



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2005

Permanent Mission of Romania to UNOG

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| 17.02.2005 | Public Meeting of the UN Security Council on Small Arms |
| 23.02.2005 | Reunion Publique du Conseil de Sécurité de l'ONU sur
«Les enfants et les conflits armés» |
| 24.02.2005 | UN Security Council Public Meeting on Kosovo |
| 25.02.2005 | UN Security Council Public Meeting on Cross-border
Issues in West Africa, held on 25 February 2005 |

In a statement made by the Permanent Representative, Ambassador Mihnea Motoc, at the Security Council Public Meeting on Small Arms, held on 17 February 2005, Romania fully associated herself with the statement to be delivered by Ambassador Jean-Marc Hoscheit of Luxembourg on behalf of the EU. In addition, he underlined that the question of small arms is not just one of disarmament, but also of development, democracy, human rights and human security.

Illicit trafficking and uncontrolled flow of SALW are sources of instability. The proliferation of such weapons exacerbated conflict, sparked refugee flows, and spawned a culture of violence and impunity. Often, they pay for civil wars, which produce severe economic and social consequences. In almost all conflicts that took place in the last decade, ranging from Great Lakes region in Africa to the Balkans, Central and South Asia, the weapons used by different parties have been mainly SALW. The humanitarian implications of small arms have alerted the international community to the urgency of curbing their illicit trafficking, reducing violence and the risk of civil wars.

In recent years, more states have committed themselves to abide by and implement regional and international standards to strengthen export controls in order to prevent illicit trafficking of SALW. The UN Plan of Action, the OSCE Document of 2000 and the EU Code of Conduct are the most relevant standards in our region.

Most countries have already in place laws and regulations that are used to control production, use and transfers of SALW. However, in some countries existing laws appear to be inadequate or control procedures are vulnerable to misuse.

Romania's policy on small arms will continue to focus on combating illicit trafficking, on pursuing a responsible and transparent policy on legal transfers and on promoting the removal and further destruction of surpluses. In

implementing its commitments under the Program of Action, Romania started nearly 2002 a program of destruction of its SALW. Romania - which is also concerned with SALW-related challenges in its own neighborhood - stands ready to share its experience with all interested countries and assist other states in establishing and developing sound export control systems.

As indicated in the Report of the Secretary General, significant progress has been achieved so far at global, regional and national level. Yet, a lot SALW-related issues are still to be discussed and agreed upon by means of elaborating and enforcing international norms and regulations in this field.

The Security Council has a major role to play in making the small arms a focus of global attention and action. It could add value by improving the effectiveness of its arms embargoes, by putting an end to the economy of war, by encouraging moratoria of arms sales to conflict regions and by adopting comprehensive regional approaches to DDR programs; the minimal requirement on governments to report to the UN on their small arms activities, including on MANPADS must be taken into consideration.

Finally, weapons management, and in particular the control of civilian possession of small arms and light weapons in post-conflict countries, are central to longer term human security. This will only be effective if it takes place within the framework of comprehensive programs of security reform, subject to the authority of civilian representative governments.

Dans une **intervention prononcée le 23 février 2005** par le Représentant permanent de la Roumanie auprès des Nations Unies au **CONSEIL DE SÉCURITÉ de l'ONU, sur «Les enfants et les conflits armés», Roumanie s'est associée** pleinement au discours prononcé par la Présidence luxembourgeoise du Conseil de l'Union Européenne. Le discours du sous-secrétaire général Olara Otunnu a témoigné sur la perpétuation d'une réalité accablante du monde contemporain: le recrutement et l'utilisation d'un grand nombre d'enfants en tant que combattants dans des différentes zones de conflit.

Face à ce terrible défi, la communauté internationale doit activer les instruments envisagés dans les textes des résolutions adoptées successivement par le Conseil de Sécurité, surtout les Résolutions 1379, introduisant la notion de « liste noire », et 1539, qui évoquait l'imposition éventuelle des sanctions à l'encontre des parties qui ne respectent pas les obligations qui leurs incombent ou n'honorent pas leurs propres engagements.

La recommandation contenue dans le rapport du Secrétaire Général concerne précisément la prise de mesures concrètes et ciblées lorsque les progrès réalisés par les parties nommées dans la « liste noire » ont été insuffisants ou inexistantes. Cette recommandation a une pertinence tout à fait particulière. La Roumanie va porter son fort appui à toute initiative visant à l'adoption des mesures telles que celles proposées par le Secrétaire Général. C'est ainsi qu'on pourra marquer le début d'une ère d'application et, en même

temps, avancer vers la fin d'une ère d'impunité.

Le mécanisme de suivi et de rapport représente un autre volet de l'engagement actif pour que les normes établies soient finalement respectées par ceux qui sont visés. Ce système doit avoir un caractère global et intégratif, qui lui permettra d'assurer la transmission des informations précises, complètes et vérifiables, qui sont indispensables pour une réaction opportune et adéquate.

Le plan d'action pour mettre à l'œuvre ce mécanisme, tel que proposé par le Secrétaire Général a fait une excellente impression. Le représentant spécial du Secrétaire Général et l'UNICEF devraient joindre leurs efforts pour faire fonctionner ce système avec l'efficacité attendue. En même temps, il faudrait peut-être attribuer un rôle plus distinct aux organisations non-gouvernementales et à la société civile dans l'élaboration des produits finaux du mécanisme.

La délégation de la Roumanie a exprimé sa haute appréciation pour le travail accompli par le Représentant spécial qui, dans l'exécution de son mandat, agit de manière pragmatique et coopérante, veillant à assurer une protection à la fois large et effective des enfants exposés à des situations troubles partout dans le monde. C'est dans l'esprit d'une telle approche que nous pensons attirer l'attention sur la possibilité d'inclure dans le champ d'action du Représentant spécial la situation particulière des enfants victimes de la violence, physique et mentale, exercée dans les zones de «non-droit». Dans ces zones, souvent résultant d'un conflit armé gelé, des autorités illégitimes autoproclamées se sont emparées du pouvoir par la force et se livrent en toute impunité à des graves violations massives des droits de l'homme, y compris des droits de l'enfant. Une situation intolérable, telle que l'on peut constater en Transnistrie, aux confins de l'Europe, ne saurait échapper, dès lors, à l'attention de la communauté internationale.

Le Conseil de Sécurité va commencer bientôt des consultations sur un projet de résolution qui devra offrir des nouvelles orientations pour la suite des démarches en faveur de la protection des enfants dans des situations de conflit armé.

In a public meeting of the UN Security Council on Kosovo, held on 24 February 2005, the Permanent Representative of Romania highly appreciated UNMIK and KFOR men and women, as well as the staff of other international organizations and agencies working in Kosovo. Romania associates itself with the statement delivered by the Ambassador of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

2005 is a significant year for Kosovo and the whole region of the Western Balkans. There is need for stability and security in Kosovo; and, prior to anything else, and a more tolerant and democratic society.

Thorough standards implementation and dialogue are essential. Romania welcomes the signs of progress described in the report of the Secretary-

General. There are indications of growing political maturity in Pristina, proven by a rather smooth electoral process and the energetic approach to standards by the new Government. We appreciate particularly the efforts to disseminate the message on standards as broadly as possible to the population.

The future of Kosovo must be one in which all people, regardless of ethnic background, race or religion are free to live, work and travel without *fear, hostility or danger*, and where there is tolerance, justice and peace for everyone. This is clearly not the case yet in Kosovo. The standards have multiple and complex dimensions. There are painful problems related to economy, rule of law, corruption, fighting organized crime and so on. Children going to school under military escort, as presented by the Secretary-General's report, are not a sign of normality or something that one can build durably upon. Fear for one's life, for one's security – especially if it's ethnically motivated – must be addressed politically, in an urgent manner, and that makes it one of the biggest challenges ahead for the political leaders in Kosovo.

The Serbs living in Kosovo have to work with UNMIK and the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government to find ways to end such fears.

Dialogue at all levels, between all communities in Kosovo and between Belgrade and Pristina is crucial at this moment. Romania echoed the call of the European Union Council and High Representative Javier Solana to all communities in Kosovo as well as to authorities in Belgrade and Pristina to engage in a substantial dialogue.

Romania continues to promote a Mission of the Security Council in Kosovo, during the course of this year. The Council needs to take its messages closer to all actors involved, and also to find ways to stimulate cooperation and dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. Romania welcomes in this respect indications presented by Mr. Jessen-Petersen and Mr. Covic about the prospects for resuming the direct dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina.

Romania reiterated the belief that a solution for Kosovo must result from, and be based on, the broader European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes. Romania welcomes a recent confirmation of such policy by the EU Council. Romania believes that legitimate concerns of countries in the neighbourhood should be duly taken into account. I

n a statement made by Permanent Representative of Romania at the **UN Security Council Public Meeting on Cross-border Issues in West Africa, held on 25 February 2005**, Romania associated itself to the statement by Ambassador Hoscheit of Luxemburg, on the behalf of the European Union.

As the Secretary General points out in his report, West Africa still presents a mixed picture. Encouraging news of progress and prospects for peace and development are counterbalanced by chronic and pervasive socio-economic problems and worrisome political developments. The international community is alarmed by the recent situation in Togo and fully supports the actions taken

by ECOWAS and African Union. Lingering crisis such the one in Cote d'Ivoire also offer reasons for deep concern, as negative evolutions in any West African country may easily have larger scale impact.

West Africa is probably one of the best examples of a need for comprehensive and harmonized approach to conflict situations. The important investment the international community made in individual countries could be wasted if the many cross-border problems calling for durable solutions in the larger regional framework are ignored. We need a long-term process, as the level of commitment should measure up to the profile of the region – one emerging out of decades of war and instability.

Romania noted with appreciation the trend towards greater **coordination within the UN system and** appreciated particularly the spearheading role ECOWAS is playing in West Africa, as relevant and successful partner of the UN. Romania welcomed the increased cooperation between the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA), ECOWAS and EU with the goal of developing a regional conflict prevention policy. The international and regional efforts must be backed by fundamental political changes at national level in areas such as participatory decision-making, transparent and accountable governance and administration, fighting impunity and corruption. Solutions to West African cross-border challenges are eventually a function of efforts deployed by regional countries themselves, by their leaders and civil society alike.

The cross-border problems such as illicit trafficking of arms, illicit exploitation of natural resources, the existence of child soldiers and mercenaries cannot be truly dealt with in the absence of **viable pre-requisites for development**. The UN achievements are more than a function of security gains.

The donor community and international institutions such as the World Bank should also step up and help national authorities and regional actors in this direction.

With the general elections in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire and presidential elections in Guinea-Bissau, one can say 2005 is an "electoral year" for West Africa. There are opportunities for the whole region in terms of laying down a steady course toward political stability, national reconciliation and economic growth.

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