

The UNAMIR mandate ends on 5 April 1994. The new SC president (New Zealand) therefore had to interrupt the usual round of bilateral consultations with other SC members, usually the first order of business of every SC President, and convene informal consultations to consider and then adopt a resolution extending the UNAMIR mandate for another period of time.

The SG report on the matter (S/1994/360) had been distributed over the weekend. The SG observed that the presence of UNAMIR has a positive impact on the situation in Rwanda. He emphasized, however, that this does not concern the political process where practically no progress has been marked since the adoption of UNSCR 893 (of 06/01/94). Therefore, while recommending the UNAMIR extension by another six months, the SG conditions any further role for the UN in the country by evaluating, after two months, how the Arusha agreements (especially concerning the establishment of a transitional government and parliament) are being implemented. The SG also recommends expanding UNAMIR by 45 civilian policemen.

A draft resolution on UNAMIR was presented by France. While introducing it, France underscored two positive elements of the situation: the deployment of UNAMIR has contributed to the country's stability, and parties to the conflict are still dedicated to the "Arusha process". It described the delays in establishing the transitional institutions as a negative. In the draft itself France stipulated the extension of the mandate for three months, with a review of the Rwanda situation in six weeks. These shorter timeframes are to exert sufficient pressure on the parties concerned to accelerate the implementation of the Arusha agreements. France suggested that the dispatch of 45 police be postponed.

While there is otherwise no dispute about the draft, these time limits (for the length of the mandate and for the review) became subject to a lengthy and so far unresolved debate. Nigeria (on behalf of NAM) supported the original proposals of the SG. US and Russia are in favor of a 3-month extension but consider this a compromise, inasmuch as originally they would have supported only a 2-month extension. UK also supported the timeframes mentioned in the French draft, and NZ and Brazil followed. Informal consultations were then suspended for NAM to have a chance to discuss what next. Nigeria then suggested leaving the extension at 6 months but shorten the period of review, to 4 weeks. Original reactions of others (except for China) were evasive. Delegations referred to the need for fresh instructions. The US delegation was the most cautious one (note: small wonder, after the US in the last moment blocked the expansion of UNPROFOR by the proposed almost 10 000 troops).

Informal consultations to resolve this single sticky point in the draft will be held tomorrow, 05/04, with voting on the draft the same day.