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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3856th meeting of the Security Council, held on 24 February 1998, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Tajikistan and along the Tajik-Afghan border", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the progress report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan of 10 February 1998 (S/1998/113), submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of its resolution 1138 (1997) of 14 November 1997.

"The Security Council regrets that during the last three months work on the implementation of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan (S/1997/510) and the relevant activities of the Commission on National Reconciliation (CNR) have proceeded very slowly. It welcomes recent efforts made by the parties in order to fulfil their obligations. The Council calls upon them to intensify their efforts to implement fully the General Agreement, including the Protocol on military issues (S/1997/209, annex II). It also encourages the CNR to continue its efforts aimed at the institution of a broad dialogue among the various political forces as foreseen in the General Agreement.

"The Security Council commends the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the personnel of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) for their work and encourages them to continue assisting the parties in the implementation of the General Agreement. It welcomes the results of the international donor conference in support of peace and reconciliation in Tajikistan convened by the Secretary-General in Vienna on 24 and 25 November 1997, and looks forward to the contribution of those results to consolidating the peace process in Tajikistan.

"The Security Council reiterates its concern that the security situation in some parts of Tajikistan remains precarious. It reminds both parties that the international community is ready to continue assisting in the implementation of the General Agreement as well as in humanitarian and rehabilitation programmes, but that its ability to do so and also the

ability of UNMOT to carry out its tasks more effectively is linked to improvements in security conditions.

"The Security Council firmly condemns the hostage-taking of relief workers that took place in November 1997 and urges the parties to cooperate further in ensuring the security and freedom of movement of the personnel of the United Nations, the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (the CIS Peacekeeping Forces) and other international personnel, and to take practical steps in this respect, such as those mentioned in paragraph 7 of the report of the Secretary-General.

"The Security Council welcomes the presidential decree establishing a joint security unit with the task of providing security, including armed escorts, for UNMOT personnel and calls upon the parties to make the unit operational as soon as possible. It also welcomes the readiness of the CIS Peacekeeping Forces to arrange for the guarding of United Nations premises in Dushanbe, as mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General, and encourages UNMOT and the CIS Peacekeeping Forces to make the relevant detailed arrangements.

"The Security Council encourages the Secretary-General to continue the expansion of UNMOT to the strength authorized by its resolution 1138 (1997) as soon as the Secretary-General deems conditions appropriate."
