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## Security Council

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### Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict

#### Introduction

1. The present report, the third report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, is submitted in accordance with the request of the President of the Council, contained in his letter dated 21 June 2001 (S/2001/614).

2. The first report, dated 8 September 1999 (S/1999/957), presented the facts about the reality confronted by millions of civilians around the world in situations of armed conflict and recommended that the Security Council act to encourage parties to a conflict to better protect civilian populations. The second report, dated 30 March 2001 (S/2001/331), focused on some additional steps Member States could take to strengthen their own capacity to protect civilians in armed conflict.

3. In the 18 months since those reports were tabled, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat has worked to ensure a more consistent and systematic presentation of these issues to the various organs of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Much interest has been demonstrated through the increased number of briefings to the Security Council during the past 18 months, highlighting issues of humanitarian concern in matters of peace and security, including the protection of civilians. The one-day workshop on the Mano River region convened by the Council on 18 July 2002, at which the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs made presentations, provided a practical stocktaking of the effectiveness and adequacy of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). It also ensured a comprehensive review of the protection needs of civilians alongside peace-building and political objectives. It would be useful to conduct further regular reviews of Security Council mandates from the point of view of the impact on civilians and in the context of a joint political, security and humanitarian analysis.

4. Much work has also been done to strengthen and enhance the policy agenda outlined in the first two reports. At the request of the Security Council, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs developed an aide-memoire, which was adopted by the Council in the statement by its President of 15 March 2002 (S/PRST/2002/6). The aide-memoire is a practical tool that provides a basis for improved analysis and diagnosis of key civilian protection issues that arise out of