



SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT UPDATE REPORT



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PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT

Expected Council Action

On 28 June, following a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland, the Council will hold an open debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The theme of the debate will be the implementation of resolution 1674 of 28 April 2006, especially in the context of drafting mandates of peacekeeping operations. Because of the recent adoption of this resolution, which was in many respects a landmark development, Council members are not expected to seek to negotiate any new text but instead to focus on the challenge to produce real improvements on the ground. The meeting may generate some specific recommendations in this regard. Denmark has prepared a discussion paper in advance of this open debate.

Background

Following the recommendations from the Secretary-General's 26 November 2002 report the Council in December 2002, in a presidential statement, recognised the value of a public focus on this issue by the Council every six months.

For full background on the Council's work on this issue please consult our December 2005 *Forecast Report*. For additional information on the most recent resolution, please see our 13 January, 8 March and 20 April 2006 *Update Reports* on the Protection of Civilians.

Council Dynamics

Some Council members have been questioning the need to have the protection of civilians on the Council's agenda again only two months after the last resolution was adopted. But Denmark, which has the presidency of the Council in June, persisted with this open debate so as to:

- 1) continue the practice of holding semi-annual briefings in June and December as an important obligation for the Council;
- 2) follow-up on the April resolution as soon as possible with a briefing focused on implementation issues; and
- 3) provide all states and E10 members of the Council with a real opportunity to share their views on the issues arising from resolution 1674. (Indeed, because of disagreements between the P5 over the draft, the E10 were not closely associated with the latter phase of the consultations on resolution 1674.)

Likely Themes

Some members of the Council may want to focus on ways to have the Department of Peacekeeping Operations more involved in future briefings, since the primary goal remains improvement of peacekeeping mandates and operational activity so that protection of civilians would be better guaranteed. Previous resolutions on the protection of civilians (1296 and 1265) refer to protection in zones where peacekeeping operations are deployed. Other members are concerned that because humanitarian protection so often proves to be a necessary element of peacekeeping, it is also crucial to ensure that appropriately robust mandates be established.

Because the issue of “responsibility to protect” was such a major area of controversy in the formal discussion on the protection of civilians resolution earlier in April, it seems that some members may be hesitant to go into these issues again so soon.

UN Documents

Security Council Resolutions

- S/RES/1674 (28 April 2006)
- S/RES/1296 (19 April 2000)
- S/RES/1265 (17 September 1999)

Selected Presidential Statements

- S/PRST/2002/41 (20 December 2002) reconfirmed the need to keep protection of civilians on the Council agenda.

Selected Reports of the Secretary-General

- S/2002/1300 (26 November 2002) contained recommendations to enhance protection of civilians in the work of the UN.