The Security Council,

Recalling its resolution 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998 and the statement of its President of 7 January 1999 (S/1999/PRST/1),

Expressing its deep concern over the recent deterioration of the situation in Sierra Leone, and encouraging all efforts aimed at resolving the conflict and restoring lasting peace and stability,

Having considered the Third Progress Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) (S/1998/1176) and his Special Report on UNOMSIL of 7 January 1999 (S/1999/20), and noting the recommendations contained therein,

1. Decides to extend the mandate of UNOMSIL until 13 March 1999;

2. Takes note of the intention of the Secretary-General, as set out in paragraph 37 of his Special Report, to reduce the number of military observers in UNOMSIL and to retain in Conakry a small number who would return to Sierra Leone when conditions permit together with the necessary civilian substantive and logistical support staff under the leadership of his Special Representative;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the Council closely informed on the situation in Sierra Leone and to submit a further report to the Council with recommendations on the future deployment of UNOMSIL and implementation of its mandate by 5 March 1999;

4. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.