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Peacekeeping and security in Africa –
conclusions drawn from the Lisbon Colloquy

REPORT

submitted on behalf of the Political Committee
by Mr Roseta, Rapporteur

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*Peacekeeping and security in Africa –
conclusions drawn from the Lisbon Colloquy*

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¹ Adopted unanimously by the Committee.

² *Members of the Committee:* Mr Baumel (Chairman); MM Urbain, Blaauw (Vice-Chairmen); MM de Assis, Bianchi (Alternate: Mrs Pozza Tosca), MM Behrendt, Brancati, Sir Sydney Chapman (Alternate: Hancock), Mr Cusimano (Alternate: Amoroso), Mr Dias, Mrs Dumont (Alternate: Dreyfus-Schmidt), Mrs Durrieu, MM Ehrmann, Evangelisti, Eyskens, Haack, Hornhues, Lord Kirkhill (Alternate: Lord Judd), MM Lemoine, Liapis Van der Maelen (Alternate: Staes), MM Marshall, Martínez (Alternate: Solé Tura), Mr Martínez Casañ, Micheloyiannis, Lord Ponsonby (Alternate: Vis), MM Puche Rodríguez, Recoder (Alternate: Arnau Navarro), MM Rippinger, Roseta, Schmitz (Alternate: Maass), MM Skoularikis, Sterzing, Timmermans, Verhagen, Volcic, Wray.

Associate members: MM Gundersen, Kosmo.

N.B. *The names of those taking part in the vote are printed in italics.*

Draft Recommendation
on peacekeeping and security in Africa

The Assembly,

- (i) Conscious of the historical ties and strategic interests binding Europe to Africa;
- (ii) Declaring its support for the framing of a European policy on Africa;
- (iii) Concerned about the absence of any reference to African problems in the Rome and Bremen ministerial declarations;
- (iv) Disappointed by the slowness some member countries are showing in responding to the Council's efforts to coordinate their cooperation programmes with Africa;
- (v) Deeply concerned by the proliferation of crises in sub-Saharan Africa;
- (vi) Welcoming the progress a number of countries have made in terms of their economic and social development and the establishment of democratic institutions;
- (vii) Aware that social and economic prosperity and the existence of democratic institutions are not only the most important factors for promoting peaceful international relations and the internal stability of individual countries but also help the culture and traditions of the peoples of those countries to flourish;
- (viii) Convinced that owing to its historical involvement in Africa, Europe has a special responsibility to promote social and economic development, peace and security on that continent;
- (ix) Recognising the crucial role incumbent on the OAU for the purpose of maintaining peace and security in Africa and the fact that subregional organisations have a stabilising influence in promoting cooperation between states and economic and social development;
- (x) Recalling that any action taken to settle conflicts and restore peace should be consistent with the Charter of the United Nations;
- (xi) Noting that many sub-Saharan conflicts are aggravated by illegal arms trafficking and the activities of mercenaries;
- (xii) Convinced that peacekeeping and security in Africa are closely linked to the economic and social development of the countries of the continent and to the strengthening of democratic institutions in sub-Saharan Africa;
- (xiii) Recognising the beneficial effects of the work churches, religious associations and NGOs are doing on the ground with a view to promoting civilian societies in African countries,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

1. Continue to monitor African problems closely with a view to framing a proper European policy on sub-Saharan Africa;
2. Cooperate closely with the European Union in order to place such a policy in the context of the CFSP in the longer term while at the same time giving it an economic and social dimension, and – more particularly – enhance cooperation with the EU for the purpose of preparing for the Euro-African summit in 2000;
3. Continue to promote and support the transition to democracy in African countries, this being essential for the stabilisation of the continent as a whole in the perspective of a global concept of security;
4. Further the cooperation programmes each European country has with African countries;

5. Urge the member countries to become more involved in endeavours designed to coordinate their programmes of cooperation with the countries of sub-Saharan Africa so as to develop a European policy on Africa;
6. Establish a programme of cooperation with the OAU covering the following aspects in particular:
 - (a) cooperation with the Torrejón Satellite Centre mainly so that it can provide African authorities managing situations on the ground with reports on the development of crises;
 - (b) training programmes for OAU officials, armed forces and police forces in the sub-Saharan countries, with a view to making a bigger contribution to the prevention and settlement of crises;
 - (c) a programme to fight arms trafficking;
 - (d) cooperation between the WEU Planning Cell and the OAU conflict-management centre;
 - (e) greater WEU involvement in peacekeeping exercises organised in Africa, with the possible participation of the Planning Cell in their preparation;
7. Support any efforts made by WEU member countries in bilateral trade and international relations to fight the proliferation of, and trafficking in, arms with particular reference to anti-personnel mines;
8. Adopt, in cooperation with the OAU and the relevant countries, a programme of ongoing support for African endeavours to clear anti-personnel mines;
9. Study the possibility of European advisers providing support, under the auspices of WEU, for peacekeeping operations in Africa and envisage logistic support for such operations;
10. React without delay, within the framework of the resources available to WEU and in cooperation with the OAU, in order to support peace initiatives taken in response to emergency situations.

Explanatory Memorandum.

(submitted by Mr Roseta, Rapporteur)

I. Introduction

1. The close ties forged by history, geographic proximity, common interests and, to a large extent, culture mean that Africa and Europe cannot afford to ignore each other. It therefore comes as no surprise that, since making its entrance on the world stage, Africa has been seen as being inextricably linked with Europe. Moreover, for a long time it was politically and of course economically dependent on Europe. Even though Africa is fortunately no longer under the yoke of colonialism, strong ties continue to exist between the two continents, one with its former colonial powers and the other with their colonies of old which in most cases share the language, religion, economic interests and quite often the democratic ideals of their former masters who, as we well know, very often exploited them. Furthermore, the presence of a very large number of Europeans on what was known for so long as the "Dark Continent" together with an increasing number of Africans in search of a better future in Europe has created a climate of Euro-African rapprochement based on personal ties and shared interests which compound the links between states and enhance the feeling of inter-dependence between these two continental neighbours¹.

2. Opening the colloquy held by the Assembly of WEU in Lisbon on 15 September 1998, the President of the Portuguese National Assembly stressed the obligations Europeans had towards Africans on account of slavery, the wrongs they suffered during the colonial period and the profound upheavals to which they were subjected through having had forced upon them a large dose of Western culture including the notion of ownership, the concept of the state, language and even religion. Mr António de Almeida Santos also pointed out that a number of the problems plaguing modern-day Africa could be attributed either to conquests by European countries (for instance, the artificial way in which borders were drawn up, dividing peoples between two and sometimes three states) or to illicit ac-

tivities in some sectors of Western society (arms trafficking in particular). He also argued that progress in advancing the cause of democracy throughout the continent and the economic and social development of its countries could make a decisive contribution to overcoming the present crises and promoting the continent's security. When drawing conclusions from the colloquy debates, the President of the Assembly stressed that all the European institutions, and more particularly the European Union and WEU, should be involved in a European policy on Africa. Mr de Puig added that one of the objectives of such a policy should be to promote the economic and social development of African countries and their transition to democracy².

3. Your Rapporteur shares this analysis: history has put an obligation on Europeans to concern themselves with African matters. Moreover, certain vital interests common to the two parties also make this a necessity and the former colonial powers – most of whom now regret past deeds – not only have a thorough knowledge of African problems but also possess the means necessary for taking action where circumstances so require – in cooperation, of course, with the Organisation of African Unity and in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

4. In this report, which draws on the extremely valuable debate at the Lisbon Colloquy, a considerable effort has been made to describe the main events since September 1998 that have influenced the present situation in Africa, in order to arrive at conclusions. However, in line with the rationale followed at the colloquy, this particular analysis of events focuses on sub-Saharan Africa which, from the historical, socio-cultural and economic angles, constitutes a somewhat special case. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that Europe's strong ties and close relations with north Africa are also relevant in this connection as are the important relations existing between that region and sub-Saharan Africa – these aspects have already been discussed in two previous reports on security in the

¹ See Assembly Document 1566, *WEU's contribution to reinforcing peace in central Africa*, Rapporteur: Mr Masseret, 15 May 1997.

² See the official record of the colloquy on peace-keeping and security in Africa.

Mediterranean region, submitted to the Assembly by Mr de Lipkowski and your Rapporteur³.

5. It would be inappropriate to conclude this introduction without stressing that despite the proliferation of flashpoints in Africa, the existence of dictatorships and coups d'état, the succession of humanitarian disasters, endemic diseases such as malaria and the recent spread of AIDS, poverty and famine – all of which have brought and continue to bring endless suffering to many peoples, the overall image of the continent today is far from being entirely negative. The fact that countries as important as Nigeria have become democracies, that key states such as Mozambique and Uganda have restored a peaceful order and made substantial economic and social progress, that other countries such as Togo and Ghana have also improved their economies and that there are stable democratic institutions in Cape Verde, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Benin, Mali and South Africa gives cause for hope and shows that the peoples of Africa have both the resolve and ability to build a better future. Timid though this hope may be, there is nonetheless reason to describe it as realistic and justified by the progress the Organisation of African Unity has made in the field of peacekeeping and security. The task facing Europe, and more particularly WEU, is to fulfil what is a historical and humanitarian duty – within the limits of their possibilities. In so doing, Europeans will also be acting in full conformity with the interests they have to defend.

II. The general situation in Africa and its subregions

6. Unfortunately 1998 was a year that saw a fresh outbreak of conflicts in Africa, putting a damper on the cautious optimism experts whose job it is to analyse the situation on that continent and especially its sub-Saharan region had begun to show in recent years. The instability that is virtually ubiquitous is decimating populations and to a large extent undoing all the hard work put in over the last decade to promote economic development and political democratisation, the fruits of which are there to see in a number of countries. For although crises abound in and

among a very large number of states (a quarter of the sub-Saharan countries according to the 1998-99 annual report of the International Institute for Strategic Studies), this does not detract from the progress made in other countries. Furthermore, it has to be remembered that the fundamental cause of Africa's problems continues to be the low level of human development as defined by the United Nations (life expectancy, level of education and living standards). Most countries are caught up in this situation and, with some rare exceptions, the human development index in Africa is below 0.499, one of the lowest in the world⁴. An outline of the situation in each subregion and in more detail for each country will perhaps provide a clearer picture of the general state of affairs on the sub-Saharan subcontinent.

(a) West Africa

7. 1998 was not an easy year for West Africa – already affected by the devaluation of the CFA franc, the region had to contend with difficult climatic conditions (drought in a number of areas and too much rain in others) and the effects of the Asian crisis.

8. However, there were some positive developments such as in *Guinea* where, following an abortive putsch in 1996, peaceful elections were held in December 1998. The country's economy showed signs of picking up mainly in the agricultural and mining sectors.

9. *Senegal* also maintained growth at 5% but had a considerable economic burden to bear owing to its intervention in Guinea-Bissau. Its fishing industry was badly affected by the devaluation of the currencies of its Asian competitors.

10. *The Gambia* re-established normal relations not only with its neighbours but also with many non-African nations (such as the Commonwealth countries) and this enabled it to sustain its development drive.

11. Despite its isolated geographic position, *Cape Verde's* economic and social development in a context of well established democracy continues to be satisfactory. The government's decision to tie its currency to the Portuguese escudo (under the agreements of 13 March 1998 provid-

³ Documents 1543 of 4 November 1996 and 1371 of 24 May 1993.

⁴ United Nations Development Plan, 1997 report.

ing for a fixed exchange rate guaranteed by Lisbon) was an encouraging sign.

12. *Burkina Faso* can be taken as an example of sound public management and political stability even though it barely has an economy because of its unfavourable geographic position and scarce natural resources. Nevertheless there is an undercurrent of tension in the country mainly because of the suspect circumstances surrounding the death in December 1998 of the freelance journalist, Robert Zongo⁵.

13. *Mali* experienced political uprisings in 1997 and 1998 but they did not undermine the democratic process. From the economic point of view, it is now the biggest cotton-producing country in the region and has become self-sufficient in rice thanks to an effective irrigation programme.

14. Security, law and order have been restored in the north of *Niger* but the country still faces a worrying food shortage. The coup d'état by the presidential guard which toppled President Baré Mainassara and also resulted in his death could, if the international community applies pressure, lead to the country becoming a democracy given that the new, interim President, Mallan Wanké, has promised to hold general elections by the end of the year.

15. *Ghana* has managed to overcome its own shortages and the economy is starting to grow despite the drought and lack of electricity which have led to a considerable slowdown in output.

16. *Benin* has had to contend with the same problems but now that it has a democratic system which has already seen two changes of government, it is pushing ahead with economic reforms, particularly in the area of privatisation, with satisfactory results

17. *Togo* has managed to come back up to the level of income it had prior to the political crisis in the early 1990s, in spite of the impact of the drought and the political situation which is not problem-free⁶.

18. Since the death of President Abacha who brought in a military dictatorship, *Nigeria*, the

⁵ See *Le Monde*, 4 May 1999: "Robert Zongo dies in the afternoon".

⁶ See Amnesty International's report of 5 May 1999 in which it refers to serious human rights violations.

giant in West Africa, has fortunately at last entered a period of transition to democracy that holds promise for the entire region and is even of crucial importance for Africa as a whole. However, the country's economy is suffering because of shifting oil prices and the cost of peacekeeping operations in which it is involved.

19. The economy in *Côte d'Ivoire* picked up with a growth rate of 6% in 1998 even though the regional context is difficult and the effects of the Asian crisis have made themselves felt. But the country's huge public deficit is a millstone.

20. From this brief overview of the region, your Rapporteur believes he can draw the general conclusion that a certain degree of stability seems to have set in in West Africa despite one major crisis flashpoint, namely Sierra Leone.

(b) Central Africa

21. There is great instability in Central Africa, a region that is vital for the balance of the African continent. The main cause at present is the upheaval in the *Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)*. Yet other countries are continuing their efforts to promote economic development with some success, among them *Equatorial Guinea* whose oil-producing activities have taken on increasing importance. Still on the positive side, *Cameroon* and *Gabon* are politically and economically stable despite being surrounded by the crises in the DRC and the Central African Republic. In contrast, *Chad*, which recently emerged from a crisis lasting several years and whose government claims to want to tighten public spending in 1999, is on the brink of a fresh civil war. The relative degree of stability some states have achieved could be undermined by the serious conflicts in neighbouring countries such as the *DRC*, *Congo-Brazzaville*, or the *Central African Republic (CAR)*. Finally, there is the situation in *São Tomé e Príncipe* where a cohabitation arrangement, albeit seemingly precarious, is operating between the President and government and where the economy remains weak owing to a lack of natural resources in spite of the possibility of oil lying off shore.

(c) Southern Africa

22. There is no doubt that the *Republic of South Africa* dominates this region both on account of its size and economic power. The elec-

tions due to be held in 1999 could mark the end of the country's long period of transition following the disintegration of the apartheid regime. The economy was dealt a harsh blow by the 1998 financial crisis and growth has slowed to a rate of 0.2%. However, it should pick up again this year. The country also suffers from problems such as high levels of crime in some big cities. On the positive side, one of South Africa's noteworthy achievements is the major *Blue Crane* peacekeeping exercise that took place in the country in April under South African leadership. It involved 5 000 troops from 12 southern African countries and was considered a success⁷. Neighbouring *Botswana* can boast very good economic results and a stable political climate.

23. Conversely, *Namibia's* economy has suffered on account of its military intervention in the DRC and President Nujoma is facing growing resistance to such intervention. Following a period of tension in 1997 and early 1998, the political situation in *Zambia* appears to have returned to normal. *Zimbabwe* is experiencing political and social tension due to the structural weakness of its economy which has also been aggravated by military intervention in the DRC. In *Swaziland*, where the process of democratisation is at a standstill, economic problems are causing social tension. The country's growth rate (which stood between 2.5 and 3% in 1998) is still not sufficient to cope with the big increase in its population (the increase in the birth rate was close on 5% in 1998). In *Malawi* the political debate became tougher in the run-up to the May 1999 elections. But the country is pressing ahead with its reforms (in particular the privatisation programme) and economic growth stands at 4.5%.

24. Finally, in *Mozambique*, which has enjoyed stability since the conclusion of the 1992 peace accords, the economy is in full swing. This country could be described as a showcase of economic and political stabilisation in a climate of peace. Even the continuing tension between the Frelimo and Renamo rebel movements does not appear to be a threat to peace and internal security in the country which, though still very poor, is nonetheless beginning to look attractive to investors. In 1998, it was granted an excep-

tional reduction in its foreign debt. The agreement reached on creating the Maputo transport corridor and the continuing privatisation programme should draw new investments. Mozambique's growth rate in 1998 stood at 10%. Inflation is under control and industrial output is rising. A point worth noting is that the Cahora Bassa dam, built by Portugal, is beginning to export hydroelectric power to neighbouring countries.

25. Turning to the countries giving greater cause for concern, the political situation in *Lesotho* is very tense while in *Angola* the long-standing war between the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and Unita has flared up once again, even forcing UN troops to leave the country.

(d) East Africa

26. In recent years *Tanzania* has shown itself capable of sound economic management and its stability does not seem to be under threat, at least for the moment, from the large influx of refugees from Burundi or from the tension gripping the independent island of *Zanzibar* where the opposition is contesting the results of the 1995 elections. *Kenya* also enjoys great stability which does not appear to be undermined by the crises in neighbouring countries. The country was deeply shocked by the bomb attack against the American Embassy on 7 August 1998 which caused the death of 250 people and damages amounting to some US\$ 500 million. Kenya also has to contend with a huge public deficit (140 billion Kenya shillings in 1998). Although *Uganda* has been involved in the conflict in the DRC and has to address the problem of ethnically motivated rebel movements in the north (the Lord's Reform Army – LRA) and west (the Allied Democratic Forces – FDA) of the country, it has continued to implement economic reforms and appears to have consolidated political stability. It should however be noted that regular increases in the country's defence spending are beginning to put a strain on the economy.

27. Even though East Africa is fortunate in that there is no immediate crisis in the three countries referred to above, the region's overall balance appears to be somewhat fragile mainly because of the extremely worrying situation in neighbouring Rwanda, Burundi and Sudan.

⁷ See *Le Monde*, 25 April 1999.

(e) The Horn of Africa

28. This region of great strategic importance has traditionally been beset by conflicts. It was prey to rivalry between the colonial, then post-colonial powers and finally between the two superpowers during the cold war. The Horn of Africa is still prone to great instability as a result of the tribal war in *Somalia* that has been going on for a number of years and the conflict between *Eritrea* and *Ethiopia* (which itself has to contend with rebel Islamist movements and the Oromo Liberation Front). *Djibouti* has to get used to a smaller French military presence in the country but has seen a boom in its exports to Ethiopia (it provides landlocked Ethiopia with all-important access to the sea).

(f) The Indian Ocean

29. Fortunately, both the *Seychelles* and *Madagascar* have stable political climates, in contrast to the group of islands forming the *Republic of Comoros* which, following the secession of the island of Nzwani, is facing serious economic problems that threaten to undermine its stability. Indeed, they partly account for the crisis affecting the country's unity. The OAU is persisting with its efforts to find a peaceful solution to keep the country together by mediating between the Nzwani separatists – of whom it is critical – and the legal government. In 1998, the island of Nzwani adopted a constitution by referendum. The military expedition led by the federal authorities was a failure. Nzwani requested its re-attachment to France, which considered the request unrealistic. As the crisis threatened to escalate, the OAU appointed Mr Mandela to lead a mediation effort for the purpose of stabilising the situation. Despite a guarantee to the effect that the Comoros franc will continue to be indexed on the French franc after the transition to the euro, the country's economy remains very weak. On 23 April 1999, the representatives of the various islands in the archipelago concluded an agreement on a Union to replace the federal State but the Nzwani delegation refused to sign it. Protests and violent demonstrations in the capital, Moroni, ensued. Faced with this unstable situation the army, accusing the President and government of being too accommodating with the separatists, seized power under the command of its commander-in-chief, Colonel Assoumani, dissolved the country's constitution and disbanded

its institutions. Although a semblance of calm has returned to the Comoros, the prospects for future developments are not very good as Colonel Assoumani has said nothing about handing power back to the civil authorities⁸.

30. Another Indian Ocean island, *Mauritius*, has lost out in economic terms to Asian competitors. Its government is also under challenge from an opposition movement but despite these problems, the country continues to produce good economic results and its political stability does not appear to be under threat.

*III. The main flashpoints – a short historical review and the situation today**(a) Sierra Leone*

31. The head of state until 1991 was President Momoh. A series of coups d'état then brought civil war to Sierra Leone and it was at this time that F. Sankoh founded the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Following elections in 1996, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah became President with the country still in the throes of conflict. In fact the President is in control of only a quarter of the country. The RUF, in alliance with a section of the army under the orders of Commander J. Koroma, invaded the capital, forcing President Kabbah to flee. In 1997, Sankoh was taken prisoner in Nigeria in circumstances that remain unclear and ECOMOG forces succeeded in taking back the capital in February 1998 and reinstating President Kabbah. But they did not manage to control the country areas where the RUF is based and in which it recruits its forces.

32. Early in 1999, S. Bockarie, Sankoh's second-in-command, launched a counter-offensive and is currently negotiating a truce in which he insists that the liberation of his leader is a *sine qua non* of a real ceasefire, whereas Nigeria and President Kabbah categorically reject that condition. Nigeria accuses Liberia and Burkina Faso of backing the rebels. It should also be noted that Nigeria, Ghana and Guinea (which provide ECOMOG forces) are lined up against the Côte d'Ivoire and Togo which are in favour of a diplomatic solution. But is ECOMOG capable of

⁸ However, E. Soussah, defending counsel for the Comoros State in the trial of the former mercenary, Robert Denard, has said that Colonel Assoumani intends to hold elections "over the next few months". See *Le Monde*, 7 May 1999.