



SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT

UPDATE REPORT



17 February 2010 No. 4

HAITI

Expected Council Action

On Friday, 19 February the Council is expecting a public briefing from Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes and the head of the Peacekeeping Department, Alain Le Roy, on the humanitarian situation in Haiti and the work of the UN Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The meeting is expected to be followed by informal consultations. It is possible that members of the Council will agree on a press statement.

Key Recent Developments

The effects of the catastrophic earthquake that struck Haiti on 12 January continue to be felt. Over 200,000 people are estimated to have died, and a million are estimated to have been left homeless. Among the casualties were dozens of UN personnel, many of whom died when MINUSTAH's headquarters was destroyed. (The earthquake caused the largest ever loss of life suffered by UN personnel in a single event.) The already significant security and peacebuilding challenges in Haiti were dramatically exacerbated by the earthquake, which caused large-scale damage to the infrastructure of the capital.

On 13 January the Secretary-General notified the Council that he was deploying Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to Haiti as his Acting Special Representative and Head of MINUSTAH. (Mulet served previously as the Special Representative and Head of MINUSTAH. At the time, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Hédi Annabi was missing and later confirmed dead, along with Principal Deputy Special Representative Luiz Carlos da Costa and Acting UN Police Commissioner Doug Coates.)

On 19 January the Council adopted resolution 1908 increasing the number of authorised military and police personnel for MINUSTAH, in line with a request made by the Secretary-General, in order to support immediate recovery, reconstruction and stability efforts. (One thousand five hundred additional police and 2,000 additional military personnel were authorised; as of 17 February, 1,510 troops and 480 police had been pledged with additional commitments being received regularly.) Although no change to the mandate was made in January, the question of possible future change was discussed. Mexico circulated a letter (S/2010/27) proposing that the mandate be adjusted so MINUSTAH could take the lead in coordinating efforts in the areas of reconstruction and humanitarian assistance, as well as maintaining stability and security.

On 18 January the Council issued a press statement expressing condolences to the families of all members of MINUSTAH who lost their lives in the earthquake.

A national day of mourning was observed on 12 February in Haiti to remember those lost in the devastating earthquake that struck on 12 January. In a news conference that day Holmes stated

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that a month after the earthquake, meeting residents' humanitarian needs was still a pressing concern. He said that overall the relief effort had achieved much but that many tasks remained. While the distribution of water and food was much improved, emergency shelter had only been provided to about a third of those needing it. In addition, thousands of latrines need to be constructed in the coming weeks. He also said that while the UN's initial six-month \$575 million flash appeal for Haiti had been well funded so far, that a larger revised 12-month appeal would be issued within a week. Holmes also stressed that the regular importation of food items has not yet resumed, and that the hundreds of thousands of displaced are putting significant stress on the food sources of the people they are living with.

Significant international focus on the aid effort has been maintained. Senior officials from donor countries, the UN and aid organisations attended a conference on Haiti convened by the government of Canada in Montreal on 25 January. A more extensive conference is planned to take place at the UN in March. It is hoped this will generate both donor support for Haiti and agreement on an in-depth strategy for addressing the longer-term needs of the country. Former US President Bill Clinton, UN Special Envoy to Haiti, has continued to play a leadership role in coordinating the international relief effort since being requested to do so by the Secretary-General on 3 February. Overall, at least 116 countries from all continents and regions of the world have contributed to the relief effort. (An account of contributions made to date, "Table A: List of All Commitments/Contributions and Pledges", is available at <http://www.reliefweb.int/fts>.)

Human Rights-Related Developments

The Human Rights Council held a special session on Haiti on 27-28 January. In a resolution, the body stressed the importance of a human rights-based approach to recovery efforts in Haiti, and the need for continuing international support for protecting human rights in the country (A/HRC/S-13/2). The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights sent a team to Haiti after the 12 January earthquake to support human rights monitoring.

Key Issues

The key immediate issue is using the prestige and public leadership of the Council to reinforce the recovery and reconstruction efforts.

A second, but probably longer-term issue is whether the current mandate of MINUSTAH is adequate as raised in the letter circulated by Mexico.

Underlying Problems

The extreme poverty of the country prior to the earthquake is exacerbating the situation and the acknowledged need for major development efforts has only been made more pressing by the immense task of reconstruction that lies ahead as the result of the earthquake. In addition, the recurrent political instability of the country, along with crime and insecurity, are interrelated problems that could reemerge.

Options

Options available to the Council include:

- refraining from any action at this stage (bearing in mind the upcoming international conference on Haiti scheduled for March, and the anticipated Secretary-General's report on MINUSTAH);
- arranging a Council visit to Haiti to directly assess the needs of the country and the mission before altering the scope of the current mandate;
- approving a press statement highlighting the recovery, peacebuilding and development needs in Haiti, and the ongoing central role for the UN and MINUSTAH in particular;

- asking the Secretary-General for a detailed plan for better integrating the security mandate of MINUSTAH with ongoing development and reconstruction operations; or
- revising the mandate of MINUSTAH to explicitly deal with the issue of peacebuilding and development, to allow the mission to comprehensively involve itself in peacebuilding and development activities.

Council Dynamics

Most Council members remain cautious about revising the mandate as soon as this week. Most seem to expect that changes to MINUSTAH's mandate are some months away.

Prior to the earthquake some P5 members were reluctant to pursue initiatives strongly pressed by Latin American members of the Council for wider integration of peacebuilding components into the peacekeeping operation. The earthquake does seem to have altered the perception of some members as to whether the mission must now play a more comprehensive role. But, there is not yet consensus among Council members regarding MINUSTAH's role going forward, and it does not seem as if any specific language is under negotiation as yet.

Most members appear to be in agreement that the Council requires more time to discuss how to proceed. Some members are in favour of sending a Council mission to Haiti in order to assess current needs firsthand. But there appears to be no agreement at this time. A Secretary-General's report on MINUSTAH is expected in April (or perhaps sooner), and some members feel that this will provide both data and an occasion for a decision on revising MINUSTAH's mandate. Others believe that the end of March conference in New York will help to generate consensus around a long-term strategy for Haiti as well. Some also feel that a change to the mission's mandate might be more appropriate if made in response to a request by the Secretary-General.

Discussion is also likely to continue in the Group of Friends (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and the US).

It is unclear at this time if a single country has the lead on Haiti.

UN Documents

Selected Council Resolutions

- S/RES/1908 (19 January 2010) bolstered the troop and police personnel for MINUSTAH by 1,500 additional police and 2,000 additional military personnel.
- S/RES/1892 (13 October 2009) renewed the mandate of MINUSTAH until 15 October 2010.

Selected Secretary-General's Report

- S/2009/439 on (1 September 2009)

Selected Letter

- S/2010/27 (18 January 2010) was Mexico's letter to the Council arguing for a realignment of MINUSTAH's mandate.

Selected Presidential Statements

- S/PRST/2009/24 (5 August 2009) regarded integration of peacebuilding in peacekeeping missions.
- S/PRST/2009/23 (22 July 2009) regarded post-conflict peacebuilding.

Selected Press Statements

- SC/9846 (18 January 2010) expressed sympathy to the people of Haiti and condolences to the families of MINUSTAH members who lost their lives in the earthquake.
- SC/9842 (13 January 2010) expressed support for the government of Haiti and

gratitude for the work of MINUSTAH in the wake of the earthquake.

Other Relevant Facts

Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINUSTAH

- Edmond Mulet (Guatemala)

Acting Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General

- Anthony Banbury (US)

UN Special Envoy to Haiti

- Bill Clinton (US)

Force Commander

- Major-General Floriano Peixoto Vieira Neto (Brazil)

Police Commissioner

- Geraldo Chaumont (Argentina)

Useful Additional Sources

- Mark Schneider, "Haiti: Building Back Better - and Beyond", *Testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee hearing on International Development and Foreign Assistance, Economic Affairs, and International Environmental Protection on Haiti's Reconstruction: Smart Planning Moving Forward* (4 February 2010).
- Eduarda Hamann, "United Nations Presence in Haiti: Challenges of a Multidimensional Peacekeeping Mission", *Conflict Trends*, Issue 4, African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (2009).

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