

[Extract]

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**Security Council**

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[...]

**The situation in Côte d'Ivoire**

**Mr. Ambassador Giancarlo Soler Torrijos**

Deputy Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations

**Mr. Soler Torrijos** (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to join those who have already spoken in thanking the following speakers for their statements: Mr. Abou Moussa, the Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI); Mr. Djibrill Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, who spoke on behalf of President Blaise Compaoré, Facilitator of the dialogue; and Mr. Jean-Marie Bockel, Secretary of State for Cooperation and Francophony, chairman of the French delegation.

I would also like to congratulate Burkina Faso on its election to the Security Council for 2008 and 2009.

Secondly, I would like point to the positive developments that we can see in Côte d'Ivoire, where the countries members of the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Security Council are showing a great deal of coordination and cooperation in their peacemaking and conflict prevention efforts.

After almost seven years, Côte d'Ivoire has continued to deal with a political and military crisis whose many causes are rooted in economic, political, religious and ethnic considerations.

As we see it, the Ouagadougou Agreement, which was the result of direct negotiations between the parties, represents an important attempt at unifying Côte d'Ivoire and ending the conflict. We are encouraged by the knowledge that the determination of the parties to implement the agreement continues at the political level, but the various stages need urgently to be put into practice. It is absolutely indispensable that a solution be found to the issue of the ranks and quotas for the Forces nouvelles elements that will be integrating into the unified army. This problem is a hurdle in the way of the removal of the zone of confidence and the establishment of the green line, the unification of the defence and security forces, the disarmament and dismantling of the militias and their reintegration. We support the Facilitator's efforts in achieving these objectives.

The Ouagadougou Agreement introduces local responses by the parties and has launched a new impetus for national ownership of the solution. This process needs continued support from regional organizations, the United Nations and the international community. It is necessary to provide technical assistance to national institutions including the integrated command centre. It is also indispensable to speedily carry out tasks, especially the integral reform of the security sector, the identification process, voter registration, restoring the authority of the State throughout the territory and respect for human rights.

In his most recent report on children and armed conflict (S/2007/515), the Secretary-General stated that there was an alarming level of violence against children. He pointed to prevailing impunity. Although the number of murders and kidnappings of children has diminished, sexual abuse on both sides has continued to grow. The intervention of the International Criminal Court (ICC) could be an important way to fight impunity in Côte d'Ivoire; however, the Ivorian authorities have shown resistance to a possible mission of the ICC, which makes this, practically speaking, impossible.

The situation can and must get better. International humanitarian and human rights law require Ivorian authorities to put an end to impunity for those who are guilty and pay appropriate attention to the victims.

I would like to welcome the appointment of Mr. Choi Young-jin, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire.