



SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT UPDATE REPORT



11 May 2006 No. 1

ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA

The Council is expected to adopt on 15 May a technical rollover of the mandate of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The rollover is currently expected to be limited to two weeks.

There now deep is frustration among members with the parties' lack of progress in responding to Council demands. Specifically, Council members expect Ethiopia to give a clear, public indication that it accepts the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC)'s delimitation decision without conditions, and Eritrea to lift all restrictions on UNMEE.

There still is disagreement on the issue of when and how to decide on reducing UNMEE. Some members want new resolution to contain an immediate decision to reduce UNMEE that would become effective if the parties do not comply with Council demands by the end of May.

The majority, however, seems to favour language simply expressing the Council's future intention to reduce UNMEE should the parties not comply by the end of May.

The previous deadline for compliance with Council demands was 15 May. However, the proposal for a further two-week rollover comes in response to the postponement of the meeting of the EEBC, initially scheduled for 28 April, until 17 May. The postponement was due to the illness of the EEBC's President, Sir Elihu Lauterpacht.

The rollover proposal does not seem to be based on any strong expectation that the EEBC meeting will produce a solution. Ethiopia has stated that it does not believe that the EEBC is a suitable forum for finding a solution to the standoff. Eritrea seems prepared to lift the restrictions, but only if Ethiopia accepts the EEBC's delimitation decision clearly and unconditionally, in line with the "final and binding" nature of that decision.

Council members have adopted successive rollovers in recent months to allow room for a new diplomatic initiative to bear fruit. However, it seems that this will be the last, as there is little optimism that the EEBC meeting will assist in any way in bringing the parties closer to the political decisions they need to make if the Council's deadline is to be met. However, most Council members seem to be ready to go this last mile in the hope that there may be some last minute rethinking by the parties.

UN Documents

Selected Security Council Resolutions

- S/RES/1670 (13 April 2006) extended UNMEE until 15 May.
- S/RES/1640 (23 November 2005) demanded border demarcation and the lifting of restrictions to UNMEE.
- S/RES/1320 (15 September 2000) increased UNMEE and authorised it to monitor the Temporary Security Zone.
- S/RES/1312 (31 July 2000) established UNMEE.

Selected Presidential Statement

- S/PRST/2006/10 (24 February 2006) welcomed the meeting of the Witnesses to the Algiers Peace Agreement.
- S/PRST/2005/62 (14 December 2005) agreed with the temporary relocation to Ethiopia of part of UNMEE's staff in Eritrea.

Selected Secretary-General's Reports

- S/2006/140 (6 March 2006) is the latest report.
- S/2006/1 (3 January 2006) contained options for the future of UNMEE.
- S/2005/142 (7 March 2005) contained the EEBC's appraisal of the stalling of the demarcation, a historical summary of the process, and the 2002 Demarcation Directions.
- S/2004/973 Add. 1 (27 December 2004) contained the five-point Ethiopian proposal.

Selected Letters

- S/2006/126 (24 February 2006) contained the Witnesses' statement on the recent talks.
- S/2005/774 (9 December 2005) was a letter from Ethiopia's foreign minister indicating Addis Ababa's position on demarcation.
- S/2005/737 (25 November 2005) contained Eritrea's criticisms of resolution 1640.
- S/2000/1183 (12 December 2000) contained the Algiers Peace Agreement.
- S/2000/601 (19 June 2000) contained the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.