



Security Council

Fifty-third Year

3949th Meeting

Wednesday, 25 November 1998, 1.05 p.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Burleigh	(United States of America)
<i>Members:</i>	Bahrain	Mr. Al-Dosari
	Brazil	Mr. Amorim
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Costa Rica	Mr. Niehaus
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Gabon	Mr. Essonghé
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Japan	Mr. Kagami
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	Slovenia	Mr. Žbogar
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Grainger

Agenda

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (S/1998/796)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (S/1998/1064)

The meeting was called to order at 1.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (S/1998/796)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (S/1998/1064)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Argentina, Canada, Chile, Haiti and Venezuela, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Lelong (Haiti) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Petrella (Argentina), Mr. Giroux (Canada), Mr. Larraín (Chile) and Ms. Kislinger (Venezuela) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them two reports of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (S/1998/796 and S/1998/1064).

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1998/1117, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Argentina, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, France, the United States of America and Venezuela.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1998/1003, which contains the

text of a letter dated 27 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Haiti to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a letter dated 22 October 1998 from the President of the Republic of Haiti addressed to the Secretary-General.

The President: The first speaker on my list is the representative of Argentina. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Petrella (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Permit me first to convey to you, Mr. President, my respectful greetings and the most sincere congratulations of my delegation on the manner in which you are conducting the work of the Security Council during November.

Once again the situation in Haiti requires us to extend the mandate of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH). We agree with the Secretary-General that ending the United Nations presence in Haiti in the present circumstances could mean the loss, or a threatened reduction, of the investment which the international community has been making in Haiti's political institutions throughout this decade.

We understand, however, the hesitation of some members of the Council over renewing the mandate. For various reasons, it has been extended for longer than was originally foreseen. At the same time, we request those delegations to understand the particular significance of maintaining the rule of law and democratic institutions in the Latin American and Caribbean region. The concepts of international peace and security should be interpreted with that understanding and in that context. The Security Council has shown on a number of occasions that it is sufficiently sensitive to accommodate the specific needs of each region, and we hope that this will also be the case now.

It is up to the Government of Haiti to understand fully its responsibilities in the current difficult circumstances. The Haitian leadership must show its recognition of the international community's efforts by taking concrete action aimed at resolving the political crisis in that country.

Argentina, for its part, remains firmly committed to the consolidation of Haitian political institutions through its participation in MIPONUH, to which it contributes civilian police in both the special police unit and the civilian police element.

Lastly, I wish to thank the Secretary-General, and particularly his Representative in Haiti, Mr. Julian Harston, and the officials serving with him for the professional competence they constantly demonstrate in carrying out their functions.

The President: I thank the representative of Argentina for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Chile. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Larraín (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My country considers that by adopting the draft resolution extending the mandate of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH), the Security Council will have complied with its responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. We believe that the draft resolution extending MIPONUH's mandate is the appropriate response to the needs of the Haitian people and Government. At the same time, it is an expression of the United Nations commitment to the peace and security of one of its Members.

My country, as a member of the group of Friends of the Secretary-General for Haiti, is particularly pleased by the support given by the members of the Council to a draft resolution which we consider benefits the Haitian people and responds to an express request by President Préval. We also value the contributions which enriched its text, and the flexibility shown in the negotiations by interested delegations.

The task of reconciliation in Haiti remains unfinished. We are aware that there continues to be a need for the authorities and the political actors in Haiti in general to make additional efforts to solve the serious political crisis in the country. Here there is an inescapable, direct responsibility of the people of Haiti. The international community, in its role of supporting such efforts, should continue making its contribution and not abandon the Haitian people at this time.

Judicial reform should solve shortcomings which are incompatible with the rule of law and human rights and fundamental freedoms. There the task is great, encompassing not only judicial institutions and procedures, but also the design of a judiciary respectful of the basic principles of the administration of justice, such as the principle of due process. The task also includes appropriate treatment of the prison system, as we can see in the text of

the draft resolution. We welcome the steps in this direction taken by the Haitian authorities, and in particular by the Preparatory Commission on Legal and Judicial Reform, and we urge them to continue on that path. Once again, in this field as in others, the sustained support of the international community is essential.

We welcome the progress made by the Haitian National Police in recent months, reflected in a professional institution which now enjoys the respect of the citizenry, as is recognized by independent sources. In such progress we see that we are not far from the objective of providing Haiti with an efficient police respectful of human rights, an objective which underlies the work of MIPONUH.

In conclusion, I wish to convey the gratitude of my Government to the personnel of MIPONUH and the 11 countries which have contributed to its composition as well as to the representative of the Secretary-General. We urge them to continue their efforts in achieving the objectives of MIPONUH.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Giroux (Canada) (*interpretation from French*): I should like first to convey the regrets of Ambassador Michel Duval, who, unfortunately, cannot be here today.

It is with pleasure that I take the floor today when the Security Council is considering a draft resolution extending the present mandate of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH).

The extension of MIPONUH's mandate by the Security Council is further very concrete proof of the sustained commitment of the international community in Haiti. I can confirm that Canada will continue its contribution to MIPONUH at the same level. This police contingent joins many other Canadian experts assigned to Haiti within the framework of our bilateral technical assistance programme.

Canada supports the people and Government of Haiti in their efforts to consolidate democracy and strengthen the rule of law. We welcome the progress made by the Haitian National Police, in particular regarding respect for the rights of the individual. However, a great deal remains to be done, particularly regarding reform of the Haitian justice system.

(spoke in English)

Canada remains very concerned at the absence of an agreement regarding a prime minister, a cabinet and governmental programme, and at the negative effect this has on Haiti's political, economic and social situation. It is important that this process come to fruition very soon, in full accord with Haiti's democratic vocation and the rule of law.

It is also very important that the people of Haiti soon be able to fully express their will through free, honest and transparent elections, in accordance with the Constitution.

We believe that it is timely to reflect with our partners on how to continue to strengthen the Haitian National Police and, more broadly, the Haitian justice system after MIPONUH. We note in this regard that the draft resolution encourages this process to take place and will lead to recommendations by the Secretary-General on a viable transition. We look forward to continuing to pursue this process with all those concerned.

The President: It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Niehaus (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations confers upon the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In the light of the very purposes of our Organization, established in Article 1, this is a proactive and comprehensive responsibility, never reactive or limited, for it states that the United Nations should take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace.

This constitutional foundation would be a sufficient argument to justify the *raison d'être* of the multidisciplinary operations authorized by the Security Council aimed at promoting peace-building. It has nevertheless been experience and reality themselves that have been responsible for promoting this new concept of peacekeeping that today is part and parcel of the abundant set of values

that the Council has progressively established in carrying out its primary responsibility under the Charter.

The lessons learned by the international community, especially from conflicts in developing countries, have motivated the United Nations to approach these situations from a larger perspective that facilitates and promotes solutions to the economic and social problems that are at the root of most situations that threaten international peace and security.

The situation in Haiti constitutes a clear example of the need for organized international participation from the standpoint of guaranteeing and building peace and thus preventing a return of conflict and instability. We are all aware of the statistics on human development in Haiti: a life expectancy at birth of 54 years; a literacy rate of 44 per cent; a school attendance rate of 39 per cent; and a real gross domestic product of \$896 per capita. These cold but dramatic numbers show us that there is sufficient reason to justify the obligation of the international community to continue comprehensively assisting the people of Haiti in the laudable effort they have been carrying out for several years to promote a new political, economic and social model.

In this context, the role of the United Nations in Haiti goes beyond the simple and traditional concept of assistance to development. Its role is to ensure and promote the establishment and consolidation of efficient and democratic institutions of judicial security that can evolve into a stabilizing factor to guarantee that there will be no regression and that authoritarianism and division — possibilities that can become odious realities when we note the lack of will among some sectors of the Haitian political leadership — will not re-emerge in society.

The report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti points out the important work that that body is carrying out in that country and its significant contribution to guaranteeing and promoting the establishment and consolidation of the National Police and judicial institutions as professional democratic institutions entrusted with guaranteeing the judicial security necessary for the reconciliation of the Haitian people.

From another standpoint, that report also shows us the need for all bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations to continue to provide their active cooperation on a multidisciplinary, coordinated and integrated basis in this major effort at peace-building by

establishing efficient democratic institutions and just and sustainable economic and social conditions.

It is for this reason that Costa Rica, in keeping with the position jointly stated by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, supports the extension of the Mission's mandate on the terms set forth by the Secretary-General in his report. We will consequently vote in favour of the draft resolution before us, which we are honoured to co-sponsor.

Mr. Amorim (Brazil): The Security Council is meeting today to consider the extension of the mandate and concept of operations of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) for another period of one year on the basis of the clear assessment of the current situation in Haiti contained in the latest report of the Secretary-General.

As my colleague from Costa Rica has already mentioned — and as all other countries in the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States expressed in the letter from the Ambassador of Ecuador — Brazil expects a positive response today from the Security Council to the recent appeal addressed by President Préval to the Secretary-General for the continued cooperation of the United Nations with Haiti in order to strengthen its National Police and to assist the Government in establishing a fully effective judicial system.

As expressed in the report of the Secretary-General, despite important progress made by MIPONUH since its establishment one year ago, the consolidation of peace in Haiti cannot yet be taken for granted. Indeed, the Haitian police force is not yet self-sustainable and faces new security challenges. Moreover, judicial reform, which is crucial to the consolidation of democracy, has been suffering from regrettable delays. A political stalemate that dates back to June 1997 continues to undermine national institutions and to hinder the implementation of reforms aimed at solving the serious economic and social problems facing that country. In this regard, we see the extension of MIPONUH's mandate as part of a preventive strategy that has to include other aspects, especially economic assistance for the reconstruction and development of Haiti.

I would like to note with satisfaction that substantive activities have been undertaken in Haiti by a number of agencies of the United Nations system. The renewed mandate of MIPONUH can provide an opportunity for the gradual transfer of this Mission to other bodies. Such transitions have been successfully accomplished before, as

was the case with the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala.

In this connection, I wish to highlight that paragraph 8 of the draft resolution before the Council invites United Nations bodies and agencies, especially the Economic and Social Council, to contribute to the design of a long-term programme of support for the economic rehabilitation and reconstruction of Haiti. This is a small — but in a certain sense innovative — step by the Council to revive Article 65 of the Charter, a provision that the Secretary-General has described as dormant and to which he referred in his report on the work of the Organization in the part concerning the prevention of conflicts.

Haiti, but also the system as a whole, can benefit from that new stress on the role of the Economic and Social Council. I think that it can actually apply to other areas as well, but especially to what we call here post-conflict peace-building. We are sure that the Economic and Social Council will be up to the challenge contained in this invitation for the benefit of Haiti and other countries in future.

Mr. Mahugu (Kenya): The United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) continues to do a good job in Haiti. The Haitian National Police, which it assists, also continues to make progress despite several problems which we hope will ultimately be resolved. However, the situation in Haiti is marked by the crippling political institutional crisis that is symbolized by the absence of a Prime Minister for more than a year. We therefore share the Secretary-General's assessment, in his latest report on the work of the Civilian Police Mission in Haiti, that the consolidation of democracy continues to be hampered by this reality. This is the core of the problem.

We therefore endorse the strong appeal, in operative paragraph 6 of the draft before us, urging the authorities and political leaders in Haiti to fulfil their responsibilities and to negotiate urgently an end to the crisis in a spirit of tolerance and compromise. There is no doubt in our minds that this is the key that will unlock the door to the solution to the crisis, and it is therefore also appropriate that this draft resolution correctly apportions the ultimate responsibility for national reconciliation and the reconstruction of Haiti to the Haitians themselves.

We have tried very hard to analyse the crisis in Haiti in terms of international peace and security, but find ourselves discussing what increasingly appears to be the internal political, economic and social situation of Haiti.

We recognize that the situation in Haiti is complex and realize that international attention is critical to its survival. Continued international engagement by all is therefore essential.

In this regard, may I warmly commend the Friends group — comprising Argentina, Canada, Chile, France, the United States and Venezuela — for continuing to provide solid assistance to the people and Government of Haiti. However, this attention may now need to focus more and more on development activities. We felt it appropriate last year that a transition from peacekeeping to a policing focus was necessary. There is a need now to switch mechanisms of engagement and of assisting Haiti from a policing mode to one which focuses more on peace-building.

We think that the structure now in place, as spelt out in paragraphs 23 to 25 of the Secretary-General's report, and organized around the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is quite appropriate. We agree with the assessment of the Secretary-General that Haiti indeed affords an excellent example of United Nations agencies working effectively and economically together. We may need to explore further how to really entrench this good work. The road map for this approach, we believe, is adequately drawn with this draft resolution, which appropriately stresses the linkage between peace and development and affirms that future international assistance should be considered through United Nations specialized agencies and programmes, in particular UNDP as well as other international and regional organizations and all States.

My delegation supports the Secretary-General's recommendation for a one-year extension of MIPONUH. We need to put in place a different mechanism that enables a solid transition into peace-building activities organized around UNDP. Because this issue continues to entrench itself as an internal problem, we support the intention expressed in operative paragraph 11 of the draft resolution requesting the Secretary-General to make recommendations on a viable transition to other forms of assistance to Haiti. My delegation will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution.

In conclusion, we also hope that the energy with which we continue to promote the Council's attention and focus on Haiti through MIPONUH will also find expression when appropriate peacekeeping and peace-building mechanisms are sought to address the problems in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and indeed other African problems.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): One year ago, Portugal was one of the sponsors of the resolution before this Council on the constitution of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH).

Despite considerable progress, serious problems persist in Haiti that require the continuation of the assistance of the United Nations. We are concerned at the continuation of violence and unrest, the difficult economic situation, the high level of unemployment, the rising cost of living and the slow pace of change in Haiti.

Moreover, we are distressed to know that the parliamentary and local elections due to take place this month were postponed, prolonging the present political stalemate. This impasse is having a major impact in terms of eroding public confidence in the capacity and willingness of the authorities to solve the pressing economic and social problems facing the country. We strongly appeal to the Haitian authorities and political leaders to embark urgently on a negotiated solution to the crisis in a spirit of tolerance and compromise. The tasks ahead will be of crucial importance to the consolidation of democracy and national reconstruction. For that reason, we believe that comprehensive and sustained long-term assistance by the international community is vitally important.

A continued commitment, in particular from the international financial institutions and other United Nations agencies, is necessary to promote a successful and sustainable development that will underpin political stability in the country. We want to help Haitians build a country where democracy and progress will be a reality. That can be achieved only if the rule of law and respect for human rights are ensured.

The continued presence of the United Nations operation in Haiti, and of MIPONUH in particular, has proved to be an important element for that country's transition to democracy by assisting the Government to form a public force respectful of legality and capable of maintaining public order and security. The Secretary-General in its last report underlines that the Haitian National Police has not yet reached the level of professionalization required to tackle successfully the various problems in daily activities. In fact, a self-sustained and fully functioning police is essential to ensure a secure and stable environment and the economic rehabilitation and consolidation of democracy in Haiti.

We believe that the maintenance of the presence of the United Nations, as requested recently by President Préval, is of the utmost importance. Indeed, the United Nations should continue to help the Government of Haiti to professionalize its police force. We urge Haiti's authorities to pursue their efforts to form a public force respectful of legality and also to pursue their efforts to revitalize Haiti's justice and penal systems.

For all these reasons, Portugal will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us today.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*interpretation from French*): The French delegation supports the draft resolution on which we are about to vote extending the mandate of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) until 30 November 1999.

We firmly support this extension for the following reasons.

MIPONUH, under the impetus of the Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Harston — whose competence and thoroughness we should like to hail here once again — has achieved significant technical results in the field. Unfortunately, however, they are today still incomplete. Those results, as well as the investment that has been made by the international community in Haiti for several years, should be preserved.

The Haitian National Police is today one of the State institutions that can shoulder its mission. The presence of MIPONUH, together with actions for bilateral and multilateral cooperation, represents, in a still-fragile political context, a significant counterweight to the setbacks that could still occur. Risks exist in relation to the expansion of the drug trade, threats of human rights violations or possible attempts at the recovery of the police forces by one or another political faction.

France shares the concern expressed by a certain number of countries that the Council should wind down the activities of MIPONUH and transfer the management of this Mission to another framework. It is, however, clear that this transition must be organized and take place over time in order not to damage the results obtained to date. We should not jeopardize the efforts Haiti has made to strengthen its institutions, and thus should stick to a pragmatic approach.

We welcome the fact that the draft resolution before us explicitly requests the Secretary-General to make

recommendations starting in mid-1999 for the establishment of the mechanism that could replace MIPONUH.

In order to allow MIPONUH to fulfil its mandate next year and to put in place an assistance mechanism supported by other United Nations institutions in Haiti, we fully associate ourselves with the appeal made by the Secretary-General to Government officials and Haitian political leaders to put an end to their futile disputes and to find a solution to the present political crisis. In this regard, we can only deplore the fact that the obstruction of the political process in Haiti continues to impede the establishment of a genuine development policy, weakens the Haitian administration, prevents the beginning of a genuine process of decentralization and slows the implementation of structural reforms, which remain indispensable.

Mr. Fedotov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian delegation shares the view that Haiti is continuing to experience an acute need for assistance from the international community — first and foremost, economic, financial and technical assistance — in order to get back on its feet and overcome its protracted socio-economic crisis. At the same time, we want to emphasize once again that overcoming the crisis depends above all on the Haitians themselves, on the leadership of that Caribbean country and on the carefully targeted reform efforts to resolve its domestic political situation by means of constructive dialogue.

From the very beginning — and even less so now — the situation in Haiti has not posed a threat to peace and security. What we have is a typical situation: the difficult transition of a society that lacks a democratic tradition — a transition that is made even more difficult by chronic socio-economic difficulties and widespread poverty. We do not see how the situation in this country differs from that of many developing countries, which are also encountering drastic problems in the establishment of democracy, economic development and the fight against galloping criminality.

We also understand the importance of the work to establish, with the active participation of the United Nations, a new Haitian National Police — although, of course, even an excellent police force cannot replace the work of all the other institutions that are necessary for the normal functioning of a State.

We see that the Haitian National Police is still going to require international assistance for the protracted process of enhancing its professional training. We gather that such assistance will be provided bilaterally, by interested States as well as by international and regional organizations. A further role in this effort will also have to be played by the United Nations, through the relevant specialized agencies and programmes. We are convinced that they will do a good job of taking the baton from the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH).

The joint United Nations/Organization of American States International Civilian Mission and the United Nations Development Programme are already making an important contribution to the professionalization of Haitian law-enforcement organs. We believe that it would also be possible to make use of the institutional experience of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala, established by the General Assembly, which is carrying out similar tasks to those of the United Nations Mission in training Haiti's National Police. In short, there are many options.

As for establishing in Haiti United Nations peacekeeping mechanisms under a Security Council mandate, this option was long ago exhausted. As is well known, the first United Nations Mission in Haiti was deployed more than five years ago, in September 1993. Several times since then, the Mission has been extended "for the last time" under various names. In November 1997 the Security Council once again agreed to retain the United Nations Mission in that country, changing its name for the fourth time — in that case to the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti. Moreover, operative paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution 1141 (1997) clearly stated that the Mission's mandate was

"limited to a single one-year period ending on 30 November 1998"

and that

"further international assistance to the Haitian national police, should it be needed, should be provided through United Nations specialized agencies and programmes, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, and through international and regional organizations and by interested Member States".

It is precisely that clear understanding that allowed Russia, despite all its reservations, to support resolution 1141 (1997).

A year has elapsed, and we find ourselves — back at square one, as they say here. We have had more than enough time to shift to the aegis of the United Nations specialized agencies the task of providing assistance to the Haitian police, and the Security Council is now being asked for the fifth time to disregard its own previous decision.

Clearly there is a double standard in the Security Council's approach to crisis situations in various regions of the world. We are convinced that the adoption by the Security Council of the proposed draft resolution on the extension for the nth time of the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Haiti clearly will not enhance either the Council's authority or confidence in its decisions.

Our delegation will not be able to support the draft resolution the Council is to vote on today.

The President: I shall now put to a vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1998/1117.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bahrain, Brazil, Costa Rica, France, Gabon, Gambia, Japan, Kenya, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

None

Abstaining:

China, Russian Federation

The President: The result of the voting is as follows: 13 votes in favour, none against and 2 abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 1212 (1998).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The United Nations peacekeeping operation in Haiti has been going on for more than five years. In this

regard, the Council has adopted many resolutions extending the mandate of the operation while constantly changing its name.

China has always supported the United Nations efforts to provide necessary assistance to the people of Haiti and has always been in favour of the relevant resolutions. We still believe that the United Nations should continue to provide assistance to the people of Haiti to help them overcome the political crisis and carry out economic reconstruction.

Not long ago the Permanent Representative of China, Ambassador Qin Huasun, visited the Republic of Haiti. Having learned first hand about the situation on the ground, we believe that of late the situation in Haiti has been relatively stable and that it does not constitute any threat to international or regional peace and security. With the help of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH), the establishment of the Haitian National Police force has also made considerable progress.

The resolution before us stresses that economic reconstruction is the major task facing the Government and people of Haiti.

Under these circumstances, China believes that it is necessary to promote and encourage the relevant development and financial institutions to play a major role in Haiti instead of continuing to extend the mandate of MIPONUH for another year. China understands the importance of building a highly effective and professional police force in Haiti. At the same time, we believe that the stability and development of Haiti not only hinge on the building of a police force but also involve various other aspects. Only the restoration of the economic and social development of Haiti can ensure the maintenance of stability and lead to a genuine and lasting settlement of the present difficulties.

We have taken note of the letter from President Préval and the report of the Secretary-General. We have also taken note of the wish of the group of Friends of the Secretary-General for Haiti. In order to seek an appropriate solution to this question, China has displayed considerable flexibility, suggesting that the mandate of MIPONUH be extended for an appropriate period and that the next step be decided in accordance with the practical situation then. This suggestion both follows the general practice of the Council in authorizing the extension of peacekeeping operations and accommodates the specific situation of Haiti and of MIPONUH. In particular, it avoids the situation in which

the Council, in dealing with regional hot spots, may adopt a double standard.

It is regrettable that our major amendment proposals have not been taken into account and adopted by the co-sponsors. As a result, my delegation was compelled to abstain in the voting on this draft resolution.

China undertakes to continue to support the United Nations presence in Haiti to demonstrate the international community's attention to and support for the peace process and economic reconstruction of Haiti. We hope that Haiti will get out of the present political impasse as soon as possible and that the elections will be conducted smoothly. We believe that with the help of the international community, the people of Haiti will eventually reach their goal of long-lasting peace and security, prosperity and development.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States of America.

We welcome today's decision to extend for one year the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH). By affirming our commitment, the United Nations, through MIPONUH's effective training and mentoring, will continue to help Haitians construct a responsive and credible police force.

We remain concerned with the present political impasse in Haiti, as noted in the present MIPONUH resolution. We will continue to urge the Haitians to resolve their differences in the interest of the country's immediate and long-term future. Despite the political obstacles, notable progress has been made towards the professionalization of the Haitian National Police.

Our work, however, is not complete. Senior and mid-level managers require further training. By withdrawing MIPONUH prematurely, before an adequate transition mechanism is readied, and at a time when Haitian democracy is fragile, we would have jeopardized the very real achievements made by the Haitian National Police. An early withdrawal would also have undermined the international community's efforts to sustain Haiti's still young democracy.

We must use the time given in this mandate constructively. In the months ahead, we need to develop a viable transition mechanism outside the peacekeeping

framework to continue support for the professionalization of the Haitian National Police.

My Government commends all those who have contributed and continue to contribute to MIPONUH, particularly the Representative of the Secretary-General, Julian Harston of the United Kingdom. We acknowledge his valuable contributions and believe that they have been essential to the success of the mission. My Government remains committed to MIPONUH's success and will continue to support this important mission.

In April 1995, the United Nations played a crucial role in restoring a constitutional government to the people of Haiti. Today's Security Council vote, extending for one year the mandate of MIPONUH, reaffirms our commitment to helping the Haitian people build a foundation for permanent peace and development.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The Security Council has concluded its voting procedure.

I now give the floor to the representative of Haiti.

Mr. Lelong (Haiti) (*interpretation from French*): First of all, I would like to pay tribute to the expertise you have demonstrated in guiding the work of the Security Council during the month of November while serving as President of this important body. I should like to take this opportunity also to congratulate your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, who guided the deliberations of the Council in an outstanding manner during the month of October.

The resolution which the Council has just adopted is of considerable importance for the consolidation of the democratic process in Haiti. By authorizing the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH), the Council not only will allow our young police force to continue to benefit from assistance from the international community for its professionalization, but will also contribute to preserving the progress made up to now in the building of democracy and the state of law in Haiti.

On behalf of the Government and people of Haiti, I would like to extend our warm gratitude to the Secretary-

General for his understanding and leadership on the issue of Haiti. To the Members of the Security Council — all of them — and to the group of Friends of the Secretary-General for Haiti, I would like to voice our gratitude for their tireless efforts.

As was emphasized by Mr. René Préval, President of the Republic of Haiti, in his letter dated 22 October 1998 addressed to the Secretary-General, the Haitian National Police has made outstanding progress, thanks to the support which it has received from United Nations missions in Haiti; however, essential steps still remain ahead which require the continuing assistance of the international community. This is, in particular, the case regarding judicial reform, which has not yet achieved a satisfactory degree of implementation.

Thanks to this resolution, Haiti knows that it can continue to count on such support of the international community. In particular, the assistance of international financial institutions and other United Nations bodies should promote a concrete and lasting development designed to strengthen political stability in the primacy of law and respect for fundamental freedoms.

Haiti is at present facing a continuing institutional crisis which is testing the political will of all the protagonists. We are aware of the frustrating nature of this situation, both for the Haitians and for the international community. But the rule of democracy requires that we not force a solution which in fact could be the origin of serious problems in the future. Serious negotiations are under way. The Haitian parliament has had a special session to debate this question and to find a solution within the framework of our constitution.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti, the personnel of MIPONUH and the contributing countries for their support to the process of the consolidation of democracy in Haiti.

The President: I thank the representative of Haiti for his statement and for his kind words addressed both to my predecessor and to me.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 2 p.m.