical missions that recently visited our country.

Let me end by saying that the Angolan Government believes that the efforts it has been developing should continue to enjoy the support of our international partners. We therefore reiterate our appeal to donors; we expect that their response to the 2002 Consolidated Appeal to be more significant, in order to respond to the growing needs and numbers of internally displaced persons in our country.

We further reiterate our conviction that only by means of a coordinated, continued and effective approach to the humanitarian situation, with the full participation of the Government, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the targeted population, shall we overcome these challenges.

I cannot conclude without reaffirming to OCHA, in Angola as well as in New York, our recognition of the altruistic work it has done in our country and express our deepest appreciation to the donor countries and to all in the international community who, in one way or another, have provided support to the Angolan people.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Vice-Minister for External Affairs of Angola for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): We are very grateful to Under-Secretary-General Oshima for providing us with such a detailed briefing on the humanitarian situation in Angola. It is very timely. Much of the focus of the Council's recent discussions on the situation in Angola has been on political developments. Ireland is very mindful that, even in the event of a much-hoped-for positive political development in the coming months, the humanitarian conditions in the country will remain at a crisis level. We should therefore ensure that too much time does not elapse before members again discuss the crucial humanitarian issue.

We are very grateful also to hear of planned action by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs over the coming months.

We welcome to the Council today the Vice-Minister for External Affairs of Angola, Mr. Georges Chikoti, and the delegation that has travelled with him from Luanda. The Minister is the latest high

representative of his Government to attend a meeting of the Security Council. His presence further demonstrates the strong relations that exist between Angola and the United Nations. This fourth meeting of the Council on Angola in a period of six months also highlights the great concern there is here for the situation in his country. I very much agree with Minister Chikoti that the humanitarian crisis is at the centre of our concerns.

The facts outlined by Mr. Oshima are truly bleak and distressing. This is all the more so given that we had expected measurable improvement in the humanitarian crisis in 2001. Instead, it deteriorated. Primary responsibility for this continuing tragedy rests squarely on the shoulders of Savimbi's UNITA. Over the past year, the predicted improvements in access to the enormous at-risk population and in relation to the resettlement of displaced persons failed to materialize. In fact, the internally displaced population increased well beyond projected levels, thereby preventing any large-scale resettlement programmes. All this has been taking place against the backdrop of the Government's establishing control over wider territory and increasingly effective application of the Security Council's sanctions against UNITA. Concerned observers suggest that increased military and state control should result in increased humanitarian reach and they can only be disappointed with the direction of events.

It would be ungracious not to recognize the steps made and the promises undertaken by the Government of Angola. We are fully aware that the conditions in which it operates are far from ideal for the normal implementation of economic and social policies that will improve the lives of the citizens of Angola. We also acknowledge that there is on its part a growing awareness of and, importantly, an increasing willingness to discuss the responsibilities of the Government of Angola towards its people.

When the Council met here in September with the Minister of the Interior of Angola, Mr. Dias dos Santos, Ireland was very struck by his acknowledgement that his Government had to do more in support of the civilian population and by his expressed concern regarding a perception that international donor fatigue might set in with regard to Angola. In this respect, we also noted his comment that the Angolan Government could not fairly be expected to cope alone with the humanitarian challenges which it is facing. We are

pleased to have heard Minister Chikoti's description today of the recently announced immediate efforts his Government is making to address the very most urgent dimensions of the humanitarian emergency. We would welcome a future opportunity for the Council to examine and to measure with the Government of Angola the effectiveness of those measures.

Some of the problems outlined by Mr. Oshima are particularly worrying. Access to the at-risk population has not improved in the past year. If anything, it seems to have deteriorated. The circumstances facing the authorities in Angola are, without doubt, very difficult, given the tactics employed by UNITA. However, every effort must be made to ensure effective and sustained access for those seeking to alleviate the crisis faced by the Angolan people. When it proves impossible to provide safe access for the international community to provide assistance, the Government must do everything possible to provide the assistance itself. Each and every Angolan must be treated equally in this regard and all efforts must be made to reach everyone everywhere.

We are also concerned about the additional displacement arising from military actions. We would be grateful to hear more about how the affected people are being assisted and whether other measures are being planned for those who might be displaced in the future. We would also be grateful to learn more about the composition of these displaced populations, given worrying reports that a low proportion of young males appears to be among them.

We understand very well the call by Minister Chikoti and Mr. Oshima for the international donor community to remain engaged in Angola. Ireland's emergency and rehabilitation assistance to Angola has increased steadily over recent years and Angola has been consistently among the largest recipients of such aid from Ireland. Many of our humanitarian non-governmental organizations are also present on the ground. I mention this to underline that Ireland is deeply conscious of and engaged with the plight of the Angolan people and the conflict they have endured for far too long.

There is an enormous humanitarian deficit in Angola which cannot be bridged without the assistance of the international community. In this regard, the donor community is not avoiding its responsibilities. However, it can be encouraged to do more. There is also a major opportunity and responsibility for the

Government of Angola to play its own central role in addressing the humanitarian deficit. The donor community can reasonably be expected to further support humanitarian action if it sees the systematic diversion of greatly increasing state revenues from natural resources into programmes to rebuild Angola for the people of Angola, who are the natural owners of those resources. We make the case that this should be done not only for the welfare of the people — the clear and absolute first priority — but also to strengthen the perceived legitimacy of Angola's institutions and state structures.

We cannot address the humanitarian crisis in Angola without reference to the violent conflict that underlies it. Ireland fully supports the mediating efforts of the Secretary-General and of his Adviser for Special Assignments in Africa, Ibrahim Gambari, to establish a process of political dialogue. We very much hope that these efforts will lead to progress soon. We also want to record our strong support for the work of the United Nations Office in Angola.

The ending of the conflict in Angola would not in itself bring about the end of the immense economic and social obstacles facing the country. However, increased confidence on the part of the Angolan people that the arrival of peace holds out the promise of greater economic and social progress will surely contribute to the creation and endurance of stability. That is why Ireland believes that the Government of Angola, the United Nations and the international community must continue our work to improve greatly the humanitarian situation in Angola. That agenda must be asserted systematically by all concerned, and now, despite the continuing conflict situation. It is an agenda that cannot await the hoped-for end to the conflict. It is an agenda to be addressed now by all of us together.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): I, too, should like to thank the Emergency Relief Coordinator for his excellent presentation.

My delegation is deeply concerned by the humanitarian crisis resulting from the conflict that has gripped Angola for 27 years now. The information available to us confirms that, despite the fact that some progress has been achieved in the last few months, the situation not only remains extremely serious for a large percentage of the population, but has deteriorated considerably.

One of the major challenges facing the country is the considerable increase in the number of displaced persons and refugees, who now exceed 4 million, or a third of the total population. It is clear that the Government has the primary responsibility for the return and resettlement of internally displaced persons. We encourage the Government to continue the initiatives it has taken with a view to resettling some 500,000 people.

Bulgaria welcomes the efforts made to improve the living conditions of the most-affected displaced persons in transit and food centres, temporary sites and refugee-hosting centres. We believe that a great deal remains to be done in order to alleviate the suffering of those most affected.

Another point I deem particularly important is the need to provide easier access to people in need in many areas of the country. Despite the concrete results achieved in the south, the north and the central region, the serious deterioration of the situation in 20 areas that are difficult to access, especially in the western provinces, remains a source of concern. The Angolan Government must ensure access to all parts of the country and guarantee minimum conditions of security for humanitarian agencies, in order to consolidate the delivery of assistance. We encourage the Government to do more in this respect.

Bulgaria also welcomes the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal to support the Angolan Government in its economic recovery. We would like to emphasize strongly that the democratization of the country is a prerequisite for coping with Angola's serious problems.

Bulgaria commends the various humanitarian organizations, in particular the World Food Programme, for their efforts to alleviate the suffering of the affected people. We solemnly appeal to UNITA to refrain from using violence and to begin to respect the security and integrity of humanitarian convoys and personnel. UNITA bears the main responsibility for the humanitarian disaster, and the international community must continue to bring pressure to bear on it through sanctions and other appropriate means.

We remain deeply concerned by the human rights situation in Angola, especially with respect to areas where military operations are taking place. It is a sad fact that 60 per cent of Angolans do not have official papers or identity cards. The Council must encourage the initiatives taken by the Angolan Government aimed

at raising the awareness of the main actors in this area and establishing concrete protection measures. The Angolan authorities must do their utmost to put an end to all acts of violence.

Bulgaria welcomes the progress that has been achieved in the coordination of humanitarian assistance. We would like to emphasize the importance of an integrated approach in helping displaced Angolans, and we would like also to commend the efforts made by the Special Coordinator on internally displaced persons.

My delegation fully agrees with the high-level Inter-Agency Network missions' assessment of the nature and magnitude of the assistance requirements of internally displaced persons. We take note of the creation of a national intersectoral commission on demining and humanitarian assistance, and we call on the Under-Secretary-General to devote particular attention to the implementation of the second plan of action.

We would like also to note encouraging signs with respect to the participation of civil society in the search for a solution to humanitarian problems. Given their immense potential and their increased efforts, religious and community groups, women's groups and special-interest organizations are important actors that have considerable influence and can bring pressure to bear on the two principal parties to the conflict. They have an important role to play in efforts to raise public awareness of humanitarian principles and of human rights violations. We support the efforts of the Angolan Government to establish a mechanism to integrate these entities into the process of political dialogue.

It is clear that the evolution of the peace process in Angola is at the heart of the matter. I think that this meeting represents a good opportunity to make headway in this respect and to give it fresh momentum by adopting appropriate measures along these lines.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): I warmly thank the Under-Secretary-General for the very useful and detailed briefing he has given us this morning and Vice-Minister Chikoti for his interesting presentation.

It has been nearly 18 months since the Security Council was last briefed on the humanitarian situation in Angola, so the discussion we are having this morning is not just timely; I think that it is overdue.

The humanitarian problems in Angola are among the worst in the world.

It is quite clear from the briefings that we have heard that this situation requires the concentrated attention of both the international community and the Government of Angola. The Government's own figures, circulated today, show the extent of the problem that we are facing: half a million people fled their homes afresh in 2001, and 560,000 people in eight provinces cannot be reached by the United Nations agencies.

The recent efforts made by the Government of Angola to improve the humanitarian situation are very welcome, but much more needs to be done, as Under-Secretary-General Oshima has made very clear. The international donor community also has an important role to play in improving the humanitarian situation. It is therefore right for the Security Council to inject a strong note of urgency into this debate and into the search for an end to the internal conflict. We welcome Mr. Oshima's intention to visit Angola this spring.

What is really required is a coordinated approach by all parties working in Angola to alleviate the suffering of the Angolan people. This coordinated effort should lead to positive action — easily measured, substantive and clear improvements in the humanitarian situation. Access to populations in need through improvements in security and infrastructure would ensure the delivery of much-needed humanitarian relief.

I think that we all noticed, when we looked at the map on the screen during Mr. Oshima's briefing, how much white there was on the map — areas that cannot be reached by the agencies — some of them quite close to Luanda itself.

The international donor community has to respond better to the 2001 United Nations Consolidated Appeal, which so far has not yet reached the necessary level of funding, before it addresses afresh the appeal in 2002.

At the same time, we have to support energetic efforts to end the civil war, not least those led by the Secretary-General and Ambassador Gambari. The United Kingdom also strongly supports the work of the United Nations Office in Angola.

I should like to put a few questions to Mr. Erick de Mul, through Under-Secretary-General Oshima.

First, we would welcome the assessment by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) of the extent to which the Angolan Government contributes to the humanitarian relief effort in financial, political and other inputs, including military efforts; and secondly, whether these inputs have changed either way over the last six to 12 months.

The continuing conflict in Angola is directly affecting far too many Angolans. UNITA clearly has minimal concern for the humanitarian effect of its operations. The Security Council's consideration of the situation in Angola today is an important opportunity to focus now on the practical steps that need to be taken to relieve a situation that shames Angola and the international community.

The proposals made by OCHA this morning are an important start to that process. We also look forward to the discussion in the Security Council next month, under Norway's presidency, of the aide-memoire that OCHA is preparing on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and our exchanges on Angola this morning are entirely relevant to that more general debate.

Mr. Strømmen (Norway): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Oshima for his informative briefing this morning. Let me also welcome to this meeting the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola.

Norway recognizes the positive steps taken by the Government in connection with the joint strategy for humanitarian assistance. Particularly important is the adoption of a rights-based strategy in the 2002 United Nations Consolidated Appeal. This is to ensure that assistance is provided in accordance with core principles of the Angolan Constitution and on the basis of international standards. We would like to encourage the Government to continue its positive efforts.

It is now essential that the Government elaborate an agreed monitoring mechanism for the implementation of priority actions set out by the Government. These priorities include preparation for access to places with internally displaced populations by opening roads and airstrips, improving and increasing humanitarian assistance in areas not accessible to international humanitarian partners, extending State administration to areas controlled by the Angolan Armed Forces, preparing return and resettlement plans for displaced populations,

establishing reception and registration centres in areas with large influxes of internally displaced persons, in accordance with Government regulations issued on 15 January this year, and improving health assistance and the supply of essential medicines, personnel and drug kits in provincial capitals and rural municipalities to address the critical health and nutritional situation of newly arrived internally displaced persons.

Having stressed those points, it is important for me to emphasize that Norway stands ready to respond quickly to help meet the great humanitarian needs in Angola. We urge the rest of the international community to do the same.

Let me conclude by saying that humanitarian emergencies in Angola have reached an unacceptable level. We are deeply concerned about the humanitarian consequences of the ongoing military activities. Humanitarian problems emerge faster than it is possible to solve them. There is no military solution to the conflict in Angola. Everyone concerned must realize this and act accordingly. In this regard, it is important to point out that the main responsibility for ending human suffering in the country rests with UNITA and Jonas Savimbi. UNITA must stop its violent activity, hurting so many innocent civilians, and it must seize the existing opportunity for dialogue. Dialogue is the tool for finding a lasting political solution. Let me, in this regard, also express my Government's support for the efforts made by the United Nations, and especially the Special Adviser for Special Assignments in Africa, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari.

Mr. Ocaziones (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to thank Mr. Oshima, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, and the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola for their presentations on the disturbing humanitarian situation in Angola.

In my delegation's view, we are faced with a situation that has enormous humanitarian dimensions, and yet it is a situation that perhaps receives less publicity than do those in other parts of the world. The description of the conditions and the figures provided us here are disturbing: 4 million persons internally displaced by war, which is almost one third of the country's population; over 1 million people surviving on rations provided by humanitarian agencies; 480 children under the age of 5 dying daily; and more than 60 per cent of humanitarian aid being transported by aircraft because roads are unsafe or have been

destroyed. And what concerns us most is that there are no signs of improvement.

That is why it is timely that the Security Council has decided to focus attention on this serious situation. We have taken note of the fact that 10 United Nations agencies are already in the country, under the coordination of Mr. De Mul, working with the Angolan Government to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. There are grounds for hope that the appeal issued to the international community to finance this year's humanitarian projects will be responded to generously by donors.

What, then, are the tools available to the Security Council to respond to the crushing humanitarian situation of the people of Angola and to try to alleviate it?

First, we certainly believe that focusing attention on this situation with urgency is something positive that we can do. Secondly, we must also continue to support the initiatives of the Secretary-General and Ambassador Gambari aimed at facilitating a solution to armed conflict. Thirdly, we must continue supporting the international sanctions regime against UNITA until its fighting capability has been curbed and eliminated. However, these are medium- and long-term measures. It is possible that by the time they take effect, many more people will have died and the path of national reconstruction will have become more difficult. Therefore, we are duty-bound to do more. In the current atmosphere, our efforts will certainly influence the ability of relief agencies to reach more people and to meet the needs of vulnerable groups. We feel profound admiration for the humanitarian staff, and we wish to contribute to facilitating their work.

Accordingly, my delegation would like to address two questions to Mr. Oshima about the humanitarian situation in Angola. The first question is, as you see it, Sir, is this the right time to explore once again the idea of agreeing on the establishment of a humanitarian corridor to facilitate access for humanitarian workers to persons in need and to facilitate land-based transportation of aid? It is concerning that there is large number of people whose situation is unknown because of the difficulty in reaching them.

The second question relates to the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. My delegation would like to know how these Principles, which have already been incorporated

into Angola's domestic legal statutes, are being implemented in the provinces and how useful they are proving in providing humanitarian aid, as well as in protecting the human rights of the Angolan people. I would appreciate Mr. Oshima's comments in this regard.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I consider this discussion to be very useful, thanks to the briefing provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) through Mr. Oshima. From the information provided by Vice-Minister Chikoti, we know that the humanitarian situation in Angola is extremely alarming; hence the usefulness of today's debate.

I do not wish to repeat everything that Mr. Oshima said. However, when a third of the population of a country is displaced, when a tenth survives only because of humanitarian assistance and when hundreds of thousands of people find themselves in a critical situation, we must discuss the issue in such a way as to enable everyone to act together. We are well aware of the cause: it is conflict, the responsibility for which falls mainly on UNITA. We must therefore keep up the pressure on UNITA.

The international community and the Angolan Government are searching for an appropriate response to this humanitarian crisis. We welcome the new commitments of the Angolan Government — the significant increase in assistance to the population in distress. We believe that the Government must make an even greater commitment to the struggle for survival of the people concerned. However, the modalities of the new governmental programme must be clarified, particularly as they relate to the time frame, and we would be pleased to receive more information from Vice-Minister Chikoti in this regard.

We would also welcome comments from Mr. Oshima or Mr. De Mul on the recent initiatives taken by the Angolan authorities with regard to resettlement, demining and the opening up of areas, initiatives taken on the basis of recommendations by humanitarian organizations.

I have another question to ask Mr. Oshima. There have been allegations about the forced movement of the population, and I would be interested in receiving further information from OCHA about those allegations. Indeed, if people are forcibly displaced, that clearly has disastrous humanitarian consequences.

Generally speaking, we would like to see greater access to people in distress. Areas controlled by the Angolan Government could be further opened up to humanitarian organizations. In insecure areas, assistance could be made more secure by the use of strong military escorts provided by the Angolan authorities, which would allow greater access to those zones. Finally, there is a third part of the territory — areas under UNITA control or very isolated and dangerous areas. We believe that, as the representative of Colombia said, we could consider the idea of establishing humanitarian corridors.

I would like to ask Mr. Oshima about how feasible such corridors would be. Of course, the Government of Angola would need a guarantee that such corridors would not be used by the rebels. On the other hand, if the Government of Angola were to accept the idea of humanitarian corridors, that would obviously be a gesture of encouragement to the population. It would also be in keeping with the current efforts being undertaken by the Angolan Government and by Mr. Gambari — efforts that France fully supports — with a view to relaunching the Angolan peace process on the basis of the Lusaka Protocol. In that context, even an indirect discussion between the two parties on the establishment of humanitarian corridors would be a first step that could prove decisive for the return to the peace process.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting today. We are very grateful to Mr. Kenzo Oshima for his briefing on the humanitarian situation in Angola. We would also like very warmly to welcome to this Chamber the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola and to thank him for his important and comprehensive statement. We are also very pleased to see here among us Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, whose presence we salute and whose contribution to the search for a solution in Angola can never be overemphasized.

My delegation remains very concerned about the very precarious humanitarian situation in Angola today — a situation that is continuing to worsen day by day and is being further exacerbated by the atrocities committed by those who continue to reject peace and every effort at reconciliation. We had the opportunity to witness the gravity of the situation from the video projection that we watched this morning, as well as the one we watched in the Chamber last September. Those

video projections showed the extent of the violence and suffering being inflicted upon innocent Angolan civilians.

Nobody could remain insensitive to the scale of impunity in Angola. There is little doubt that the primary responsibility for the situation lies with Mr. Jonas Savimbi and his UNITA group. The terrorist activities of UNITA and its leader remain the major cause of the large number of refugees and internally displaced persons there. Given what we saw in the videotape this morning, I think it is very appropriate that we place the activities of Jonas Savimbi in the same context as the attack on the World Trade Center and the tremendous international coalition to fight terrorism. I think that that is where we need to take the question of Savimbi.

The innocent people of Angola have been held hostage by UNITA for too long. It is important that every effort be deployed to spare them further suffering and to prevent UNITA from carrying out any further attacks on civilians. We believe that one way of doing that would be to tighten still further the sanctions against UNITA.

The statistics on the humanitarian situation in Angola are alarming. Last year, the Government and the United Nations estimated the total number of internally displaced persons to be approximately 3.8 million, of which 1.9 million were receiving assistance. With the recent fighting reported in the province of Moxico and elsewhere in Angola, the number of displaced people continues to grow. The United Nations Children's Fund has reported that a quarter of Angola's population is internally displaced and that most such people are living in camps. This has led to a plethora of problems. The food security situation remains fragile, and malnutrition is a significant underlying factor in the deaths of thousands of children and women in Angola.

We recognize the tremendous efforts being made by the Government of Angola in improving the humanitarian situation through its resettlement plans and by making available additional funds to tackle the increasing influx to urban areas of internally displaced persons. We also congratulate the Government for incorporating the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement into its national legal framework. We also commend the local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the churches, which are

playing an important role in providing humanitarian assistance to people in need. We encourage the Government, local NGOs and the churches to continue providing such assistance to the needy people.

We also greatly value the contribution of the United Nations agencies and other international organizations in relieving the dire humanitarian situation of millions of Angolans. We call on them to continue the delivery of much-needed emergency relief assistance. We also call on the international community to render the necessary financial support.

In this regard, I refer to Vice-Minister Chikoti's statement that the response of international donors to the 2001 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal represented only 46.8 per cent of the expected amount. This indeed constitutes an important setback for the expectations of the Angolan Government. We call on the international community to contribute generously to this appeal fund.

The frequent acts of violence by UNITA and the problem of access are major obstacles for the agencies as they continue to deliver assistance to those in need. The international community should make it clear that those responsible for hindering the access of humanitarian personnel to the needy will be held responsible for their actions. We also wish to stress the importance of guaranteeing the security and safety, as well as the freedom of movement, of humanitarian personnel.

We would like to express our gratitude for the courage and determination of those who are working to relieve the human suffering in Angola, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the World Food Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and other agencies. It is vital that all these humanitarian agencies work in close cooperation and in coordination with the Government of Angola, as well as with the civil society, to effectively alleviate the suffering of the population.

Finally, I would like to ask OCHA whether it thinks the Security Council can do more to improve the humanitarian situation on the ground in Angola.

Ms. Lee (Singapore): We join others in thanking Mr. Oshima for his excellent briefing and for the comments expressed regarding the very important work done by his team. We also join others in welcoming the Vice-Minister's presence here today and thanking him

for his very important statement. Finally, we associate ourselves with Mauritius's comments regarding the very important work of Ambassador Gambari, who knows full well that he has always had our unstinting support.

I have only two questions to ask, because all the comments we wanted to make have been covered by other colleagues, especially with regard to the very serious humanitarian situation in Angola.

First, the Government's current military campaign against UNITA unfortunately appears to have resulted in a significant increase in the number of internally displaced persons in the affected areas. The World Food Programme reported that in the Bié province alone, more than 12,000 new internally displaced persons were registered in January. We wonder if any information can be provided on how the Government will be tackling the consequences of this fighting.

My second question relates to whether any overtures have been made to UNITA to facilitate the work of the humanitarian agencies, and if so, what UNITA's response has been thus far. Perhaps the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs could also give an assessment of the prospects for UNITA's facilitating such humanitarian work.

Mr. Chen Xu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I will be very brief. First of all, like other colleagues, I would like to thank Mr. Oshima for his briefing. We would also like to thank Mr. Georges Chikoti, Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola, for his important statement.

The humanitarian situation in Angola is a source of great concern to us. We have noted that the United Nations and other international relief organizations are carrying out activities there and that the Angolan Government has taken actions in response. We hope that these efforts will be effective as soon as possible and that the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal will receive sufficient funding.

The humanitarian situation in Angola is related closely to the security situation and the peace process there. As far as the Security Council is concerned, we must redouble our efforts to promote the peace process. Only thus can the humanitarian situation in the country be alleviated. The Angolan Government has many

times expressed its readiness and willingness to achieve national reconciliation and peace.

It is regrettable that the armed faction led by Savimbi has continued its violent activities, thus sabotaging the peace process in Angola. This is unacceptable. It is necessary for the international community to exert pressure on UNITA. We appeal to Savimbi and the armed faction under his leadership to respond to the Angolan Government's peace initiative by laying down their arms and starting peace negotiations with the Government as soon as possible.

The Chinese delegation supports the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and other international relief organizations. We also support the efforts of Ambassador Gambari, Special Representative of the Secretary-General. For our part, we will also work for the peace process in Angola.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open meeting to consider the humanitarian situation in Angola.

We would also like to thank Mr. Kenzo Oshima, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, for his detailed and candid briefing, which illuminated the humanitarian situation in Angola. I became acquainted with his humanitarian spirit during the humanitarian segment of the Economic and Social Council in Geneva last year.

We would also like to thank Mr. Georges Chikoti, Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola, for clarifying his Government's role in seeking peace and security in Angola.

I was under the impression that UNITA's ability to continue waging a conventional war had been greatly diminished. However, the fighting in Angola continues. As a result, the activities of UNITA groups in several parts of the country are still having devastating effects on the humanitarian and social situation in Angola and the Angolan people.

In this regard, we would like to express our concern over the dark humanitarian picture drawn for us by Mr. Oshima and the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola, and also by the reports of humanitarian agencies indicating that large numbers of the population have been displaced by the war.

We all heard Mr. Oshima's statement and saw his maps illustrating the number of internally displaced persons in 2001. The statistics indicate that some 500,000 people can be expected to be displaced in 2002 if the increase continues at the present rate. Many people are dependent on food aid, and the situation of children is extremely critical: it is feared that measles, polio, tuberculosis and other diseases could spread. What makes the situation worse is the how difficult it is to gain access to those in need because of the poor security situation in provinces where the Government is unable to guarantee security, particularly in urban areas under UNITA control. Another factor is the poor state of repair of transport infrastructure, roads, bridges and airstrips. All of this is an obstacle to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as borne out by the maps that Mr. Oshima showed us this morning.

UNITA must stop threatening the security of humanitarian assistance convoys and must facilitate the delivery of such assistance throughout Angola. Here, it is worth noting that the sanctions have resulted only in an escalation of UNITA's attacks against civilians in Angola; the Council must therefore seriously consider ways and means to put pressure on UNITA and on the sources of its military supplies, with a view to putting an end to the provision of such supplies and to UNITA's attacks against the Angolan people, and with a view to compelling UNITA to move towards reconciliation as a basis for ending the war and establishing the stability that Angola needs. UNITA and Jonas Savimbi bear responsibility for the deteriorating situation in Angola. This reflects that group's lack of commitment to the peace process and to the Lusaka Protocol. UNITA's escalating military activities run counter to efforts to find a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

My delegation welcomes the Angolan Government's renewed commitment to the Lusaka Protocol, its initiatives to enhance the peace process and its intention to find a solution to the conflict, as stated today by His Excellency the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola. That solution would be built around a peace plan based on a number of points, which he enumerated in his statement. Such a plan would stabilize the situation in Angola.

We welcome the special measures taken by the Government of Angola to fulfil provisions of the Lusaka Protocol that remain to be implemented, including disarming UNITA armed groups and

extending State authority throughout the national territory in order to protect the Government of national unity and reconciliation and to create a climate conducive to the reestablishment of order, to the establishment of a constitutional order and to preparations for elections.

We appreciate the efforts of the Organization of African Unity and the Southern African Development Community to bring peace and stability to Angola. We join the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola in urging the international community, especially the donor community, to provide generous assistance to the Government and the people of Angola, and to put pressure on UNITA with a view to establishing the stability that is so earnestly desired. Here, we support the efforts of the Secretary-General and of his Adviser for Special Assignments in Africa, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, in the search for peace and stability and for an end to war in Angola.

I have two questions for His Excellency the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola. His Government has a plan for resolving the conflict in Angola; in the light of his statement that UNITA has escalated its military activities and its weapons purchases, how does he view the real prospects of implementing the peace plan that his Government has proposed? And what practical role does he feel the Security Council could play?

I also have one question for Mr. Oshima. In his view, what are the reasons for the 22-month delay in repairing the Kuito airstrip?

Mr. Fall (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): Today's meeting is most timely. My delegation welcomes the delegation from Angola led by Mr. Georges Chikoti, Vice-Minister for External Relations, and thanks Mr. Chikoti for the useful information he has provided about the situation in Angola, including its humanitarian dimensions. Our thanks go also to Mr. Kenzo Oshima for the superb work he has been doing and for the invaluable information he has shared with us today.

As members know, the conflict in Angola is among the oldest crises in Africa; it may be the oldest of all. And because of its scale and its subregional dimension, it has caused profound suffering to the Angolan people. With the signing of the Lusaka Protocol and the many initiatives that have been taken, we can acknowledge that progress has certainly been

made, but the situation remains alarming, particularly in the humanitarian sphere. Guerrilla activities have exacerbated the situation in several provinces, leading to the internal displacement of more than 4 million people out of a population of 12 million. That is the sombre picture that was sketched for us this morning. Obviously, the statistics are shocking; as Mr. Oshima said in his briefing, they are among the worst in the world.

Above and beyond the many difficulties currently facing the people of Angola, the restoration of peace, in our opinion, is of the essence. Guinea encourages all parties to do all they can to compel UNITA to abide by its commitments to ending the suffering of the Angolan people. Guinea supports the encouraging measures undertaken by the Angolan Government to address the situation. I would even say that these measures have often been very courageous, as the Minister related earlier, such as the permission granted to an armed group to sit in Parliament as an opposition party, even as it continues to wage guerrilla activities. We believe that this is a very brave initiative on the part of the Government.

Guinea welcomes the invaluable support of the humanitarian agencies on the ground and calls for greater coordination of their efforts. My delegation appeals to the international community speedily to help meet the urgent needs on the ground, particularly the repair of infrastructure; the establishment of reception, health care and food centres; the implementation of a reintegration plan to alleviate the problem of crowding in transit centres and camps; an increase in food assistance by enhancing the capacities of the World Food Programme; support for the work of the Government on the urgent need to improve access to isolated areas and, in particular, to the most vulnerable populations; the strengthening of security in the reintegration areas; and the protection of the civilian population.

As I said at the outset of my statement, the Angolan conflict has lasted too long and caused too much suffering. Every effort should be made to maintain pressure on UNITA with a view to ending the conflict swiftly. The sanctions against UNITA must be maintained and additional measures should be considered to ensure that they are effectively respected.

Finally, Guinea encourages the initiatives and efforts of the Secretary-General and his Adviser for

Special Assignments in Africa, our brother Ibrahim Gambari, to pursue their efforts towards a speedy end to the conflict.

Mr. Ngoh Ngoh (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): My delegation welcomes your initiative, Sir, of convening a meeting of the Council on the humanitarian situation in Angola. This is an issue to which my country attaches the greatest importance.

We were pleased to hear the comprehensive and very instructive briefing by Mr. Kenzo Oshima on the matter. We also welcome the presence of Vice-Minister Georges Chikoti and thank him for his statement and for the very useful information he provided.

The ongoing deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Angola is of serious concern to my delegation. Approximately 4.1 million people, a third of the population of that country, are currently displaced, while many Angolans are refugees in neighbouring countries. This situation is due primarily to the ongoing hostilities in Angola, caused notably by the persistent refusal of UNITA to engage in the peace process and to adhere to the provisions of the Lusaka Protocol. My delegation feels that it is therefore essential to maintain pressure on UNITA and to strengthen the sanctions regime imposed on it.

The endless war, which has brought unspeakable suffering to the people of Angolan for many years, has claimed many victims and had tragic humanitarian consequences. Precarious security conditions brought about by intensified fighting have caused people to flock to urban centres and stripped them of their property and employment. The malnutrition, mortality and morbidity rates are high among the displaced populations. The situation is even more tragic for those living in areas inaccessible to humanitarian agencies. UNITA's deadly attacks on civilians and humanitarian agencies are indescribable and unacceptable. Last year's train attack, which claimed so many victims, is only one horrendous example.

We are very pleased by the efforts of the Angolan Government to assist the displaced populations and to facilitate access for humanitarian agencies to people in need. It is important that those efforts be pursued, in particular with respect to the rehabilitation of the infrastructure, the reintegration of displaced persons and the delivery of humanitarian assistance. We call on the international community substantially to increase its assistance to the Angolan Government in order to

alleviate the suffering of the victims of war, inter alia, through support for the implementation of emergency plans of action for each province. In that regard, the fate of populations in inaccessible zones should be the focus of particular attention. We cannot stress strongly enough the fact that everything must be done to protect civilians, ensure the security of humanitarian convoys and guarantee the safety of humanitarian personnel.

The humanitarian situation in Angola is heavily linked to its political and security situation, particularly to the ongoing fighting in that country. We support the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Adviser for Special Assignments in Africa, Mr. Gambari, to find a lasting solution to the conflict in Angola. We are also pleased by the work of the United Nations Office in Angola and of the humanitarian agencies on the ground.

I have one question for Vice-Minister Chikoti. I should like to know his view on measures that the Security Council could take to reduce UNITA's capacity for harm. I should also like to have information from OCHA on assistance programmes specifically designed for children, who, we know, are the principal victims of the tragic situation in Angola.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Mexico.

My delegation wishes to thank Mr. Kenzo Oshima, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, for his exhaustive report on the humanitarian situation in Angola. My country is also grateful to Mr. Erick de Mul, Humanitarian Coordinator for Angola, for having joined us.

Mexico appreciates the efforts of the United Nations Office in Angola to restore peace, to provide humanitarian assistance and to promote and protect human rights as indispensable elements of the rebuilding of that nation. In that context, my delegation is ready to support the request of the Angolan Government for the United Nations, in the event of an acceleration in the peace process, to assist in the implementation of a plan for demobilizing combatants and resettling internally displaced persons and to support Angola's electoral process.

My delegation also welcomes the presence among us today of Mr. Georges Chikoti, Vice-Minister for

External Relations of Angola. His participation in this meeting reflects the interest and concern that the Government of Angola shares with the international community over the extremely serious humanitarian situation, by which we are all preoccupied. My country notes with appreciation the decisions taken by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Angola on 5 February to improve the situation and hopes that they will be implemented forthwith.

As Mr. Oshima pointed out, the humanitarian situation in Angola is of the highest gravity and has significantly deteriorated, increasing the number of internally displaced persons. Therefore, Mexico appeals to União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) to stop its military activities against the civilian population and to commit itself to reinitiating a constructive dialogue with the Government of Angola to achieve peace. Mexico also appeals to the Government of Angola to fully implement the law on norms for resettlement. It also recommends to the Government of Angola and UNITA that they negotiate the safe access of humanitarian organizations to the most vulnerable groups of Angolan society, particularly in the provinces of Bié, Huila, Uige and Lunda Sul.

Mexico believes that in order to overcome humanitarian problems, it is necessary to achieve peace through negotiations between the parties to the conflict and to respect the 1994 Lusaka Protocol, as well as the relevant Security Council resolutions. My delegation recognizes the efforts undertaken by the Government of Angola to improve the humanitarian situation in the country and appeals that these efforts be maintained, particularly in the areas of infrastructure rehabilitation, which facilitates the provision of humanitarian assistance, and of providing a safe environment for humanitarian personnel. It encourages the Government of Angola to increasingly coordinate the support of all the political parties and civil society in these efforts. Mexico urges Member States and non-governmental organizations, national and international, to redouble their support to the Government of Angola and to the humanitarian efforts being made there by the United Nations.

We cannot ignore that country's situation, and the international community must unavoidably be engaged. In my country's view, a peaceful resolution of the conflict can make possible a just and lasting peace that will allow the Angolan people to achieve national

reconciliation and create the conditions for their development. Thus, Mexico commends the work done by civil society, particularly by the Church, in achieving these objectives.

I wish to conclude by asking Mr. Kenzo Oshima about the activities in Angola of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in dealing with the internally displaced and about the bases on which that work is being carried out.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

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

Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal): Today I will speak on behalf of the troika of observer States of the Lusaka Protocol — the Russian Federation, the United States and Portugal.

We welcome the Vice-Minister for External Relations of the Republic of Angola to this important discussion. His presence signals the strengthened engagement of the Angolan Government in responding to the needs of the staggering number of internally displaced persons and refugees in Angola, as well as in supporting the ongoing international effort to improve the humanitarian situation throughout the entire country. We note that the United Nations and the Security Council have welcomed these important efforts by the Angolan Government.

Unfortunately, the gravity of the humanitarian situation in Angola, as described in very clear terms by Under-Secretary-General Oshima, may soon dwarf the efforts of the international community and the Government. The humanitarian burden of the war continues to grow and has accelerated in recent months. The estimated number of internally displaced persons is now over 4 million. The number of refugees continues to grow in Zambia, Namibia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo — over 30,000 in recent months. The conflict is forcing populations to move, often against their will and often with inadequate preparation for their care. We particularly want to register our grave concern about the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the areas of the country where access is most difficult for relief agencies.

The Government of Angola can do more to help its own citizens who are displaced, and we are encouraged to hear the representatives of the Government of Angola recognize that they themselves need to do more for their own people. We welcome recent expressions of intent by the Government to provide more resources in the areas of health, transport and food distribution, and we look forward to these important commitments quickly becoming reality.

We encourage the Angolan Government to take a more active stance in the provision of direct assistance and to fully cooperate in the efforts of the international community to alleviate the suffering of those who are not receiving the necessary assistance. The members of the troika are looking for action and expect the Government of Angola and the United Nations to report back on their progress in addressing the humanitarian situation.

This meeting of the Security Council is proof that the humanitarian situation in Angola is of the utmost concern to the international community. The ongoing conflict has brought unacceptable suffering to the Angolan people and has subjected them to terrible living conditions. If there were no other reason to justify the renewed commitment of the international community to the peace process in Angola, this dire humanitarian situation would be reason enough.

We need to be creative and constructive in finding adequate and appropriate solutions to address the suffering of millions of Angolans, in particular those living in the most remote areas. This must be done in a way that combines efficiency and respect for the basic political principles of the peace process. Humanitarian assistance should not be used to achieve political advantage, and neither should it be withheld or impeded in any way. Access should be ensured for aid workers throughout the country.

We must be practical. There are populations in the territory of Angola that have been unable, until now, to have access to food supplies and basic medical assistance due to the conditions created by the war. The good will of those involved in this process will be measured by how they address the humanitarian needs of the Angolan people. All those involved need to understand that the international community cannot allow the current situation to continue indefinitely. Everyone must show the flexibility to let others act where they are not able to do so.

Without peace and stability there will be no durable solution to the dire humanitarian situation in Angola. We have often stated our conviction that there can be no military solution to the Angolan conflict. The troika of observers to the Lusaka Protocol praises the efforts being made by the Secretary-General's Special Adviser, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, in order to relaunch a dialogue between the parties. The troika is of the opinion that all these efforts must be pursued in the most transparent manner, in order to sustain the confidence of the parties, keeping in mind that the Lusaka Protocol is, and will remain, the sole framework for peace.

We also consider the use of agreed-upon facilitators as a helpful tool to clarify each party's understanding of the current situation. Nevertheless, to move the peace process ahead, the presentation of any concrete proposals in this regard should remain firmly in the hands of the United Nations, as the representative of the international community and the guarantor of the Lusaka Protocol, and through which a future solution must be found.

We once more reiterate that only the practice of good governance, respect for human and civil rights and the delivery of better social and economic conditions to the Angolan people can contribute to bringing the conflict to an end. Within the responsibilities the troika assumed under the Lusaka Protocol, we are prepared to continue to assist the United Nations in its proactive role during this phase of the peace process as long as we are requested to do so.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I note that the comments of the representative of Portugal were made on behalf of the troika of the Russian Federation, the United States of America and Portugal.

I now give the floor to Mr. Oshima to respond to the observations made and the questions asked by members of the Council.

Mr. Oshima: Before responding to the questions raised, I would like to make a few observations.

First of all, I would like to thank the members of the Council for the fact that the Council's attention has been drawn afresh to the humanitarian situation and the plight of the people in Angola, and to the urgent need to take action to address that situation. That is very important. I was also very heartened by the clear and strong message that we heard in this Chamber — a

message that encourages the donor community to be yet more generous in providing assistance to the vulnerable population in Angola.

I also welcome the call by a number of Council members on the Government to do more and to implement the goals and strategies to which it is attached, while acknowledging the actions it has already taken to make more resources available for humanitarian action.

A number of questions were asked about issues that touch upon the daily humanitarian activities in Angola. I would like to ask the Humanitarian Coordinator for Angola, Erick de Mul, to answer some of those questions. I would like first to say that my planned mission to Angola, as well as that planned by my deputy and, possibly, that of Under-Secretary-General Gambari in the near future, will be coordinated so as to take up priority issues with the Government of Angola. Such questions will include access to the vulnerable population; days of tranquillity, which have been under consideration and discussion as a means of addressing some specific requirements for polio immunization; the issue of funding for projects and programmes; the problem of infrastructure, which has been explained; and the question of resettlement of internally displaced persons, among other issues.

Another comment I would like to make is in response to a specific question raised by the Ambassador of Colombia relating to the position the Government of Angola has taken with respect to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. In Angola, the Guiding Principles became the basis for minimum standards for the resettlement of internally displaced persons developed by the Government in cooperation with United Nations agencies. In October 2000, the standards were adopted, in a decree of the Council of Ministers signed by President dos Santos, as norms for the resettlement of internally displaced persons. A preambular paragraph states that the Guiding Principles establish general principles governing the treatment of internally displaced persons. So they have been clearly incorporated in part of the national legislation.

I would also like to touch on the question about the way in which the Security Council might be useful to the work of humanitarians. I think that the fact that this meeting is being held today is in itself very important, as I said earlier. The clearly enunciated

message from the Council about the need to do much more in Angola for humanitarian purposes is surely welcome. I would also like to think that the fact that the Council is interested in keeping this issue under review in a constant and sustained manner, rather than just holding a hearing on it — and, indeed, its interest in other severe emergencies in Africa and elsewhere — is, in itself, very important for us humanitarians and, I am sure, for the donor communities.

My office, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, stands ready to provide any information or update that the Council may request in this regard. As I indicated, my office will be working very closely with Ambassador Gambari's office on the Angolan situation.

Having made those comments, may I, with your permission, Mr. President, ask Erick de Mul to speak. He is a dedicated humanitarian with a long record of distinguished service in a number of countries, including Afghanistan, where —until very recently when he moved to Angola— he was the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): With a view to completing the response that Mr. Oshima has given to questions put by Council members, I now call on Mr. Erick de Mul, United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Angola.

Mr. De Mul: I will be as brief as I can. The question was asked about what is being done in terms of accessing those displaced by military intervention. It depends: if those displaced by military intervention come to camps where they can be attended to, then they will be attended to. But that is not always the case. In certain cases, those people fall through the cracks and are not attended to at all. Again, this refers to the matter of access, which we will talk about with regard to another question.

As to the composition of the displaced, it is very true that often it is skewed, in that we see many children and women, while men between the ages of, say, 16 and 40 years may not be there. I think that what is happening with young males in the case of Angola is no different from what is happening in other countries where there is conflict: young males are probably engaged in fighting or otherwise involved in conflict.

I will turn now to the question of our assessment — the assessment of the Office for the

Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs — of what the Government of Angola is putting into the humanitarian effort. I would say that this is the assessment not of OCHA alone, but also of the non-governmental organizations and the donor community.

The assessment is very simple: too little, too late. I think we can be very grateful for the fact that the Angolan Government agrees with this assessment. The proof of this is that a very serious meeting took place last week in which the Government decided to review the situation and came to the same conclusion: too little, too late. Something had to be done, and a whole series of measures was agreed upon and adopted, to be implemented forthwith by the Government.

With regard to the question of whether the military effort has increased or decreased over the past six months, we have the impression that it is increasing. There is more military activity and hence more displacement.

The issue of humanitarian corridors is a complicated one. Corridors are normally easier in situations where there is a kind of stabilized conflict: where two parties hold certain territories in a more stable fashion, you can negotiate corridors. It is a nightmare to do it, but it is possible. The Angolan situation is much more fluid. So I suppose that when we talk about access, we have to look at it in a broader context. If there is a possibility of using corridors, let us try it. However, I think it is much more an issue of the parties, and particularly the Government, accepting the idea that all Angolan citizens are the responsibility of the Angolan Government, and that measures should be taken to try to attend to their needs. In the case of the Angolan situation, it is much easier to negotiate and discuss this with the authorities than with UNITA, with which we have no contact. So access is something we have to continue to discuss with the Angolan authorities.

As for the question on demining, the Angolan Government took an important decision to create an inter-sectoral demining commission, which is now reviving the whole issue of mine action in the country. The commission will be the entity that will set policy and priorities and outsource the activities to non-governmental organizations and other bodies.

There was a question concerning allegations of forced movement of people and the humanitarian consequences. I think it is correct to say that there have

been allegations of forced movement of people. It is always difficult to define exactly what that means, and to prove that people are being forced to move is not very easy. The bottom line is, for whatever reasons people move, the consequences should somehow be attended to. In the first place, I think the consequences should be dealt with by the national authorities, particularly the provincial authorities, hopefully supported by the non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system.

With regard to the question on what the Security Council can do, I think that has already been answered by Mr. Oshima.

The question about what we can do to approach UNITA to facilitate the work of the United Nations agencies is a difficult one. We will have to discuss it with Mr. Gambari, because we cannot get in direct touch with UNITA.

How is the Government tackling new displacements? That is a question for the Government, so I will leave it to them.

There was an interesting question about the Kuito airport. Kuito has become something of an international issue: for almost two years, repairs have been somewhat under way but never moving at a normal pace. Many people have tried to find out what is really happening, because the information we have is that funding has been made available to repair the airport. You open one door, you are sent to another door and you go around in circles — there is no answer. Our assessment thus far is that this could well be a case where we have a combination of lack of interest, a capacity problem and possibly, some think — I am going to use a word that perhaps is not often used in this Chamber — probably also a case of corruption. We all hope that the Government will address the issue and make sure that this is resolved soon.

As for Cameroon's question about special programmes for children: there are far too few. Notably, there are very few programmes that deal with street children issues. This must be rectified. Overall, the problems are so overwhelming that it is very difficult to get into details and create specific projects for children.

The representative of Mexico asked a question as to the role of the Office of the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) vis-à-vis the situation of internally displaced persons. UNHCR is gradually withdrawing its activities in relation to internally displaced persons, who are increasingly the responsibility of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. UNHCR will remain in Angola and will continue to help the United Nations agencies and the international community work on issues related to the protection of internally displaced persons.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank both Mr. Oshima and Mr. De Mul for their observations and responses.

I shall now give the floor to the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola, Mr. Georges Chikoti, so that he may conclude his observations and respond to the comments and questions raised.

Mr. Chikoti (Angola): Many questions have been brought to my attention. I would like to express my appreciation for the spirit of the statements of the members of the Council, in which they have expressed sympathy over the situation in Angola, proposed solutions and raised questions about the critical humanitarian situation in the country. Indeed, I believe that it is a concern of everyone, and I would like to make a few important points.

First, it must be very clear to the Council that the Angolan Government is committed not only to achieving peace by all means at its disposal but also to protecting human life and human rights in Angola and to maintaining a democratic environment and a democratic Constitution. It might not be very easy for many people to understand how difficult it is to keep this balance, to keep institutions working in a democratic environment.

The Council will recall that in 1992 we held elections, and they provided an environment for peace. Twelve political parties participated, all of which are represented in Parliament. Indeed, UNITA is represented in Parliament. However, when the post-electoral conflict started, the Government had no army. I recall that the provisions of the 1991 agreement stated that the two belligerents should disarm. The Government disarmed; UNITA did not.

What we saw from then on — from when UNITA resumed the conflict after rejecting the election results — is an increase in the numbers, because for the first time the conflict was affecting bigger towns and

villages, and the amount of destruction was very high. So far, the Government has never had any support, in military terms, from anyone. The Government had to rebuild its army and to maintain the institutions in order to build confidence. We are coming from a situation, in 1992, in which the Government controlled only a few provinces. With the Lusaka Protocol, we wanted to conclude the process; that means no war, and thus no more displaced persons. Unfortunately, that has not been the result.

With respect to UNITA-controlled areas, what the Government is now doing reflects the fact that today UNITA does not control territory as such; the Government has extended its authority to the borders with Zambia and with Namibia. What has happened is that the people who had followed UNITA into the bush are coming back today, because we have established authority in those areas. Most of the country is in fact being liberated. I think that what some organizations have written with regard to the notion of “forced displacement” is something that has to be clarified. There is no forced displacement of people. There are people who are surrendering to Government authority, and there are also people who are willingly coming to Government authority. That is something that nobody expected. Remember that when UNITA controlled certain areas, UNITA, through the violation of sanctions, was getting support from outside and it thus kept people in certain areas. Such people are today coming to Government authority. We think it important that we understand that there are no forced displacements.

The military activities that are going on do not tend to increase the number of displaced persons; they tend rather to increase the authority of the Government, so that we will be able to help the people in those areas. We know that there are areas to which it is difficult to gain access. The military do indeed have access to these today, but the humanitarian organizations do not go there; it is not easy. First, we need to build bridges; secondly, we need to make sure that we have territorial administration in those areas: that is what the Government intends to do. I brought a map to show the methodology we are pursuing in that regard. This principally relates to areas where we are extending our authority to the border with Zambia, where in fact part of the UNITA leadership is located. We are finding that new people who are coming in are in a very, very bad state. I have to point out that when

most of these people — generals and their families — come, we need to put them in hospital for at least two weeks before we can let them go home or stay in camps. That is the situation.

The Government is not saying that there will be no access. In the context of the Secretary-General's efforts, when Mr. Gambari came we discussed this issue with the military. We discussed how well we can coordinate among ourselves, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system in order to provide assistance to those areas. This is what we intend to do: first, we should put Government administration into those areas. But they are areas that were liberated by the military, and the military, along with their military activities to introduce Government authority, is providing humanitarian assistance: it is transporting food to the people it finds; it is transporting medicine to the people it finds. The Government needs to re-establish its administration, because these are areas where there was no Government administration at all — because UNITA does not administer anything in those areas.

The second stage has to be rebuilding bridges — because then we can send trucks carrying food — and rebuilding some of the airstrips. I think that the challenges are greater than a mere question of access. The Government is not saying that nobody can gain access; the problem is that it is difficult to gain access to some of those areas, particularly in the province of Moxico. These are areas where you, first, have the problem of access, but also the problem of population: you do not have as much population. You have 0.5 inhabitants per square kilometre in those areas.

I think there is indeed an openness on the part of the Government to respond, along with the international community, to these things. The Government has already adopted supplementary measures to repair the Kuito airstrip; I think it will be done in due course. I do not believe that part of the statement by Mr. De Mul of the United Nations Development Programme was true — unless there is an appropriate inquiry to determine what the situation is. We believe that what may have happened is that the company that initially should have repaired the Kuito airstrip did not have the technical capacity to do the job. We have to say that most of the equipment must be

transported from about 500 to 1,000 kilometres away; the equipment must come from Huambo or Luanda or Benguela. We have now taken supplementary measures to see if we can repair the airstrip.

I have said that, in order to respond to the urgent need for transportation, we will increase the fleets of motor vehicles, which will transport some of the food from Huambo to Kuito and other areas that need it. But this is the rainy season; it rains intensely in those areas, and I believe that for the time being it will not be very easy to continue the repair work. But that is one of the challenges we have to face.

Another question was what the Security Council can do to help reduce UNITA's military capacity. We have been working very closely with the Security Council; we are open to continuing to negotiate through the mechanisms that have been employed by Ambassador Gambari — and we encourage him in that work. But we have also said that it is very important indeed for the sanctions to be maintained. Sanctions have made possible the reduction of UNITA's military capacity. We think that is the only way to make UNITA understand that it must rely on peaceful means to achieve peace.

The time is short, so let me thank you again, Mr. President, for the opportunity to come here today and participate in this debate. I reassure you that the Angolan Government is indeed committed, first and foremost, to maintaining democratic institutions and respect for human rights so that UNITA can be integrated into the process. We want to help UNITA to participate. We should avoid making political interpretations of things that the Government does not intend. There is an environment that provides for all political parties — not just UNITA — civil society, churches and, above all, the traditional authorities, which are not generally mentioned. Angola is not only a Catholic country. There are also traditional people, representing a large segment of our population, whom we think should be part of this process.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.