

REPORT FROM THE SECURITY COUNCIL



Yugoslavia

■ As the role of the UN is redefined in the post-Cold War era, the limits of Security Council intervention in the internal affairs of a member state were once again tested in the case of Yugoslavia. On 25 September, the Council unanimously adopted Resolution 713, which “strongly urges” the parties to the conflict in Yugoslavia to observe a ceasefire and decided that all states shall “immediately implement a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Yugoslavia.”

The foreign ministers of eleven of the fifteen Council members participated in adopting the resolution. Although some states had privately attempted to have the Council send UN peacekeepers to the area, China and the non-aligned states were said to be strongly against any such UN involvement.

On 25 October the Secretary-General issued a report that, among other things, noted that the arms embargo was being violated. He did not name those responsible. Resolution 713 imposes no penalties on states that violate the embargo.

Cambodia

■ On 31 October, the Council unanimously adopted Resolution 718, which formally recognized the accord signed in Paris eight days before by the combatants in the Cambodian conflict. Resolution 718 calls on the Secretary-General to submit a detailed estimate of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) which will administer the country at least until free elections are held. The document brought the world body a step closer to launching what is expected to be one of the largest and

most expensive peacekeeping operations in its history.

The complexity of the undertaking is hinted at in the resolution, which calls on all the parties to the conflict in Cambodia to comply fully with the 23 October Paris peace agreement. The reason for the Council’s call can be traced back to 16 October, when UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar warned of plans by the combatants to repatriate their followers to Cambodia. In a sharp statement, the Secretary-General warned that “the existence of such plans raises a doubt about the commitment of the parties concerned” to the peace accords.

On 16 October, the Council unanimously adopted Resolution 717 establishing the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC) whose duty is to assist in maintaining the current ceasefire and to prepare for the arrival of UNTAC. The over 250 members of UNAMIC will be responsible for facilitating communications between the military headquarters of the four Cambodian parties to the dispute, as well as to train civilians on how to avoid injury from land mines and booby traps.

El Salvador

■ On 30 September, the Council reaffirmed its support for the completion of a peace process in El Salvador by unanimously adopting Resolution 714. The document also welcomed the agreement signed five days before in New York by the government and guerrillas of the *Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional* (FMLN).

Haiti

■ On 3 October, the president of the Security Council, ambassador Chirmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan of India issued a statement which “condemned strongly” the overthrow of Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The statement, which is non-binding, also urged the “restoration of the legitimate authority in Haiti.” The presi-

dential statement represented a compromise between those countries pushing for more forceful action and those which feared that binding Council action could set a precedent for future international intervention.

Iraq

■ On 15 August, amid reports of worsening civilian conditions inside Iraq, the Council adopted Resolution 706 which allows Baghdad to sell limited amounts of oil for the purpose of meeting essential civilian needs like food and other essentials. The resolution also demands that Baghdad comply with its obligations to cooperate in the identification and destruction of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons as well as ballistic missiles.

The Council held off authorizing Iraq to sell a specific amount of oil until the Secretary-General presented a report on measures to monitor the sale of oil and distribution of food. Resolution 706, which was adopted by a vote of 13 in favour, with Cuba voting against and Yemen abstaining, also requires Iraq to pay up to thirty percent of its oil revenue to a special fund intended to compensate victims of its invasion of Kuwait on 2 August.

On 19 September, the Council adopted Resolution 712, which sets a ceiling of \$1.6 billion in the amount of oil that Iraq is allowed to export in order to meet its humanitarian needs. However, Baghdad was sharply critical of the resolution and complained that as a result of the strict monitoring regime Iraq had been put under UN “trusteeship.” While Baghdad stopped short of categorically ruling out any sale of oil, as of the beginning of November, no sale had taken place and as a result, no food had been purchased. An Iraqi diplomat told a reporter that his countrymen would “rather eat dirt.”

On 12 October, the Council adopted Resolution 715, which in effect, established the most intrusive and wide-ranging arms con-

trol regime ever established in UN history against any country. Not only did it authorize the UN Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to move unhindered inside Iraq, but it granted inspectors wide-ranging powers of search and seizure. Iraq’s ambassador complained that the resolution turned the Special Commission into “the High Commissioner for Iraq, as in the old colonial days.”

Resolution 715 was an outgrowth of the ceasefire terms for the end of the Persian Gulf War. It was adopted after weeks of diplomatic skirmishes with Baghdad that had led the US and some allied governments to warn of military action if Iraq persisted in obstructing the work of UN inspectors charged with locating and scrapping its weapons of mass destruction. Through most of September, Baghdad refused to allow three UN helicopters to operate in its airspace – a clear contravention of Resolution 707 authorizing the UN teams to use aircraft inside Iraq.

During September, Iraq also detained a UN inspection team for several days in a parking lot after UN officials discovered documents relating to Iraq’s clandestine nuclear programme. Afterwards, UN officials said the documents offered conclusive proof that the regime’s secret nuclear programme was aimed at producing an atomic bomb.

New Members

■ The number of UN members rose to 166 after the Security Council recommended to the General Assembly on 12 September the admission of three Baltic states – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. On 9 August, the Council had recommended the admission of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea) and the Republic of Korea as well as of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. □

– TREVOR ROWE