

SEVENTH SITTING

Tuesday, 6 December 2005

The sitting was opened at 10.00 with Mr Goris, President of the Assembly, in the Chair.

1. Attendance register

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – The names of those substitutes present at this sitting which have been notified to the President will be published with the list of representatives appended to the minutes of proceedings.

2. Adoption of the minutes

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – In accordance with Rule 23 of the Rules of Procedure, the minutes of the previous sitting have been distributed.

Are there any comments on the minutes? ...

The minutes are adopted.

3. Peacekeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa: a practical approach

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – We now have the presentation of the report of the Political Committee on peacekeeping in sub-Saharan Africa: a practical approach (Document [1913](#)).

After the presentation of the report, I will interrupt proceedings for the address by His Excellency Ambassador Said Djinnit, Commissioner for Peace and Security, African Union Commission.

I call the Rapporteur, Mr Goerens, to present the report.

Mr GOERENS (*Luxembourg*) (Translation) – Over the past months, the United Kingdom Presidency and the Assembly have made Africa a priority: Prime Minister Tony Blair chaired the Commission for Africa, the G8 Summit in Gleneagles took important decisions concerning the international financial obligations of a number of heavily indebted African countries, and the European Council decided, in June, to adopt a long-term strategy for Africa by the end of the year.

The EU Presidency invited the Assembly to make its contribution to the ongoing reflection among the governments of the Union. In September, the Assembly, together with the Belgian Chamber of Representatives, organised a conference on “Peacekeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa: a practical approach” with the participation of Louis Michel, the European Commissioner for Development. The Commission submitted its communication, entitled “EU Strategy for Africa: Towards a Euro-African pact to accelerate Africa’s development”, in October. The document is a comprehensive one, providing a full description of the Commission’s development assistance potential. The Commission calls for a coherent approach to the deployment of the range of instruments available to the European Union and in the Union’s and individual member states’ policies and activities.

Javier Solana, our Secretary-General, has in his capacity as EU High Representative, submitted a very interesting contribution, with an emphasis on the need for measures in the fields of trade, aid, and debt relief to be supported by peace and security and governance. I fully agree with Mr Solana’s analysis. The link between security and development is now well established and we know from experience that even a minor conflict can set the social, economic and democratic development of a country back years. I should like to use this opportunity to thank Mr Solana’s able staff from the EU Task Force “Africa” for the productive exchange we have had.

I am happy to say that as Rapporteur I also enjoyed excellent cooperation with the presidency which supported and organised a very successful mission to Addis Ababa, willingly provided us with information documents, and was readily available for informal dialogue.

In Addis Ababa, I had talks with a number of different representatives of the African Union and the African Commission and took part in a key preparatory meeting of the African Standby Force. I had the opportunity to meet the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Said Djinnit, who is with us here now, and the Chairman of the Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, whom I knew already through his and my own previous functions. Ambassador Djinnit, your presence here today is a great honour for us and affords our work additional recognition. The Assembly has – from the outset – been seeking a dialogue with African partners. Many parliamentarians from African countries, some of whom are back here today, attended our conference in Brussels. You were all an important source of inspiration for our report, and I hope that, when you read it, your impression is that you were listened to.

Our report was adopted in the Political Committee before the meeting of the EU Council of Foreign Ministers on 21 and 22 November 2005 when ministers drew initial conclusions regarding the various contributions. Today is a good opportunity to respond and to provide the Council with our assessment before the final adoption of the EU Strategy for Africa at the European Council on 15 and 16 December 2005.

There are many points on which both our report and the Council conclusions are in complete agreement, such as African ownership, coherency of policies and approaches, the inclusion of African sub-regional organisations, the need for long-term financial support, and combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

The Council document is much wider in scope than our report, also covering issues such as trade, migration, infrastructure and development policy. The Assembly report concentrates on security aspects, the current activities and role of the African Union and its crisis management capabilities, and, more particularly, on questions of peacekeeping and its future funding, based on the means provided by the EU's African Peace Facility.

The EU Council is now talking about an EU Strategy for Africa. Not long ago, the aim was to present a partnership strategy with Africa. I believe we should maintain the idea of a partnership between the EU and Africa, and that we should avoid its becoming a partnership without partners as happened recently in the Euromed framework.

When it comes to financing crisis-management in Africa, the Council simply states there is a need for long-term funding for the African Peace Facility. Our report contains a detailed chapter on the African Peace Facility and what needs to be done to maximise its impact and sustainability – necessities the Council pertinently notes. We agree that there is no need to reinvent the wheel, but a more convincing commitment on the part of the Council to replenish, reform and rename the facility, so that it is clear who provides the funding and who takes the decisions at the end of the day, would be welcome. We call for a Euro-African Peace and Security Fund to which European and African countries contribute, which is complementary to other sources of funding, and which makes the funding of African crisis-management activities more predictable for the African Union. Our commitment to the notion of African ownership is a hollow one if we do not provide Africans with the means to allow them to act for themselves.

Another area where we agree in principle with the Council, but where we want to see more concrete commitment, is the Council's proposal to strengthen the EU-AU political dialogue. In the light of the decisive role the EU Political and Security Committee plays in determining financial and other support for the African Union, we recommend the holding of regular meetings at ambassador level between the EU PSC and the AU Peace and Security Council. Given the distance between Brussels and Addis Ababa, video conferencing could be envisaged as a way of facilitating the dialogue.

Strengthening the capabilities of African countries to deploy crisis management and peacekeeping forces is one of the priorities the Council rightly identifies. This is an area where the EU member states make important individual contributions. The Council proposes to support training centres in Africa. At the Assembly's conference in Brussels, our former President, Armand De Decker, who is today Belgium's Minister for Development Cooperation, suggested setting up a joint EU-AU military base in Central Africa where African and European soldiers could be trained together and equipment be made available. We believe this is an idea worth further study, provided our African partners agree.

These are only a few of the points I wanted to raise today by way of comparison between the Council's conclusions and our report. I believe the EU should not look at Africa as one seeking his own advantage, with an eye only to its material wealth. We are looking for a partnership with our neighbour in the south, with whom we have close historic, cultural and economic ties, but to whom great injustice has been done in the past. The African people have suffered great harm either as a result of decisions taken by our countries or by the decisions our governments failed to take. Although we cannot intervene in every conflict this does not mean that we must not act where we can to help prevent great loss of human life.

In conclusion, let me simply say this: our debt of responsibility towards the peoples of Africa, the commitments we have given in various forums, at the G8, at the United Nations World Summit, in the framework of the Cotounou agreements, our talk of a "responsibility to protect", are promises we need to keep. If we fail to provide the African Union with the means of tackling the problems of the continent now, we will have a far higher bill, or should I say toll – death toll – to pay tomorrow.

The presidency has invited us to contribute to its work on the final document for the European Council in December, at which the EU strategy for Africa is to be adopted. With your vote today, we can send a strong signal to the Council that we would like to see certain of the foreign ministers' interim conclusions strengthened in the final document and the implementation of the practical proposals we make in our report.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Goerens.

***4. Address by H. E. Ambassador Djinnit, Commissioner for Peace and Security,
African Union Commission***

The PRESIDENT – It is a great pleasure to welcome Mr Laurent Akoun, President of the Defence and Security Committee of the National Assembly of the Ivory Coast, Mr Nandjirmado Goumba, a Member of the Parliament of Togo, and Mr Ahmed from Eritrea. I can also see in the gallery many distinguished ministers and attachés from other African embassies, whom I am delighted to welcome to the Chamber.

The next order of the day is an address by the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union Commission, Mr Said Djinnit. Commissioner, let me start by thanking you for being with us this morning.

As our Rapporteur Charles Goerens said a few moments ago, your presence here is a strong token of recognition for our work and our interest in, and commitment, to the security of the African continent. We are grateful in turn for your interest in the work of the WEU Assembly.

I was myself the author of the previous report on peacekeeping in Africa for our Defence Committee and have been following the African Union's swift evolution with great interest.

Our Assembly believes in the future of the African continent and in the important role the African Union must play not only in its social and economic development, but in respect of governance and in tackling Africa's crises and conflicts.

There can be no lasting development without security, and we will continue to put pressure on our governments to keep the promises they make and continue supporting your excellent work.

Commissioner Djinnit, you are an internationally recognised figure, consulted by Africans and Europeans alike on all manner of security questions. Together with President Konaré, you are working daily to resolve the continent's current conflicts. We will listen most carefully to what you have to say.

You and President Konaré gave our Rapporteur, Mr Goerens, a magnificent welcome in Addis Ababa. We would like to return the favour today. Commissioner, the floor is yours!

Mr DJINNIT (*Commissioner for Peace and Security, African Union Commission*) (Translation) – Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Members of the Assembly, I would like to start by thanking the President of the Assembly on behalf of the President of the African Union Commission, Mr Alpha Oumar Konaré, for having invited him to take part in this session.

I am grateful, President, for your words of encouragement to the AU and its Commission, and for the hope you expressed as regards the capacity of the AU and that of the African leaders in general to meet the different challenges facing Africa.

It is a great pleasure for me to represent the AU Commission and its President at this session.

Finally, I would like to thank the Rapporteur of this Assembly, Charles Goerens, for the enthusiasm he showed during his visit to Addis Ababa and for the useful in-depth discussions that we had with all the relevant authorities there on key issues of peace and security in Africa.

I have been asked to give a presentation on the African Union's experience in the area of peacekeeping and security in Africa. I will do so as succinctly as I can, placing that experience in the context of the AU's Peace and Security Agenda for Africa. If I was asked to sum up that Agenda with a few key words, these would be: mandate, principle, architecture, partnerships and challenges.

As far as the first is concerned, the AU has been given the mandate to act and intervene in order to promote peace and security on the African continent by means of various mechanisms and measures.

The first of these is conflict prevention. Indeed that is our priority in the AU: to prevent crises from degenerating into open conflict.

Conflict prevention entails the structural prevention of conflicts through programmes for the promotion of good governance, democracy and the rule of law. The AU embarked on those efforts during the 1990s to meet the democratic challenges posed by the introduction of multi-party systems. Since the 1990s it has been endeavouring to develop its democracy and governance programme. Indeed, among its short-term objectives is the adoption of a Charter on elections, democracy and governance in Africa setting out the essential values recently developed by the African institutions in cooperation with the international community in order to promote democracy and good governance in Africa.

It is important, in addition to that structural conflict-prevention programme, to set up machinery for operational conflict prevention by means of a continent-wide early warning system. I'll come back to that point in a moment.

The second aspect of the mandate is conflict management. When a conflict cannot be averted it has to be managed and resolved through the structures and machinery provided for in the peace and security architecture, including peacekeeping operations. That precisely is the challenge facing the AU: to set up the different conflict-management arrangements and structures, including peacekeeping machinery.

Let me turn just for a moment to an important aspect of life in Africa and of its institutions. Peacekeeping operations are a whole new field of activity for Africa. When the Secretary-General of the former Organisation for African Unity submitted a report to the heads of state meeting in Dakar in 1992, his proposals for that machinery, the first that this continental organisation had ever been able to set up, comprised a peacekeeping component. However, at that time the heads of state and the states themselves were unanimously of the opinion that it was not up to the OAU to become involved in peacekeeping operations, which in their view remained the exclusive responsibility of the United Nations, which had the requisite mandate, capabilities, expertise and resources. It was only in 1993 that the Dakar mechanism was adopted in Cairo, but in the meantime, the Secretary-General's proposal had been trimmed of all references to involvement by the OAU in peacekeeping operations. The OAU was merely authorised to deploy fact-finding missions of a limited size and duration. So this is what was done by the Organisation for African Unity in the late 1980s and the 1990s.

The last component of the AU mandate for crisis prevention, crisis management and peace consolidation is also a new area. The OAU built up some experience in the field of conflict management and endeavoured to become involved in conflict prevention by means of structural prevention programmes and the machinery that is now being put in place. But now the AU and the African regional institutions are also trying to become involved in consolidating peace. The cases of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia, among others, illustrate the high risk of a new outbreak of conflict if peace is not consolidated during the post-conflict phase. The AU therefore intends to participate in that consolidation process by means of a post-conflict programme which is due shortly to be submitted to the Assembly of heads of state for adoption and which will mark the beginning of a new chapter in the African Union's

intervention for the purpose of consolidating peace, once it has been established by means of the conflict-prevention and conflict-management machinery.

That was the first point concerning the mandate. Allow me now to say a few words as regards the principle. The OAU's peacekeeping action was greatly hindered by the abuse of the principle of non-interference. Within the AU we prefer to talk about non-indifference, rather than non-interference. This means giving the AU the mandate to intervene in conflict situations in Africa, including for peacemaking purposes, within the limits defined by its Founding Act. Thus from an organisation that was to all intents and purposes paralysed by the abuse of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states we have evolved into one that is endeavouring to put into practice the principle of non-indifference, of the duty to provide assistance.

The third point is the architecture: we have a mandate and a principle, but we also need a peace and security architecture to underpin this new resolve of the African Union and the regional institutions.

The Peace and Security Council – the new key component of the peace and security architecture of the continent of Africa – is obviously at the heart of those arrangements. On the model of the UN Security Council, it is the decision-making body in the field of peace and security in Africa. It is supported by a number of structures. I will mention at least four of these, including the AU Commission, which has the power to submit proposals and to monitor and implement the decisions of the Peace and Security Council. Other structures are the continent-wide early-warning system, which includes the AU Situation Room that is under construction. It already exists in embryonic form in Addis Ababa, but it is to be developed and linked up with the various regional mechanisms and with other organisations and institutions, including those of civil society.

A number of regional organisations are also in the process of setting up conflict-prevention machinery. ECOWAS in particular already has such a structure, as does IGAG, although it is not yet operational. All these structures will need to be linked up with each other in order to be able to gather, process and analyse a maximum amount of information with a view to taking action sufficiently in advance to avoid a situation from becoming explosive and degenerating into open conflict. We are, then, in the process of building this architecture. It is still at the embryonic stage for the moment but we will make a committed effort over the years to come.

The future African Standby Force which Mr Goerens mentions in his report is the armed component of that architecture. This is in my view one of the fundamental differences between the OAU and AU structures. Indeed, it is one thing to express resolve, and quite another to put decisions into practice. This is the initiative which will enable the AU to translate its resolve into effective and efficient action.

The African Force will comprise five brigades, one for each geographic region. They will receive the same training and share common concepts (generally inspired by those of the United Nations but adapted to take account of certain realities of the situation in Africa) and a common doctrine, with a view to conducting peace-support operations.

Progress has been made towards setting up the Force and a number of workshops are scheduled with a view to finalising the process. The official target date is 2010, but there are high hopes that it will be in place before that. Indeed, a number of regions are already well ahead with creating the planning structures. The Force could take action under the auspices of the AU or the regional institutions in order to keep peace on the continent, or even be made available to the United Nations.

This brings me to the issue of partnership on the basis of a more robust mandate, for while we are in the process of setting up an architecture, we are conscious of the AU's limited resources and the need therefore for a partnership in compliance with the principle of international solidarity, of the international peace and security partnership.

Our priority for such a partnership is the United Nations, because we have a firm belief in international legitimacy and in the major role to be played by the UN and the UN Security Council in all peacekeeping action at international, continental or regional level. A sound partnership with the UN is therefore a necessity.

We are working downstream to develop relations and strong partnerships with the five African regions, because the African regional economic groupings are in our view the pillars not only of Africa's economic and social integration, but also of its peace and security structures. This architecture embracing the regions, the continent as a whole and the United Nations at global level is therefore essential.

In our opinion the African Union has an important part to play as an interface, for it is the channel through which Africa can address the United Nations, in other words the global level, and through which the global level can address the continent.

The other multilateral and bilateral institutions constitute another fundamental aspect of that pillar. Major partnerships are being developed in that framework, in particular with the European Union. Let me mention some of the missions in which that partnership has been put into practice.

Since the OAU was transformed into the African Union, two peacekeeping operations have been deployed, the first in Burundi. I should remind you that the United Nations was initially reluctant to deploy a peacekeeping mission, on the grounds that peace had not been maintained due to the failure of the main armed groups to sign the Arusha Agreement. The AU was therefore obliged to deploy South African, Ethiopian and Mozambican units for some thirteen months before the UN finally agreed, at the AU's request, to take over the peacekeeping operation. In the meantime one of the major rebel groups – one of its members is the current President of Burundi – had signed the peace agreement. It was only at that point that the UN considered the conditions to be met, even though the FLN Paleotu party has still not joined the peace camp. Thus we were able to launch this first AU peacekeeping operation with the support of our European partners under the Cotonou Agreement, but drawing also on assets made available by individual EU member states and the United States.

The other major AU mission was in Darfur, Sudan. It involved the deployment of 7 000 men, once again with the support of the UN, EU and NATO. We are also envisaging peace support operations in the East of the Congo to help with the disarmament process, as well as in Somalia, as soon as conditions permit.

My last point concerns the veritable challenge that all these actions constitute for us. This challenge enables us to demonstrate the ambitions of the African continent, and the resolve of the African institutions in particular to establish a new mandate based on "non-indifference". Through the operations in Burundi and Sudan and the various other missions in which it is engaged on the continent, the African Union has demonstrated Africa's determination to put in place and fully exercise that new mandate. At the same time the AU has built up experience and acquired the capabilities that are fundamental for the future role of the African institutions in the field of peacekeeping.

This new resolve on the part of the AU illustrates not only the continent's ambitions, but also the limits to what it can do alone, or with its partners. We do not have the necessary human resources to assume this huge mandate. There are also financial limits, which is why we have appealed for the financial support of our partners. I would like to underline in that respect the importance of the contribution that the EU has agreed to make in order to support the AU's peacekeeping efforts.

The training of troops constitutes another limit to our action. Indeed, the forces deployed in Burundi and Sudan, in the police area in particular, do not always have the necessary training. We have deployed more than 1 500 police officers to Darfur, but we were not always able to send police officers who were properly trained and equipped to deal with the situation there. The training problem also limits the scope of the EU's action in this area.

It is essential that the international community and our European partners in particular, continue to provide the African Union with financial, logistic and political support. The AU is all the more determined to shoulder its responsibilities for promoting peace, security and stability in the knowledge that the action it takes provides clear added value. But that action cannot succeed without the support of its partners. It is therefore crucial to mobilise on a permanent basis the resources needed to finance the African Union.

The African Peace Facility set up by the EU is an essential tool. We must work to preserve and strengthen it and to set up complementary instruments.

Allow me to make two remarks by way of conclusion.

I would like first of all to stress how essential it is to invest in the partnership between the African Union and the European Union. The Peace Facility not only enabled the AU to take action in Sudan and elsewhere, but also revealed the enormous possibilities offered by the EU-AU partnership. One of its major achievements has been to highlight the great advantages of that partnership for cooperation between the two organisations.

Secondly, I would like to stress that the creation of the African Union on the model of the European Union, with its Court of Justice and Economic and Social Council, has strengthened the possibilities for cooperation between the EU and AU.

Finally, I would like to stress how important it is to invest not only in the relations between the European Union and the African Union, but also in the African institutions. Change can only be brought about in Africa by the African institutions, which are in the process of being built. A new mandate founded on new principles has been established. An architecture to support the mandate and principles has been set up. A partnership has been created to consolidate all this. But now we need to breathe life into those African institutions, because change in Africa must come from within. The whole issue of strengthening African capabilities in my view constitutes a strategic dimension of the EU-AU partnership.

Since I am in a European institution now, I will conclude by stressing the importance of supporting the African institutions through programmes for strengthening African capabilities.

Thank you for your attention.

The PRESIDENT (summary) thanked Ambassador Djinnit and highlighted the plea for investment in African institutions. Mr Mota Amaral was called.

Mr MOTA AMARAL (*Portugal*) (summary) thanked Ambassador Djinnit. It was important to have a new debate on the EU's relations with Africa. He asked what progress had been made in the field of crisis prevention.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Mr Djinnit, you have the floor.

Mr DJINNIT (*Commissioner for Peace and Security, African Union Commission*) (summary) said that a number of initiatives had been developed over the years including the adoption of democracy as a legitimate description of African politics since 1990. Pluralism was also more prevalent. Unity in the past had been based on geographical proximity. Today however, while geography remained important, it could also be a factor in producing adversity. Hence it was important to base unity in Africa on shared, universal values which originated in, and reflected, Africa. African political institutions were thus very important.

The development of African institutions had to be supported. The continent was very different to how it had appeared 10 to 15 years ago. However, there was some opposition to this change. This made support for the change from the EU more important.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Thank you.

The next speaker is Mr Höfer.

Mr HÖFER (*Germany*) (summary) asked what the likelihood was of a solution being reached at the seventh round of peace talks in Dafur.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – I call on Mr Djinnit to reply.

Mr DJINNIT (*Commissioner for Peace and Security, African Union Commission*) (summary) said that there was a leadership crisis in the Sudanese People's Liberation Army Movement. This and other factors had made the negotiations very difficult. The lack of unity within the SPLAM had hindered previous peace rounds. Following round six, African leaders had decided to meet the leaders of the SPLAM on the ground before the start of the next peace talks. This had not been very successful either.

However, a declaration of principles had been agreed and some negotiations on methodology and power sharing had been progressing. There had been high hopes for a successful outcome for the seventh round.

Given that the African Union was a new institution, it still had to find its feet in terms of resources and architecture. However, there was a resolve to make this round successful. The AU and its partners were doing their utmost to strengthen their presence on the ground.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – I next call Ms Jipa.

Ms JIPA (*Romania*) (summary) asked whether the permanent missions of the various international organisations were an alternative to the conflicts in Africa.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – I call the Commissioner.

Mr DJINNIT (*Commissioner for Peace and Security, African Union Commission*) (summary) stressed that African problems required African solutions. Nobody could assume these responsibilities on behalf of Africans. However, there was still a belief in international solidarity. This solidarity was enshrined in the United Nations Security Council. The time had come to review the issues under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. It was not a case of just saying it was Africa's problem – a partnership was needed. The international community needed to show solidarity.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Djinnit. The next question is from Tony Lloyd.

Mr LLOYD (*United Kingdom*) – Commissioner, I thank you for your wise words this morning. I share your cautious optimism about the direction in which Africa is travelling, even though huge problems remain. Will you address a specific problem in Africa, which is the question of Somalia? Frankly, Somalia has largely been abandoned by the Europeans, and there has been less assistance than formerly from my continent. The problem must be resolved, however, if the whole of east Africa is to enjoy some stability in future. Are you optimistic that the current round of talks will produce results, and what tangible, practical assistance would help the African Union to bring pressure to bear on the warlords and political leaders in Somalia? What can Europe do to give you and your colleagues real assistance in moving Somalia forward?

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Lloyd.

Mr Djinnit, you have the floor.

Mr DJINNIT (*Commissioner for Peace and Security, African Union Commission*) – Thank you for raising the case of Somalia, Mr Lloyd. I am pleased to hear a representative saying that Somalia has been abandoned by the international community. There has been a shift in the position of the international organisations from the situation in the 1990s, when they would not intervene or deploy peacekeeping operations, towards a situation in which it is expected to do so. That has a great deal to do with the situations faced in Somalia and Rwanda where the international community did not assume full responsibility. That shocked minds in Africa; at a time when Rwanda most needed the international community, the United Nations decided to withdraw; when the Somali people most needed the international community, the United Nations again decided to withdraw. That brought the African leaders to rethink their positions and to decide that henceforth the African Union and African institutions are obliged – indeed, have a duty – to help people in the continent who are suffering.

Somalia has been forgotten for too long. The African Union believes that the international community should be more supportive. The Djibouti conference has made significant progress in bringing together the factions and community leaders, and they have been able to put together a transitional government and transitional Somalian institutions, which deserve strong support. We understand the international community's hesitation, but we in the African Union are making every effort to sensitise the international community to support those institutions. It is true that that will not be easy, because the situation has deteriorated so much that the work that needs to be done is huge.

Recently, we have been encouraged by the reconciliation initiative taken by the Prime Minister and other Somali leaders, and we are of the strong opinion that those efforts must be supported. The African Union is taking an initiative to convene a meeting with our partners, including the European Union, to review the situation in Somalia as regards reconciliation and what needs to be done, on the one hand, to support reconciliation for Somalis, and on the other to stabilise Somalia in terms of providing training to the security forces in order to stabilise institutions and to deal with post-conflict reconstruction. We urge our partners to pay attention to the situation in Somalia, and as you rightly said, Mr Lloyd, the impact of

Somalia on the whole of Africa is obvious, and the region is in trouble. We know of course of the problem in Darfur, and the unresolved conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which remains unstable. Finding a solution to the problem of Somalia would help greatly to promote stability in the region, which continues to suffer greatly.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Djinnit.

The next question is from Ms Petrescu.

Ms PETRESCU(*Romania*) (summary) said that the EU Heads of State and Government would be adopting the EU strategy for Africa at the December Council meeting. She asked whether the Union had an economic and an education strategy. The interests of countries such as China and the United States in Africa were also raised.

The PRESIDENT – You have the floor, Mr Djinnit.

Mr DJINNIT (*Commissioner for Peace and Security, African Union Commission*) (summary) said he would speak for the African Union. The African Union had welcomed the strengthening of a partnership with the EU. The African Union's strategy had covered all aspects of cooperation and partnership. There were also other important partnerships such as those with the United States, Japan and China. Africa needed all partnerships, but the EU partnership in particular was strategic. It was necessary to give this partnership content and then implement it. The African Union firmly believed such partnerships required financial instruments and the EU had the means to provide assistance.

WEU's report looked at Sub-Saharan Africa but the African Union had preferred to speak about the whole of Africa. The current period was the first time Africa and Europe had looked at Africa as a whole. Europe and Africa had been bound by many factors over time. An important factor now was the need for financial resources for Africa.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you. The next question is from our colleague from Eritrea, Deputy Andebrham Weldegiorgis.

Mr WELDEGIORGIS (*Observer from Eritrea*) – Thank you, Mr President. I should also like to thank my good friend Ambassador Djinnit for his excellent presentation. He highlighted the shifting perspective and the emerging goals and aspirations of the African Union, especially in the areas of conflict prevention and peacekeeping. He also pointed out the structural limitations, weaknesses and resource constraints that hamper the AU in pursuing its objectives and conducting its operations effectively. In that regard, the AU possesses an important instrument to strengthen Africa's capacity. The proposed strategy for EU-Africa partnership is another important instrument to reinforce Africa's capacity.

I come from Eritrea, in the Horn of Africa. The region is very volatile. The crises affecting it are very clear. I am glad that Mr Lloyd, from the United Kingdom, raised the issue of Somalia. Sudan is the largest country in the Horn of Africa, and has the longest-running war in Africa. The Darfur conflict and killings must be brought to an end. A political solution must be found, as part of the comprehensive peace agreement. It cannot be seen in isolation. The implementation of the CPA must be supported as the nucleus from which all the outstanding conflicts in the Sudan can be addressed.

In addition to the Somalia conflict, there is also the border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The AU and the United Nations are guarantors of the Algiers peace agreements, which have put the solution on the table. The implementation of that solution is being hampered by Ethiopia's refusal to accept unconditionally the final and binding delimitation decision. Acceptance of that would recognise the colonial treaty border between Eritrea and Ethiopia and allow its demarcation.

I do not believe that the AU has really exerted its strength as a guarantor. The internal structural problems that appear to remain prevent the AU from exercising its mandate in that respect.

Another related issue is the fact that Eritrea, a member state of the AU, has been denied its right to representation in the AU. The AU has not really invoked its headquarters agreement to force Ethiopia to accept Eritrea's representation in Addis Ababa. That is one of the weaknesses that must be addressed.

Other factors include recent events in Ethiopia such as the conduct and aftermath of the elections, which included protests and repression. When everybody in the international community with some political clout has voiced concern about that, the relative silence of the AU has been quite embarrassing.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you.

I call the Commissioner to reply.

Mr DJINNIT (*Commissioner for Peace and Security, African Union Commission*) – I thank my brother Andebrham Weldegiorgis for his remarks. He raised the issue of Sudan and the relationship between the Darfur situation and the CPA. He is right in what he said: the strategy in the Abuja talks is to place the discussions on Darfur in the larger context of Sudan and the CPA.

We thought that the signing of the CPA would be a boost to the talks in Abuja, but we have been concerned for the last month that the lack of progress in those talks could undermine the implementation of the CPA. Those are the dynamics of a conflict situation in the African continent, but we hope that the National Unity Government of Sudan will work together for the implementation of the CPA. We are encouraged by the recent establishment of the assessment commission mechanism, whose goal is to follow up on the implementation of the CPA. In addition, the Government of Sudan has decided to put together united delegations to Darfur. That is another reason to believe that we will be able to make more progress in Darfur. The new Sudanese delegation comprises the SPLM as part of the National Unity Government and some elements from civil society. We therefore hope that it is comprehensive.

This question gives me an opportunity to make some other remarks. Sudan is the largest country in Africa. We in the AU are convinced that promoting peace in Sudan would help promote peace in the region and in the continent as a whole. I personally believe that. The greatest countries in the continent – such as Angola, the DRC and Sudan – are all linked. They are all giant countries in the middle of Africa. Post-conflict reconstruction is going on in Angola after peace was finally achieved. We are facing some difficulties in the DRC but progress is definitely being made. We are also making progress in Sudan, and it is possible that we will achieve in the coming years significant progress towards establishing peace and security for the continent as a whole, as Sudan represents the biggest challenge.

I agree with Andebrham Weldegiorgis about Ethiopia and Eritrea. We face a great challenge in implementing the agreements in that conflict. The AU is one of the witnesses, together with the United Nations, the EU and others. In that context, the AU has not always been able to make its views clear in public, as each institution has to work within its structural limitations. However, the AU has been working with the other witnesses to see what can be done to push the process forward. More recently, the Chairman of the Commission met the United States envoy, Mr Yamamoto, who visited the region.

We are considering the best ways and means for the AU to overcome the problems of the implementation of the Algiers agreement and the demarcation commission within the context of the witnesses.

The situation in Ethiopia is being followed closely, as with the internal situation in any other country, and the AU has been doing its utmost to overcome the crisis that emerged following the election in that country. More recently, the AU has published the communiqué, although we do not always believe that making public pronouncements can help. As I said clearly and openly in my introduction, we cannot expect the AU, which was born only two or three years ago with a clear mandate and principles but with weak institutions, to solve the problems immediately. People are asking why the African Union is not addressing issues such as Zimbabwe and other conflicts, but the AU and NEPAD cannot be expected to solve such situations and governance crises all at once.

The problem is to build capacity, and I believe in building capacity gradually. I am convinced from my experience of the continent that the more one builds capacity the more one can deliver. I have no reason to doubt and every reason to believe in and to trust African institutions when they are given the right energy and resources with which to grow and deliver their mandate.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Commissioner.

I call Mr Clerides.

Mr CLERIDES (*Cyprus*) – Thank you, Mr President, and thank you Mr Commissioner for your excellent contributions to today's debate on Sub-Saharan Africa and Africa in general. You have pleaded for EU assistance, and rightly so, but now we have to plead for your understanding, and please excuse me for doing this.

When the average European hears about Africa he hears about war, poverty, starvation and the violation of human rights, but he also hears a very important word that is related to the financial aid or assistance that Africa rightly needs if it is to recover, and that word is corruption.

We as parliamentarians have to defend every single penny that the taxpayer is asked to contribute, whether it be for their own country, their contribution as a member state to the EU or for aid to Africa to build its institutions, to which you have rightly referred. So it is important for parliamentarians in the European countries to be assured and to feel confident that steps are being taken to combat the main problem of corruption.

We continue to read reports in reputable newspapers and magazines that many Sub-Saharan governments are strong on rhetoric, but that the pace of change has been disappointingly slow, so we seek your views on that.

The PRESIDENT – I call the Commissioner.

Mr DJINNIT (*Commissioner for Peace and Security, African Union Commission*) – Obviously, I cannot justify everything by referring to a lack of capacity, although that has an impact on everything that we discuss. Corruption is a serious issue, although that word was not used in the multilateral language within Africa before 2000.

The issue of corruption is being treated with great seriousness by the AU. The AU has adopted a convention on preventing and combating corruption, which is an indication of the seriousness with which the AU treats the issue. Obviously, no African can justify the serious problems of corruption within the continent, but that corruption exists more in business than in aid. However, I personally believe that we need to review the whole problem of international aid – how it is utilised by our partners and in the countries receiving it. Members of Parliament, both in Europe and in Africa, should address the problem of the use of aid by governments, both the donor countries and the recipients in Africa, to see what part of the aid is reaching those affected by the problems.

We fully agree that the issue of corruption needs to be addressed. Obviously, there are two sides to the problem. There is the side in Africa, and again I say that that is a new battle that was started in Africa through the adoption of the convention on preventing and combating corruption. The implementation of that obviously needs institutions of governance such as the Pan-African Parliament and the court of justice. Such institutions will help us with our agenda for governance.

The other part of the corruption problem is in the donor countries, which I believe parliamentarians are already engaged in addressing. But, yes, you have a point – the issue needs to be seriously addressed. We have mushrooming non-governmental organisations in Africa dealing with issues of governance and peace and security, and I encourage such African institutions and civil society to involve themselves in the issue of corruption because it is unacceptable that the limited resources available to us and available to our countries from the donor countries are not fully utilised in addressing the scourge facing the people in Africa.

I have strong views on the issue of corruption and I want to assure you that it is important and deserves greater commitment and mobilisation within the continent. This is just the beginning of that campaign.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Thank you, Commissioner. We shall now return to the debate.

5. Peacekeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa: a practical approach (resumed debate)

The PRESIDENT (summary) closed the speakers list with nine names on it. Ambassador Djinnit would be asked to make final remarks at the end of the debate. In view of the limited time available speakers should not exceed four minutes.

He called Mr Ahmed.

Mr AHMED (*Observer from Sudan*) – I do appreciate the commendable efforts that were exerted by Mr Goerens and the Political Committee in preparing this excellent report. I had the opportunity to take part in the sessions in Brussels and to see most of these recommendations evolving. However, because of the volatile subject-matter of the report, part of it will have to be amended. I shall focus generally on Sudan and the Sudanese Government and Darfur in particular.

First, the fact that a new Government of National Unity was established in Sudan, in which former rebel groups including the SPLN/A of the south and the NDA of the north control 48% of the Cabinet and of Parliament, should be reflected in a change of attitude. Negative reference to the old government is still maintained and attributed to the new government. One part of the report deplors “the fact that the Sudanese Government continues to hinder the work of humanitarian organisations”. Is the report censuring the old government or the new one, in which the ministry of humanitarian affairs is led by a minister from the SPLN/A? The accusation that the new Government of National Unity continues along the same lines pursued by its predecessor has not yet been levelled against the new government – at least not to my knowledge.

Another phrase in the report refers to “taking the view that international pressure on the Government of Sudan must be stepped up”. I do not think that it is the policy of the international community to step up pressure on the three-month-old Government of National Unity, in spite of the pledges of support made last January in Nairobi. If the new Government of National Unity is not witnessing a change of policy, it will be very much discouraged.

I draw attention to the fact that recommendation 10 on supporting proposals to strengthen the mandate of the African Mission in Darfur so that it is able to disarm the various armed groups conflicts with recommendation 11, proposing support for the Sudan GNU police forces, which, according to the report, are responsible for the security of the population in Darfur.

Security in Darfur is the responsibility either of the African Mission, or the police of the GNU, which was restructured, in the Nairobi agreement, by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations along decentralised lines. Enhancing the capacities of the new decentralised police will take priority. Handing over the disarmament role to the African Mission will undermine the police. The practical problems were revealed last week by the United States Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, who said that there was no way to raise the African Union troops in Darfur from the current 7 000 to 12 000 without looking at United Nations troops, whose contributions should be taken into account.

We should either enhance the role of the new police of the GNU or involve the African Union mission as a United Nations operation, but we do not think that it is feasible or advisable to do them together.

Sudanese-Eritrean relations are thawing. Our first Vice-President – chairman of the SPNL/A – visited Eritrea last week and announced, together with the Eritrean President, that the borders are going to open shortly. That will have a positive impact on the situation in eastern Sudan, which deserves to be noted and encouraged.

The fact that the formula for wealth sharing included in the Nairobi peace agreement, particularly with respect to the sharing of oil revenues, covers all the country – as rightly mentioned by my colleague from Eritrea and by Ambassador Djinnit – should be the cornerstone of progress in Sudan. It is a formula that was meticulously worked out, along with the World Bank and the IMF, for the benefit of all the regions of the country, including eastern Sudan. That needs to be supported and consolidated. Eastern Sudan needs its oil share, and this should be included in the report.

The splintering of the Darfur rebel movements and its negative impact on the Abuja talks should be noted. If such an irresponsible attitude should pass unnoticed by the international community, that will definitely encourage the mushrooming of so many rebel movements in Darfur.

The PRESIDENT – I call Mr Lintner.

Mr LINTNER (*Germany*) (summary) welcomed the report’s detailed and comprehensive examination of the situation in Africa, and, in particular, its stress on the fact that African countries should

bear their own responsibilities. Peace and security and good governance were inseparable. The increased flows of migrants to Europe showed the despair of the population of African countries. It was for African countries to take greater responsibilities, but Europe had to help with the pre-conditions for this. The colonial past and current social and economic conditions were not acceptable excuses. There should be more aid from the EU and new mechanisms should be developed. Financial aid should be tied to specific conditions and to monitoring. The Commission should be involved, as should the European Parliament. Growing tribalisation in large African countries was worrying, as it increased corruption.

(Mr Vera Jardim, a Vice-President of the Assembly, took the Chair)

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – I call Mr Mendes Bota.

Mr MENDES BOTA (*Portugal*) (summary) believed that Africa had slipped backwards, partly due to theft and greed on the part of its leaders. The flow of African migrants was a tragedy with which Europe had to cope. It was possible that the plight of desperately poor Africans could foster terrorism. The EU therefore needed a concerted approach to Africa. The Commission for Africa had submitted a report to the G8 meeting in Gleneagles. It had proposed that funds in bank accounts of corrupt African leaders should be repatriated from Western countries to help eliminate their countries' indebtedness. It was a pity that the G8 had not commented on this proposal. They were not tackling the overall problem of African debt, but only the most indebted: 18 out of the total number of African states. Annual assistance to Africa was set to rise to US \$25 million by 2015, but few recognised that 90% of all aid was clawed back by developed countries. Developed countries were taking away with one hand what they had given with the other.

Were there to be a 1% growth in trade, its effect would be equivalent to 70 times the amount currently given in aid to Africa.

It was also necessary directly to involve African countries in the solutions to their own problems. The Euro-African peace and security fund should be supported. The report was to be commended.

The PRESIDENT – I call Mr Açıkgöz.

Mr AÇIKGÖZ (*Turkey*) – I thank the Rapporteur for his comprehensive report. Having declared 2005 the Year of Africa, this report has further significance for us because Turkey pays close attention to Africa's political problems with the aim of helping to find solutions. Turkey has already developed a policy for "opening up to Africa" and a strategy for developing economic relations with African countries.

Turkey has taken an active stance through the relevant organs of the United Nations such as the Namibia Commission and our continued participation in several United Nations operations and missions in Africa. The Turkish police and military have taken on important duties to protect peace on the continent. Our participation in the EU police mission in Kinshasa is yet another contribution towards that end.

We actively support the African Union and African nations in their efforts to achieve peace, democracy, development and prosperity. The establishment of the African Union is a clear step towards bringing the nations of Africa together to pursue common goals such as good governance and the rule of law.

In the political realm, the AU is a concrete manifestation of the efforts aimed at leading Africa into a new path that will help the continent erase its unfortunate image as the continent of wars, crises, disease and catastrophe. We are pleased that the AU has already taken great steps and recorded great achievements in that direction.

The African Mission in Sudan that is being conducted in Darfur is an important test case for the international community. Turkey is paying the utmost attention to the success of this operation. We therefore continue to support the engagement of major international organisations such as NATO and the EU in Sudan. Turkey contributes to this mission via NATO and we continue our bilateral assistance to the Government of Sudan. The mission's failure would not only be detrimental to the peace of Sudan but have a negative impact on the whole continent.

We are convinced that the AU will continue to play a vital role in reinforcing national conciliation processes in Africa and in shaping Africa's achievements in moving to a better future. That is why we are pleased that Turkey was been granted observer status at the African Union on 12 April 2005.

We have our relations with the AU, as shown by the visit paid by the President of the AU Commission, Mr Alpha Oumar Konaré to Turkey two weeks ago. Our relations were further enhanced by the first international Turkish-African conference. Furthermore, TICA – the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency – had its programme coordinator's office in Addis Ababa officially opened by the Turkish Prime Minister during his visit to Ethiopia. The office will lead support and development projects not only in Ethiopia but in the whole region. It will be a vehicle through which Turkey can share its experience in the fields of economic and social development with African countries.

We support the efforts that are being made to assist Africa in dealing with all its serious problems, from poverty and unemployment to epidemics and ethnic conflicts.

The PRESIDENT – I call Mr Vrettos.

Mr VRETTOS (*Greece*) – I congratulate the Rapporteur on his excellent report, and I should like to draw attention to a couple of important issues concerning aspects of our peacekeeping operations in Africa.

Of course, peace and stability are preconditions for sustained development and progress. However, development is not a precondition for sustained peace. Development helps, but does not prevent wars. We should not forget that it was in a developed Europe that two world wars broke out with dire consequences for world humanity in the last century. So it seems wise to have started building the appropriate institutions of cooperation and integration of African states now – the African Union and the African Parliament. The early successes of the Africa Peace Facility in peacekeeping and early monitoring of emerging conflicts in Africa are obvious.

However, we should note that the funding of APF is a mere €250 million, part of a total of €13.5 billion assigned to the ninth European development fund up to the year 2007. So, the continuation of funding of that institution is of great importance.

On the other hand, it should be noted that the road to development for these countries passes through their being able to sell to us things they are good at producing – that is, agricultural products. Consider the approximately €350 billion currently wasted on subsidising agriculture in the developed west. We could save a fair amount of money to spend on other things, and we would open markets for them to sell their products to us. It is important for Africa and other countries that the Doha round of trade talks, now meeting in December in Hong Kong, does not fail and that great strides are made in the right direction. We should keep it in mind that only 1% of the world's foreign investment goes to Africa, and as parliamentarians and governments we can and must redress the balance.

The issue is not complex. In fact, it is straightforward. It is immoral and economic madness to give, as, for example, the United States does, large subsidies to farmers to produce cotton, which is a labour-intensive activity that would generate millions of jobs in Africa. The same applies to growing sugar beet in Europe, as well as to subsidising our cows by more than €3 per day, which is more than what half the world's population lives on each day. Some 30% of all Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development spending goes to such subsidies – 58% in Japan, and only 9% in China.

The above does not mean that European and American farmers would be left to rot. The money saved would be used to retrain them. If by the year 2050 the world population is to reach the income per capita of a country with a medium-sized economy, annual world production should increase by four times. That is a huge increase, which we cannot achieve without the contribution of the unemployed and the underemployed of Africa and Europe. The road to our further development passes to a great extent along the road of their rapid development.

I strongly support a request presented by our African colleagues in Brussels during our conference last September. It is only fair and logical to ensure their participation in the implementation of all aid programmes, not only because they have the right to know, but mainly because they could offer valuable

advice, help the visibility of our projects and absorb great lessons in parliamentary monitoring and security. It is only through combined and joint efforts that our intervention will prove effective.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Vrettos.

The next speaker is Mr Gubert.

Mr GUBERT (*Italy*) (summary) said that the EU's response to the request for peacekeeping forces in Africa was positive.

On the historical links between Europe and Africa, it was important to learn from the negative effects that Europe has had by dividing ethnic groups into different countries. A possible solution would be a federal system.

The weakness of African states resulted in part from cultural factors and meant that development aid was important. However, this aid should go to democratic countries.

On the removal of barriers to trade, the EU should promote small-scale farming in Africa rather than large-scale production for export.

The draft recommendation should be adopted, especially the call for development funds from EU states. However, it was important to recognise that development required that people should be able to meet their own needs.

The PRESIDENT – The next speaker is Mr Clerides.

Mr CLERIDES (*Cyprus*) – The report is an excellent document – as we usually expect of this Assembly.

I had the chance earlier to draw the Assembly's attention to the problem of corruption. That is especially important when Europe faces its own internal problems and has to justify almost everything to European citizens. Europe faces double-digit unemployment and budgetary problems. The British Government is looking for substantial cuts in the budget, there are substantial cuts in aid to the former eastern European countries, and there are problems with the agricultural policy.

Given those problems in the EU, the issue of aid to Africa – and no one denies that we have to help Africa to get out of its problems – must be considered alongside proper budgetary control in the fight against corruption in African government. I have always been told that he who pays the piper calls the tune. That means that we must exercise some control on aid.

My second point has not been mentioned in the debate, but has been the subject of newspaper reports. It is that there is a possibility that certain countries in Africa might split up. The EU must formulate preventive policies soon. For example, I have read that Somalia comprises two areas, Somaliland and Puntland. Some governments – even European ones – are in favour of dividing the country as a way of solving some of its problems. I have also read about Sudan and its southern and northern parts. There is a risk that the country will fall apart in years to come. What is the EU's policy in that respect?

I have also read that there is rebellion in the north of the Côte d'Ivoire and problems in the south. Again, there is a danger of having a north-south divide. The western Sahara presents an ongoing problem with the Polisario movement. That may not be a Sub-Saharan territory, but it is part of Africa as a whole. Such problems are an important aspect of the future in Africa against which we, as Europeans, must take preventive action so that what has happened in the Balkans does not happen again.

I conclude by saying that we need more dialogue. I am glad that this Assembly has brought the African issue to the forefront. However, we need more dialogue with parliamentarians from African countries. They have to come here and we have to go there and thereby initiate that dialogue. Through dialogue, it is possible that we can really help to build democracy, the rule of law and human rights in Africa.

The PRESIDENT – The next speaker is Mr Lloyd from the United Kingdom.

Mr LLOYD (*United Kingdom*) – Thank you, Mr President. I begin by saying that one problem with debates about Africa is that they are cast only in negative terms. Mr Clerides is absolutely right to say that we need dialogue with the great continent of Africa, and we need it on different levels. We need to recognise Africa's enormous cultural diversity and its very strong traditions. They inform countries such as my own, which has a long history of engagement with Africa, as does the entire European continent. If nothing else, we must establish that there is a positive element in our relationship with Africa, and not only a negative one.

In my city of Manchester, people of African descent contribute every day, every week and every year. I am very proud of my fellow Mancunians from an African background, because of their strong traditions.

However, it is true that Africa has problems, and it is right and proper for us to look at matters such as corruption and bad governance, which certainly have bedevilled the continent of Africa. I remember when my not-so-very-good friend General Abacha was in charge of the Nigerian Government and was looting the country on a systematic basis. Billions of dollars disappeared as a result, but I must tell the Assembly that the bulk of that money came to Europe and was stashed away by European bankers prepared to work with corrupt African regimes.

We must also recognise that the problem is Europe's too. When diamonds were being stolen from the people of Sierra Leone, they did not end up in Liberia. They passed through that country, but they came to Europe, where our corrupt diamond trade was prepared to deal in them. The same thing happened as a result of the civil wars in Angola and in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Another question is: who makes the small arms that fuel the African wars? We in Europe must look at the question of the sale of those armaments, and face up to our responsibility in that as well.

I am not taking part in a breast-beating exercise, as the relationship between Africa and Europe is far too important for that. However, we must recognise the realities, and to cast the problem as an African one only is to misunderstand the nature of the modern world. The poor are not able to strike back unless the rich are prepared to help. Africa's capacity for environmental despoliation is a reminder of what can happen if we do not support African economies and societies.

When I return to my home city this weekend and attend my advice bureau, I know that I will meet asylum seekers from the DRC, Somalia and many other parts of Africa. They come to my country fleeing war and the troubles that war causes. Those factors mean that we are intimately linked in the modern world and must solve problems together.

I strongly agree with the tenor of the very good report before us and with the remarks made by our African colleagues. In the end, Africa must be the main driver of African solutions, but we in Europe must be good partners. The African Peace Facility is very modest, with a budget of some €250 million. That will be exhausted by next spring, and my government, which has the EU presidency, is looking at how more money can be put in. It is important that that is done and that long-term financial structures are established.

Like every other speaker, I am aware that there is a great deal to say on this matter. I shall conclude by saying that I welcome this debate very much. It is very important that this Assembly maintains this exchange of views and that we speak bluntly and in open terms with our African colleagues about our common problems. It is very important that we take these messages away from here and back to our national governments. We have a moral responsibility in these matters, and a very clear interest in making sure that we get this dialogue right.

The PRESIDENT – Our final speaker is our colleague Mr Weldegiorgis from Eritrea.

Mr WELDEGIORGIS (*Observer from Eritrea*) – Thank you, Mr President. I congratulate the Rapporteur, Mr Goerens, on his excellent and comprehensive report and on the draft recommendation in respect of an approach to peacekeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa. I agree that peace, security and good governance are intimately linked. There is also a link between conflict and poverty. It is no accident that the countries afflicted by prolonged conflict are among the poorest in Africa.

It is a good development that Africa has started to face up to its responsibilities. That is a very positive new development that must be encouraged. The Africa Peace Facility and the strategic partnership between the EU and Africa will contribute to strengthening Africa's ability to address its problems.

If we are looking for African solutions to African problems, that would make an important contribution towards conflict prevention and resolution, peace-building and peace-making and post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction.

However, the report's scope is rather limited with regard to Darfur, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC and Sierra Leone, and its focus on Darfur should be expanded to include the comprehensive peace agreement. I agree with my Sudanese colleague that the recent rapprochement and normalisation of relations between Sudan and Eritrea will be a positive contribution to regional peace and security.

There are also important omissions in the report and its recommendations, one of which is Somalia. The Somali national reconciliation process and the restoration of state authority merits the support of Europe and of this august assembly. In addition, there is the Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict. We have seen the fragility of the current situation of no war, no peace with the recent rise in tensions and the possibility of a resumption of hostilities. This is an example of where a success story could go wrong. What is required is to force Ethiopia to respect its treaty obligations and international law, and to accept what it agreed to accept as final and binding and allow the boundary commission to complete its mandate by demarcating the colonial treaty border.

Our appeal is that, if possible, those omissions be corrected in the final report and recommendations. That would enrich the report and its recommendations. Thank you, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Thank you, Mr Weldegiorgis.

The debate is closed. Time flies, but I would nevertheless like to give the floor to our keynote speaker, Commissioner Djinnit.

Mr DJINNIT (*Commissioner for Peace and Security, African Union Commission*) (summary) said that he had been heartened by the report and the contributions of members who had all spoken of greater support. The issues of conflict and poverty could be overcome with good government. The report had considered Sub-Saharan Africa, but members were encouraged to look at Africa "as one". There had been problems with unity and integration but these were being addressed through the Africa Union. These issues were to be resolved through shared values.

The members were thanked for their contributions, which had highlighted the real issues such as fair trade and African indebtedness. Africa could not move forward without resolving the issue of indebtedness. He left with a lighter heart following the contributions of the debate.

The PRESIDENT (summary) thanked the Commissioner and gave the floor to Mr Goerens.

Mr GOERENS (*Luxembourg*) (summary) thanked all of the speakers, and noted the criticism of the report from the representative from the Sudan but stressed that in WEU, the intellectual property of the report belonged to the Rapporteur. He believed that the report should be judged on the text set out in the explanatory memoranda. The human rights issue had been considered, as had the work of the International Criminal Court. In the interests of the truth, there could be no further comments.

The state's primary purpose was to protect its citizens. The state needed to be capable, and this was vital. The ideal solution was to leave everything to Africa but Europe could not do this – most conflict since the second world war had taken place in Africa. Europe could not accept the existing situation whereby 90% of casualties in wars were civilians. The recommendations should be considered in this light.

He turned to Europe's responsibilities: it had learned lessons but it was not in a position to hand down lessons to Africa. He agreed with Commissioner Djinnit that better institutional architecture should be promoted. Africa could draw from Europe's models. The report could not possibly cover everything but it did draw together a large number of the issues and players. The next opportunity to pursue this would be in Hong Kong the following week.

Commissioner Djinnit was supported by WEU. Europe was prepared to assist him and he could feel free to call on Europe. Europe was happy to provide financial and peacekeeping assistance.

Political coherence was crucial. Africa was no longer just a problem: there were glimmers of light and hope, for example, in Côte d'Ivoire. Europe had no lessons to give Africa. Progress could be made only through African responsibility and ownership. Commissioner Djinnit had showed exceptional talent and would transmit the messages of the Assembly to President Konaré.

The PRESIDENT (summary) thanked Mr Goerens and called Mr Agramunt.

Mr AGRAMUNT (*Spain*) (summary) congratulated Mr Goerens.

The PRESIDENT (summary) thanked Mr Agramunt and closed the debate. In view of the time constraints the votes would take place at the end of the morning's session.

**6. Statement by Ms Lyubov K. Sliska, First Deputy Speaker of the Duma,
Leader of the Russian Delegation**

The PRESIDENT – The next order of the day is a statement by Ms Lyubov K. Sliska, First Speaker of the Duma, Leader of the Russian Delegation.

Ms Sliska, I am especially pleased – I am afraid that my Russian is not very good – to welcome you here to our Chamber this morning. We are well aware that you are the first lady of Russian politics, renowned for your very clear positions on all current political questions of common interest to us.

We appreciate the fact that you go straight to the heart of the problem and do not shy away even from controversial issues. We are therefore very interested to hear your opinions about certain “frozen conflicts”, as we call them, and areas of tension – in Russia and in a number of countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

We are most honoured to have you with us as you are not only the First Deputy Speaker in the Duma but also the Leader of the Russian Delegation to the Assembly. We look forward expectantly to hearing your views and are particularly pleased that you could be available to speak to us.

I should like to invite our colleagues to put questions to Ms Sliska following her address and to take this opportunity to engage in a lively debate with her.

Ms Sliska, you have the floor.

Ms SLISKA (*First Deputy Speaker of the Duma, Leader of the Russian Delegation*) (summary) considered that the participation of representatives of the two Houses of the Russian Parliament in the work of the WEU Assembly was very important. These parliamentarians now took part in the discussion of many subjects which had earlier been inaccessible to them. Noteworthy among them were the enlargement of NATO and the European Union, Kaliningrad, problems of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear and energy security. There was identity of views on the role of the United Nations, respect for diversity and peaceful resolution of conflicts and the fight against all forms of terrorism.

Russia did not see security in a narrow military sense. Economic factors were also important.

The 60th anniversary of the second world war had made it clear that partnership and cooperation under the new conditions of enlargement of the EU and of NATO did not happen spontaneously but required great efforts and readiness to listen to neighbours in the European house.

Ordinary people in Russia posed very reasonable questions about whether the European Security and Defence Policy might not be a threat to Russia and in what direction the military dimension of European integration was headed.

Russia actively supported the possibility of cooperation with its European neighbours above all in such areas as the fight against terrorism, peacekeeping, and interethnic or religious conflicts, as well as in a common struggle against transnational criminality, drug-trafficking and trafficking in human beings.

Globalisation had created favourable conditions for development but had aggravated old problems and created new challenges in Europe. Russia shared the two objectives of an integrated Europe and a common response to threats. All countries should cooperate in face of the wave of terrorist attacks. Terrorists benefited from the lack of coordination. The same standards should be applied across the board in the fight against terrorism, focusing on countering financing and supplying terrorist groups.

Frozen conflicts and other elements in Europe meant that it was essential to return to first principles in arms control and security building measures. The Conventional Forces in Europe Agreement had been signed in 1999 but had not been implemented because of contrived pretexts. Russia had done its part and was waiting for others to respond. Close cooperation would lead to problem solving. The Russia-EU Summit had enshrined the dynamics of further development.

Russia maintained international stability, including in its neighbouring regions. Better cooperation with the European Union helped to avoid conflict, but this should not be confined to the post-Soviet area. It should also include Afghanistan and Iraq not only the Caucasus and Transdnistria.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Thank you, Ms Sliska, for your very clear presentation and for agreeing to answer questions. Members who are not on my list for asking questions should bear it in mind that I must finish at one o’ clock.

I call Ms Becerril to ask the first question.

Ms BECERRIL (*Spain*) (summary) noted that members of the WEU Assembly were ardent supporters of democracy, including freedom of opinion and freedom of the press. Many in the EU had the impression that, despite efforts to promote these freedoms in Russia, much was left to be done. Some groups in Russia had complained over difficulties in expressing criticism of the Government.

The PRESIDENT (summary) thanked Ms Becerril and called Ms Sliska.

Ms SLISKA (*First Deputy Speaker of the Duma, Leader of the Russian Delegation*) (summary) said that the Russian mass media were far freer than mass media in the EU. All sorts of criticism could be heard of all levels of government in all the media. There were perhaps not many critics of the government in the Duma, but one could not say that they did not exist. An agreement was being prepared with France for a new digital television joint venture.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Thank you Ms Sliska. A number of speakers wish to ask questions. Please put specific questions keeping to a minute, and please try to limit yourselves to security and defence matters, which are the subject of our debate.

I call Ms Petrescu.

Ms PETRESCU (*Romania*) (summary) asked what was Russia’s policy towards the Black Sea.

Ms SLISKA (*First Deputy Speaker of the Duma, Leader of the Russian Delegation*) (summary) said that Russia cooperated with all institutions and countries on the Black Sea. Developments on security had been seen in this area. Security had to be considered a priority in the Black Sea area.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you. I call Ms Hoffmann.

Ms HOFFMAN (*Germany*) (summary) welcomed Ms Sliska and said that it was a pleasure to hear Russian being spoken in this auditorium. She wondered why Europeans felt that the Russian press was restricted and censored. She made reference to the agreement for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Transdnistria by 2008 and to various other conflicts involving Russia and asked whether there were good prospects for their resolution in the near future.

Ms SLISKA (*First Deputy Speaker of the Duma, Leader of the Russian Delegation*) (summary) referred to the issue of REN TV, but said that the problem over the dismissal of a newscaster was still being resolved. This one instance should not be interpreted as an example of a lack of press freedom.

There had been some difficulties over ongoing negotiations with Moldova over Transdnistria but these were now back on track. Consultations had resumed on the initiative of the Moldovan side.

On Georgia, Russian troops which were currently stationed in Georgia were to be withdrawn according to the existing schedule.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you Ms Sliska.

I call Tony Lloyd, the President of the British Delegation.

Mr LLOYD (*United Kingdom*) – I very much welcome Ms Sliska's presence. May I ask her specifically about the situation regarding the Iranian nuclear programme? She will be aware of the efforts made within the European Union by my own country and France and Germany to make progress on that matter through negotiation. How does Russia see it? Obviously, a nuclear-armed Iran would be massively dangerous on Russia's southern border. That would be a real threat, and I cannot believe that Russian public opinion would be content with that. What assessment has been made of Russian public opinion on Iran's capacity to move from a legitimate, peaceful nuclear programme based on nuclear power and towards progress on a nuclear arms agenda?

Ms SLISKA (*First Deputy Speaker of the Duma, Leader of the Russian Delegation*) (summary) said that on the nuclear power plants and the negotiations with Iran, that the Russian delegation was following the current developments. Discussions were under way, but had not been completed.

The new Iranian leader's statement on Israel was taken very seriously in Russia, but fortunately the reaction of world leaders appeared to have tempered his approach to Israel.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – The next speaker is Mr Galowski from Poland.

Mr GALOWSKI (*Poland*) – Thank you, Mr President, and I thank Ms Sliska for her essential speech. Relations between Russia and Poland are not the strongest these days, and we fear that Russia has more specific relationships with countries such as Germany and France that run counter to its European interests as a whole. I should therefore like to ask whether Russia is ready to begin partnership relations with its neighbours, and especially with Poland. How would the Duma approach that?

Ms SLISKA (*First Deputy Speaker of the Duma, Leader of the Russian Delegation*) (summary) said that Russia always pursued good neighbourly relations with countries even if hostile comments were made. However, Russia must be allowed to organise and develop solutions to her own problems autonomously. Nonetheless, it was important to abandon previous attitudes and build good relationships between Russia and Poland.

The PRESIDENT (summary) said that he had closed the list of speakers and thanked Ms Sliska.

Cooperation with the Duma was important for stability and security in Europe on such issues as terrorism and crime, and to find solutions to the "frozen conflicts".

7. Peacekeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa: a practical approach (resumed debate)

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – We now come to the report of the Political Committee on peacekeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa: a practical approach, vote on the draft recommendation and amendments.

The Political Committee has tabled in Document [1913](#) a draft recommendation, to which two amendments have been tabled.

Amendment 1 reads as follows:

"1. Add the following new recital after recital (*viii*) of the preamble to the draft recommendation:

'Welcoming the contribution by the EU High Representative to the *EU Strategy for Africa*, in which he emphasises the link between security and development and argues that "*measures in the fields of trade, aid and debt relief will need to be supported by peace and security, and governance*";'

Amendment 2 reads as follows:

"2. Add the following new recital before recital (*ix*) of the preamble to the draft recommendation:

‘Welcoming also the initial conclusions drawn by EU Foreign Ministers on an *EU Strategy for Africa* at their meeting in Brussels on 21-22 November 2005, and stressing that these should be strengthened and improved by giving effect to the practical proposals made in this report;’.”

I call Mr Goerens to move the amendments.

Mr GOERENS (*Luxembourg*) (summary) said that these two amendments had been adopted unanimously by his committee and that they were updating amendments.

The PRESIDENT – Does anyone wish to oppose the amendment? ...

What is the view of the Political Committee?

Mr AGRAMUNT (*Spain*) (summary) said that the Committee had agreed the amendments unanimously.

The PRESIDENT – I will now put Amendment 1 to the vote.

(A vote was taken by show of hands)

Amendment 1 is adopted unanimously.

I will now put Amendment 2 to the vote.

(A vote was taken by show of hands)

Amendment 2 is adopted unanimously.

We shall now vote on the draft recommendation contained in Document [1913](#), as amended.

Under Rule 35 of the Rules of Procedure, if five or more representatives or substitutes present in the Chamber so desire, the Assembly shall vote by roll-call on a draft recommendation.

Does any member wish to propose a vote by roll-call?...

That is not the case. We shall vote by show of hands.

(A vote was taken by show of hands)

The draft recommendation, as amended, is adopted unanimously.

8. Date, time and orders of the day of the next sitting

The PRESIDENT – I propose that the Assembly hold its next public sitting this afternoon at 15.00, with the following orders of the day.

1. Address by Mr Buckovski, Prime Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
2. The European defence equipment market: Article 296 of the Treaty establishing the European Community and the European Commission’s Green Paper – reply to the annual report of the Council (*Presentation of and debate on the report of the Technological and Aerospace Committee and vote on the draft recommendation*, Doc. [1917](#))
3. The future of the European naval defence industry (*Presentation of and debate on the report of the Technological and Aerospace Committee and vote on the draft recommendation*, Doc. [1916](#))
4. Surveillance of the maritime and coastal areas of European states (*Presentation of and debate on the report of the Defence Committee and vote on the draft recommendation*, Doc. [1920](#))
5. Accounts of the expenditure of the Assembly for 2004 (*Presentation of and debate on the oral report of the Committee on Budgetary Affairs and Administration and vote on the motion to approve the final accounts*, Doc. 1907 and addendum)
6. Opinion on the budgets of the WEU ministerial organs for 2005 (*Presentation of and debate on the report of the Committee on Budgetary Affairs and Administration and vote on the draft recommendation*, Doc. 1909)

7. Draft budget of the Assembly for 2006 (*Presentation of and debate on the report of the Committee on Budgetary Affairs and Administration and vote on the previous question, Docs. 1908 and 1923*)

Are there any objections? ...

The orders of the day for the next sitting are approved.

Does anyone wish to speak? ...

The sitting is closed.

(The sitting was closed at 12.55)