



SUPPLEMENT 2020

# Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council



United  
Nations



**United Nations**

# **Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council**

**Supplement 2020**





**Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs**

**Repertoire of the Practice  
of the Security Council**

**Supplement 2020**



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## Introduction

The present publication constitutes the twenty-third supplement to the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 1946–1951*, which was issued in 1954. In 2020, owing to the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, between 12 March and 14 July 2020, the Security Council suspended the holding of in-person meetings in the Security Council Chamber. Instead, Council members initiated the practice of holding open and closed videoconferences as a means of continuing the work of the Council and developed a hybrid model of work, alternating in-person meetings with videoconferences. In 2020, videoconferences, whether open or closed, were not considered formal meetings of the Council. While meetings in person continued to be recorded in verbatim records, as customary, the statements delivered in open videoconferences were compiled in letters from the President of the Council, as further detailed in part II.

Consequently, the twenty-third supplement to the *Repertoire* features both meetings and open videoconferences, despite the latter not being considered meetings of the Council. It covers the proceedings of the Council from the 8698th meeting, held on 8 January 2020, to the last open videoconference of the year, held on 29 December 2020 and recorded in the corresponding letter from the President of the Council (S/2020/1311). The original *Repertoire* and previous supplements may be consulted online on the website of the Security Council ([www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/repertoire/structure](http://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/repertoire/structure)).

The *Repertoire* was mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 686 (VII), entitled “Ways and means for making the evidence of customary international law more readily available”. It is a guide to the proceedings of the Council and sets forth in a readily accessible form the practices and procedures to which the Council has had recourse. The *Repertoire* is not intended as a substitute for the records of the Council, which constitute the only comprehensive and authoritative account of its deliberations.

The categories employed to arrange the material are not intended to suggest the existence of procedures or practices that have not been clearly or demonstrably established by the Council itself. The Council is at all times master of its own procedure, within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations, its own provisional rules of procedure and the practice established through, inter alia, notes by the President of the Council. For ease of reference, this introduction contains a table indicating the membership of the Council during the period under review.

In recording the Council’s practice, the headings under which the practices and procedures of the Council were presented in the original volume issued in 1954 have been largely retained. Where necessary, however, adjustments have been made to better reflect the Council’s practice. For example, the studies contained in part I of the present publication are organized according to region or thematic issues in chronological order.

The *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* covers four primary areas: the application of the provisional rules of procedure, the application of Articles of the Charter of the United Nations, the subsidiary organs of the Council, including peacekeeping operations and special political missions, as well as sanctions committees and the associated panels and groups of experts, and an overview of Council activities for each item on its agenda. From 1946 to 2007, each Supplement to the *Repertoire*, generally covering a period of two to four years,

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comprised 12 chapters; from 2008 to 2017, each Supplement covered a period of two years and comprised 10 parts. Since 2018, each Supplement, covering a period of one year, has been organized in 10 parts.

From 1946 to 2007, the 12 chapters of each Supplement covered the following topics:

Chapter I	Provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council (Articles 28, 30, 98 of the Charter; rules 1–5, 13–36, 40–67 of the rules of procedure)
Chapter II	Agenda (rules 6–12)
Chapter III	Participation in the proceedings of the Security Council (Articles 31, 32, 35 (1); rules 37–39)
Chapter IV	Voting (Article 27; rule 40)
Chapter V	Subsidiary organs of the Security Council
Chapter VI	Relations with other United Nations organs
Chapter VII	Practice relative to recommendations to the General Assembly regarding membership in the United Nations
Chapter VIII	Consideration of questions under the Council’s responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security (overview by agenda item)
Chapter IX	Decisions taken by the Security Council in the exercise of its other functions and powers
Chapter X	Consideration of the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter
Chapter XI	Consideration of the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter
Chapter XII	Consideration of the provisions of other Articles (Articles 1 (2), 2 (4), 2 (5), 2 (6), 2 (7), 24, 25, 52–54, 102, 103)

From 2008 onward, the 10 parts of each Supplement covered the following topics:

Part I	Consideration of questions under the responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security
Part II	Provisional rules of procedure and related procedural developments
Part III	Purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations
Part IV	Relations with other United Nations organs
Part V	Functions and powers of the Security Council (Chapter V of the Charter)
Part VI	Consideration of the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter
Part VII	Actions with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression (Chapter VII of the Charter)
Part VIII	Regional arrangements (Chapter VIII of the Charter)

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Part IX	Subsidiary organs of the Security Council: committees, tribunals and other bodies
Part X	Subsidiary organs of the Security Council: peacekeeping operations and special political missions

The *Repertoire* is based on published documents of the Security Council. Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Security Council documents are indicated by a symbol that includes the year and a sequential number (e.g. [S/2020/1252](#)). References to the verbatim records of meetings of the Council are given in the form [S/PV.8775](#), meetings being numbered consecutively, starting with the first meeting in 1946. As in previous recent supplements, reference is made in this Supplement only to the provisional verbatim records of Security Council meetings, as the practice of publishing the meeting records in the *Official Records* has been discontinued. As explained above, the COVID-19 pandemic had an enormous impact in 2020 on the work of the Council, including on its documentation and, in particular, on the documentation created to record statements made at or submitted for open videoconferences, which were circulated in letters from the President of the Council issued, like other Security Council documents, under a symbol that includes the year and a sequential number, as described above.

The resolutions and other decisions adopted by the Council, including statements and notes issued by the President of the Council and relevant exchanges of letters between the President and the Secretary-General, are published in the yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. Resolutions are identified by a number followed by the year of adoption in parentheses, for example, resolution [2550 \(2020\)](#). Since 1994, references to the statements by the President on behalf of the Council are given in the form [S/PRST/2020/12](#), for example. Prior to that date, presidential statements, like other Security Council documents, were circulated under a symbol in the sequential series (e.g. [S/25929](#)).

Readers who wish to consult the full record of a meeting or the text of a Council document referred to in the *Repertoire* may do so on the official website of the United Nations Documentation Centre ([www.un.org/en/documents/](http://www.un.org/en/documents/)). Council documents can be accessed on the website by selecting “Official Document System (ODS)” or one of the direct links to specific categories of documents under the heading “Security Council”. The volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions* may be accessed by symbol ([S/INF/75](#) for 2020).

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## **Membership of the Security Council, 2020**

Belgium

China

Dominican Republic

Estonia

France

Germany

Indonesia

Niger

Russian Federation

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

South Africa

Tunisia

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

United States of America

Viet Nam

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## **Part I**

# **Consideration of questions under the responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security**



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## Introductory note

Part I of the present Supplement to the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* provides an overview of the proceedings of the Security Council in connection with the items on its agenda that relate to its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

In 2020, owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Council suspended the holding of meetings in person in the Security Council Chamber between 12 March and 14 July. Council members instead initiated the practice of holding videoconferences in open and closed formats as a means of continuing the Council's work. From 14 July to the end of the year, the work of the Council was conducted using a hybrid model, alternating in-person meetings with videoconferences. In 2020, videoconferences, whether open or closed, were not considered formal meetings of the Council. While in-person meetings continued to be recorded in verbatim records as customary, the statements delivered in open videoconferences were compiled and issued in letters of the President of the Security Council.

In addition, to surmount the problem of the absence of meetings in person for the purpose of adopting decisions, Council members agreed that Council resolutions would be adopted through a written procedure, the outcome of which would be announced in an open videoconference and which would have the same legal status as those voted on in the Security Council Chamber. The announcement of the outcome in an open videoconference was not possible until April 2020 because of technical difficulties, but the communication of the outcome was made available in a set of letters from the President of the Council, setting forth the outcome of the vote together with the record of the written procedure and the explanations of vote. Presidential statements would be agreed upon following a no-objection procedure and subsequently announced at an open videoconference and would have the same status as those adopted in the Security Council Chamber. Unlike resolutions, no additional communication by a letter from the President of the Council was made available for the issuance of presidential statements.<sup>1</sup>

As in past supplements, part I gives the immediate political context in which the consideration of the items by the Council evolved in 2020, covering the meetings and documents of the Council, and for this year also including letters of the President of the Council compiling statements delivered in videoconferences.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, part I features all items in connection with which meetings and/or open videoconferences were held, despite the latter not being considered meetings of the Council. Part I constitutes a framework within which the deliberations of the Council expressly related to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the Council's provisional rules of procedure can be considered. For that reason, cross-references to all other relevant parts are included in the narrative sections of part I to facilitate understanding of the structure and content of the *Repertoire*.

Part I also examines the substantive aspects of the Council's practice that are not covered in other parts of the *Repertoire*. For ease of reference, the items are grouped by region, with an additional category of thematic issues. Within each region, items are listed in the order in which they were first included in the list of matters of which the Council is seized. Individual studies highlight significant developments in the Council's consideration of an item that are considered important for contextualizing the decisions taken by the Council.

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<sup>1</sup> Procedural developments recorded in 2020 are featured in part II.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the questions considered in part I were also discussed in informal consultations of the whole among the members of the Council and in closed videoconferences.

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In contrast with previous supplements, and in the light of the hybrid method of work developed by the Council, the narrative sections in part I are followed, as relevant and appropriate, by: (a) a table comprising all procedural information relating to the item, including meetings, sub-items, documents referred to and speakers, listed in chronological order; and/or (b) a table including a list of videoconferences held in connection with the items on the Council's agenda. In addition, to illustrate the mainstreaming of thematic issues, sections concerning the items entitled "Children and armed conflict", "Protection of civilians in armed conflict" and "Women and peace and security" are followed by an additional table setting out the relevant provisions of decisions of the Council.

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# Africa

## 1. The situation concerning Western Sahara

In 2020, the members of the Council held one open videoconference in connection with the situation concerning Western Sahara to announce the adoption of resolution 2548 (2020).<sup>3</sup> More information on that videoconference is given in the table below. In addition, the members of the Council held two closed videoconferences to discuss the situation in Western Sahara, at which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations provided briefings.<sup>4</sup> Council members also held a closed videoconference with countries contributing troops and police to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001).<sup>5</sup> In addition, Council members held informal consultations of the whole to discuss the situation concerning Western Sahara.<sup>6</sup>

On 30 October, the Council adopted resolution 2548 (2020), extending the mandate of MINURSO for a period of one year, until 31 October 2021.<sup>7</sup> The resolution was adopted with 13 votes in favour and 2 abstentions.<sup>8</sup> In the resolution, the Council looked forward to the appointment of a new Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara at the earliest opportunity.<sup>9</sup> The Council also emphasized the need to achieve a realistic, practicable and enduring political solution to the question of Western Sahara, expressed its full support for the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to sustain the renewed negotiation process and welcomed the commitment of Morocco, the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO), Algeria and Mauritania to remain engaged.<sup>10</sup> In that

connection, the Council called upon the parties to resume negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General without preconditions and in good faith, taking into account the efforts made since 2006 and subsequent developments, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.<sup>11</sup>

Nine Council members submitted written statements<sup>12</sup> providing explanations of their votes on resolution 2548 (2020).<sup>13</sup> According to its statement, the Russian Federation had abstained from the vote because the process of elaborating and endorsing the document had been neither transparent nor consultative. The Russian Federation underscored that none of its delegation's principled and well-substantiated considerations, including those of a compromise nature, had been taken into account, and a whole range of practical proposals articulated by other Council members had also been left unanswered, resulting in an unbalanced text. The Russian Federation also raised concerns regarding the substitution of fundamental principles of the Western Saharan settlement by general remarks about the need to stick to realistic approaches and seek compromise, which produced ambiguity, undermined trust in the Council's work and obscured prospects for resuming the political process. According to the statement, the attempt to boost the peace process by using language that blurred previously agreed parameters of the Western Saharan settlement would rather produce the opposite result.

According to its statement, South Africa had abstained on the mandate renewal of MINURSO during its 2019–2020 term owing to the substance of and the working methods on the Western Sahara file. The Council's working methods on the Western Sahara file had been "uniquely biased and non-transparent". South Africa had consistently raised concerns about the "negotiating process" through the Group of Friends, which remained an obstacle to making progress since a draft text would be presented to Council members for it to be accepted as a *fait accompli*. According to the statement, the Western Sahara mandate was the only one negotiated in that manner and it was not

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>4</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 3. The closed videoconferences were held on 9 April and 21 December 2020 respectively. For more information, see [S/2020/558](#).

<sup>5</sup> The closed videoconference was held on 12 October 2020 in connection with the item entitled "Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B"; see [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 22.

<sup>6</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Resolution 2548 (2020), para. 1. For more information on the mandate of MINURSO, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>8</sup> See [S/2020/1063](#).

<sup>9</sup> Resolution 2548 (2020), fourth preambular paragraph.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 2 and 3.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4.

<sup>12</sup> See [S/2020/1075](#).

<sup>13</sup> Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa, United States and Viet Nam.



considerate of the views of Member States, particularly of African Member States, that were excluded from the Group of Friends. South Africa further indicated that there had been no real attempt to reach a compromise on the contentious paragraphs. Regarding the substance of resolution [2548 \(2020\)](#), South Africa raised several points. The text did not reflect the current realities on the ground, or adequately reflect the urgency for the United Nations to find a personal envoy to resume the stalled United Nations-led political process, and the text could have been more balanced, including returning to a six-month mandate renewal cycle instead of one year, so as to send a positive signal to all parties. South Africa also noted various concrete comments on the text of the resolution, as well as the need for an explicit reference or responsibility to be given to MINURSO to monitor the human rights situation on the ground.

Among the Council members voting in favour, many welcomed or expressed support for the work of MINURSO<sup>14</sup> and stressed the need for a swift appointment of a new personal envoy of the Secretary-

<sup>14</sup> Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa, United States and Viet Nam.

General.<sup>15</sup> According to its statement, Indonesia noted that the text reflected a delicate balance, considering the sensitivity of the issue, the absence of a personal envoy and the lack of an active political process. In its statement, Viet Nam stressed the importance of considering the legitimate views of the parties concerned with a balanced and impartial approach. In its statement, China expressed hope for more thorough consultations on draft resolutions on the mandate renewal for MINURSO in the future to make the text more balanced, achieve consensus through consultation and send a positive signal.

In a letter dated 15 December 2020 addressed to the President of the Council, the United States submitted a letter enclosing the President of the United States' Proclamation on Recognizing the Sovereignty of the Kingdom of Morocco over the Western Sahara, dated 10 December 2020, recognizing that the entire Western Sahara territory was part of the Kingdom of Morocco and expressing that Morocco's autonomy proposal was "the only basis for a just and lasting solution to the dispute over the Western Sahara territory".<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa and United States.

<sup>16</sup> See [S/2020/1210](#).

## **Videoconference: the situation concerning Western Sahara**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
30 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1075</a>	Letter dated 30 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2548 (2020)</a> 13-0-2 <sup>a</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/1063</a>

<sup>a</sup> *For*: Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: Russian Federation, South Africa.

## **2. The situation in Somalia**

During the year under review, the Council held four meetings and adopted six decisions on the situation in Somalia, three of which were under Chapter VII of the Charter. Three meetings took the form of briefings, while one was convened to adopt a decision.<sup>17</sup> More information on the meetings,

<sup>17</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

including on participants and speakers, is provided in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held nine videoconferences in connection with the item, four of which were held for the announcement of the vote on the various resolutions adopted.<sup>18</sup> More information on

<sup>18</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, in 2020 Council members held informal consultations of the whole to discuss the situation in Somalia.<sup>19</sup>

In 2020, the Council heard regular briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia. In addition, Council members also heard briefings by the Director of the Mine Action Service, by the Director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and by the Founder and Chair of Somali Gender Equity Movement.

The Special Representative provided briefings to Council members in connection with the quarterly reports of the Secretary-General.<sup>20</sup> He focused on the preparations for the 2020/21 elections, and informed the Council about the persistent attacks by Al-Shabaab, which remained the primary threat to Somalia's security, as well as about the acute humanitarian situation, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, flooding and locust infestations. At a meeting of the Council held on 24 February,<sup>21</sup> the Special Representative described 2020 as a potentially transformative year for Somalia, with the main priorities being achieving debt relief, holding elections, finalizing the federal constitution, making progress in the fight against Al-Shabaab and consolidating the federal State. He informed the Council about the enactment of the new electoral code on 21 February 2020 and expressed regret that, while an important step, the new law did not address many outstanding questions such as the location of constituencies, guaranteeing 30 per cent of seats for women and finding modalities for Somalis from across the country to vote. Regarding the security situation, he expressed regret that despite the efforts of the Somali National Army, AMISOM and international partners, Al-Shabaab retained the ability to conduct large-scale attacks in Mogadishu, including against the United Nations and the international community. In a videoconference held on 21 May,<sup>22</sup> the Special Representative focused on the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, noting that it had also slowed the training by international partners needed to

generate forces for the fight against Al-Shabaab. Furthermore, he urgently called for a commitment to dialogue and improved cooperation between the Federal Government and all of the federal member states, noting that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) had supported those efforts, as directed by the Council in resolution 2461 (2019). The Special Representative reassured Council members that the United Nations forces in Somalia remained present, active and committed to delivering their mandate, despite the limitations and additional challenges resulting from the global pandemic and the ongoing security threats. At the meeting of the Council held on 20 August,<sup>23</sup> the Special Representative provided additional information on electoral preparations, noting that according to the Chair of the National Independent Electoral Commission, one person, one vote elections could take place no earlier than March 2021, and then only if manual voter registration was used, or in August 2021 if the Commission used biometric registration. Affirming that it was up to Somali stakeholders to determine the model that would guide the electoral process, the Special Representative also urged that such a model be arrived at through inclusive dialogue and compromise. In his last briefing of the year, at a videoconference held on 23 November,<sup>24</sup> the Special Representative told Council members that the Somali leadership had agreed on an indirect electoral model, which he regretted had fallen short of the constitutional requirement for direct universal suffrage. He further announced that UNSOM planned to contribute to the implementation of the electoral agreement and urged Somali leaders to prepare consensually a road map to ensure that one person, one vote elections would take place in the period 2024–2025. The Special Representative also noted that Mohamed Hussein Robleh had been appointed Prime Minister in September, whose new Government had the challenging task of steering the country through the electoral process and pursuing the reform agenda across the political, security and economic spectrums. In his briefings on 21 May and 23 November,<sup>25</sup> the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission informed the Council about the progress with regard to the AMISOM transition plan, announcing that the Mission had completed its drawdown of 1,000 troops by 28 February 2020, as mandated by the Council in resolution 2472 (2019). He also briefed the Council on

<sup>19</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 5. See also [S/2020/1142](#) and [S/2020/1045](#).

<sup>20</sup> [S/2020/121](#), [S/2020/398](#), [S/2020/798](#) and [S/2020/1113](#).

<sup>21</sup> See [S/PV.8731](#).

<sup>22</sup> See [S/2020/436](#).

<sup>23</sup> See [S/PV.8755](#).

<sup>24</sup> See [S/2020/1136](#).

<sup>25</sup> See [S/2020/436](#) and [S/2021/203](#).

the role of AMISOM related to election security and counter-terrorism.

In 2020, the Council also heard three briefings by the Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia. On 27 February,<sup>26</sup> the Chair reported on his visit to Mogadishu conducted from 21 to 23 January 2020. He noted that the visit was an important opportunity to help raise awareness of the purpose and scope of the sanctions measures, stressing that the sanctions regime was not static, was regularly reviewed and had evolved over the years to reflect changing circumstances. At a videoconference held on 9 June,<sup>27</sup> the Chair of the Committee informed Council members about the Committee's meeting with the Mine Action Service regarding the implementation of the ban on components of improvised explosive devices. In that context, the Committee had tasked the Panel of Experts with preparing an implementation assistance notice aimed at providing guidance to all Member States on the implementation of the ban on components of improvised explosive devices, which had been adopted by the Committee on 3 August.<sup>28</sup>

In 2020, discussions among Council members centred on Somalia's preparation for one person, one vote elections, relations between the Federal Government and federal member states, the security situation in the country and concerns about the worsening human rights and humanitarian conditions.

Concerning elections, Council members<sup>29</sup> welcomed the adoption of the electoral law in February 2020, underlining the need to address unresolved questions with a view to making the law implementable and to organize free and fair elections. Council members further noted the importance of respecting the principles agreed to in the Mutual Accountability Framework, including the issue of women's participation in the electoral process. In addition, Council members<sup>30</sup> mentioned the importance of holding timely and inclusive elections based on a broad agreement among all relevant stakeholders. Regarding the overall political situation in the country,

Council members<sup>31</sup> welcomed the resumption of dialogue between the Federal Government and federal member states in August 2020, further calling on all stakeholders to work together to reach an agreement on the constitutional review.

With regard to the security situation in Somalia, Council members<sup>32</sup> deliberated on the post-2021 security model, noting the importance of a Somali-led transition plan and expressing concern about Al-Shabaab as the main source of violence and primary threat to the country's security. In that context, several members<sup>33</sup> noted the use of improvised explosive devices by Al-Shabaab in its terrorist attacks. In relation to AMISOM, several Council members<sup>34</sup> underscored the importance of its drawdown taking place in line with threat assessments on the ground and the established plan to transition from AMISOM to the Somali security forces. During the meetings held in February and August,<sup>35</sup> the representative of France noted that it was necessary to continue to implement the transition plan with a view to transferring security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces by the end of 2021. At the same meetings, the representatives of the three African members and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines<sup>36</sup> stated their position that any reconfiguration or drawdown of AMISOM had to be condition-based and not lead to a security vacuum. At the meeting held in August,<sup>37</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation objected to attempts by a number of countries to forcibly expedite the drawdown of AMISOM.

In February, May and August,<sup>38</sup> Council members discussed the impact of climate on the security and

<sup>26</sup> See [S/PV.8735](#).

<sup>27</sup> See [S/2020/529](#).

<sup>28</sup> See [S/2020/529](#) and [S/2020/1079](#). For more information on the mandate of the Committee, see part IX, sect. I.B.

<sup>29</sup> See [S/PV.8731](#) (United Kingdom, United States, Dominican Republic and Russian Federation).

<sup>30</sup> See [S/PV.8755](#) (United Kingdom, Belgium, Dominican Republic, United States, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), Estonia, Viet Nam, Germany, China and France).

<sup>31</sup> See [S/PV.8755](#) (United Kingdom, Belgium, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), Estonia, China and Indonesia).

<sup>32</sup> See [S/PV.8731](#) (United States, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and Belgium); and [S/PV.8755](#) (Belgium and United States).

<sup>33</sup> See [S/2020/436](#) (Estonia, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia) and United Kingdom); and [S/PV.8755](#) (Dominican Republic, Russian Federation and Indonesia).

<sup>34</sup> See [S/PV.8731](#) (United Kingdom, Indonesia, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and Estonia).

<sup>35</sup> See [S/PV.8731](#) and [S/PV.8755](#).

<sup>36</sup> See [S/PV.8731](#) (Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa)); and [S/PV.8755](#) (South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)).

<sup>37</sup> See [S/PV.8755](#).

<sup>38</sup> See [S/PV.8731](#), [S/2020/436](#) and [S/PV.8755](#).

humanitarian situation in the country. They noted that humanitarian challenges were compounded by the triple threat of desert locust infestation, flood and drought cycles and the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the human rights front, several Council members<sup>39</sup> expressed concern over the new bill on sexual intercourse-related crimes and called for the protection of children, women and girls and the respect of Somalia's international obligations. In addition, several Council members<sup>40</sup> raised concerns about freedom of expression, and the representative of Estonia called on the Federal Government of Somalia to take steps to establish a national human rights commission.

In 2020, the Council adopted six resolutions in connection with the item, three of which were under Chapter VII of the Charter. By its resolutions [2516 \(2020\)](#) and [2527 \(2020\)](#), adopted unanimously on 30 March and 22 June, respectively, the Council provided for two sequential technical rollovers of the mandate of UNSOM for periods of three and two months, until 30 June 2020 and 31 August 2020 respectively.<sup>41</sup> On 28 August, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2540 \(2020\)](#), extending the mandate of UNSOM for a period of one year until 31 August 2021.<sup>42</sup> In addition to reiterating the existing mandate, the Council decided that UNSOM would continue to coordinate the United Nations efforts, with a particular focus, *inter alia*, on providing support, through the exercise of its good offices and technical, operational and logistical assistance, for the delivery of elections, enabling as many citizens as possible to vote in 2020–2021.<sup>43</sup> It further mandated UNSOM to provide support to the Federal Government of Somalia in the implementation of the Mutual Accountability Framework for Somalia of 2019.<sup>44</sup> The Council urged the Somali authorities to create a conducive political and security climate for inclusive elections across Somalia and called upon all federal member states to allow the National Independent Electoral Commission to operate freely to deliver an agreed electoral model.<sup>45</sup> The Council also underlined the need for the Federal Government of Somalia to establish and operationalize

the National Human Rights Commission and urged the Federal Government, with the support of the United Nations, to accelerate the implementation of the Joint Communiqué and the adoption and implementation of the new national action plan on ending sexual violence in conflict.<sup>46</sup> In addition, the Council requested the United Nations, the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states to consider the adverse implications of climate change, other ecological changes and natural disasters, among other factors, in their programmes in Somalia.<sup>47</sup>

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, on 29 May the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#), authorizing the member States of the African Union to maintain the deployment of 19,626 uniformed AMISOM personnel until 28 February 2021, inclusive of a minimum of 1,040 AMISOM police personnel, including five formed police units, to support security preparations for elections due at the end of 2020 or the beginning of 2021 and to conduct tasks in line with an updated Somali-led transition plan and the handover of security to Somali security forces by 2021. It also decided that AMISOM would be authorized to take all necessary measures to carry out its mandate.<sup>48</sup> By the same resolution, the Council also urged the Federal Government of Somalia and federal member states to take concrete action to fulfil the priority measures in the Mutual Accountability Framework essential to Somali security and underlined its intention to assess the security support needed to prepare Somalia towards taking on the leading role on security by the end of 2021 and afterwards.<sup>49</sup>

On 12 November, the Council adopted resolution [2551 \(2020\)](#) under Chapter VII of the Charter, with the abstentions of China and the Russian Federation. By that resolution, the Council reaffirmed the arms embargo and renewed the exemptions on deliveries of weapons and military equipment and on the provision of technical advice, financial and other assistance and training related to military activities intended solely for the development of the Somali national security forces or Somalia security sector institutions.<sup>50</sup> For the first time, the Council renewed the humanitarian exemption to the assets freeze without specifying an expiry date.<sup>51</sup> The Council also recalled previous decisions regarding the asset freeze, travel ban measures and the ban on

<sup>39</sup> See [S/PV.8755](#) (United Kingdom, Belgium, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), Estonia, Germany and France).

<sup>40</sup> See [S/PV.8731](#) (United Kingdom, Germany and France); and [S/PV.8755](#) (United Kingdom, Belgium and Estonia).

<sup>41</sup> Resolutions [2516 \(2020\)](#) and [2527 \(2020\)](#), para. 1. For more information on the mandate of UNSOM, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>42</sup> Resolution [2540 \(2020\)](#), para. 1.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 5 (c).

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 5 (i).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 7.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 12.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 13.

<sup>48</sup> Resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#), paras. 9, 10 and 11. For more information on the mandate of AMISOM, see part VIII, sect. IV.

<sup>49</sup> Resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#), paras. 2 and 5.

<sup>50</sup> Resolution [2551 \(2020\)](#), paras. 6–8 and 9–18.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 22.

charcoal.<sup>52</sup> By the same resolution, the Council also renewed the maritime interdiction of charcoal, weapons and military equipment until 15 November 2021,<sup>53</sup> and reaffirmed the ban on components of improvised explosive devices imposed by resolution 2498 (2019).<sup>54</sup> In addition, the Council renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Somalia until 15 December 2021.<sup>55</sup> At the meeting,<sup>56</sup> explaining their abstentions the representatives of China and the Russian Federation stated that their concerns and observations were not taken on board during the consultations on the draft resolution. Specifically, the representative of China noted that the proposal to explore benchmarks for assessing the appropriateness of lifting the arms embargo were not taken on board in the resolution and that the text failed to duly respond to the strong desire of the Federal Government of Somalia to have the arms embargo lifted. In addition, he said that the text failed to effectively address the concerns of Djibouti and Eritrea and encouraged both countries to improve their ties through bilateral consultations. Similarly, the

representative of the Russian Federation deemed inappropriate the inclusion of paragraphs on Djibouti and Eritrea in a document focusing on Somalia. She also expressed regret concerning the continued practice of using Council resolutions to promote human rights-related aspects of the Somalia dossier, stressing that there was a separate body – the Human Rights Council – that existed to address those issues. In response, the representative of the United Kingdom stated that given the divergent views between the parties and among Council members regarding the relations between Djibouti and Eritrea, the text of the resolution was the fairest outcome and the best way to ensure that the Council could support further progress towards resolving those outstanding issues.

On 4 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2554 (2020) under Chapter VII of the Charter, renewing for a further period of 12 months the authorizations set out in paragraph 14 of resolution 2500 (2019) granted to States and regional organizations cooperating with Somali authorities in the fight against piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., paras. 20–22 and 23–25.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., para. 23.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., para. 26. For more information on the sanctions measures concerning Somalia, see part VII, sect. III. See also *Repertoire, Supplement 2019*.

<sup>55</sup> Resolution 2551 (2020), para. 30. For more information on the mandate of the Panel, see part IX, sect. I.

<sup>56</sup> See [S/PV.8775](#).

<sup>57</sup> Resolution 2554 (2020), para. 14. See also resolutions 1846 (2008), para. 10, and 2246 (2015), para. 14. For more information, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2008–2009 to Supplement 2019*.

**Table 1**  
**Meetings: the situation in Somalia**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8731</a> 24 February 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia ( <a href="#">S/2020/121</a> )		Somalia	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute	12 Council members, <sup>a</sup> all invitees <sup>b</sup>	



## Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2020

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8735</a> 27 February 2020			Somalia		10 Council members, <sup>c</sup> Somalia	
<a href="#">S/PV.8755</a> 20 August 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia ( <a href="#">S/2020/798</a> )		Somalia	Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission	12 Council members, <sup>d</sup> all invitees <sup>e</sup>	
<a href="#">S/PV.8775</a> 12 November 2020	Letter dated 28 September 2020 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2020/949</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom ( <a href="#">S/2020/1100</a> )	Somalia		Four Council members (China, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States), Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2551 (2020)</a> 13-0-2 <sup>f</sup> (adopted under Chapter VII)

<sup>a</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa), United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>b</sup> The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission participated in the meeting by videoconference from Addis Ababa.

<sup>c</sup> China, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa), United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam. The representative of Belgium spoke in his capacity as Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolution [751 \(1992\)](#) concerning Somalia.

<sup>d</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>e</sup> The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission participated in the meeting by videoconference from Mogadishu.

<sup>f</sup> *For*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: China and Russian Federation.

Table 2  
**Videoconferences: the situation in Somalia**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
30 March 2020 <sup>a</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/247</a>	Letter dated 30 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2516 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/266</a>
21 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/436</a>	Letter dated 27 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
29 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/459</a>	Letter dated 29 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/466</a>
9 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/529</a>	Letter dated 11 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
22 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/569</a>	Letter dated 22 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2527 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/573</a>
28 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/854</a>	Letter dated 28 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2540 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/858</a>
28 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1079</a>	Letter dated 30 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
23 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1136</a>	Letter dated 25 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
4 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1170</a>	Letter dated 4 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2554 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/1173</a>

<sup>a</sup> Owing to technical difficulties, instead of an open videoconference to announce the vote on resolution [2516 \(2020\)](#), the videoconference was closed. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

### 3. The situation in the Great Lakes region

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting on the situation in the Great Lakes region, which took the form of a briefing.<sup>58</sup> In addition, Council members held one videoconference in 2020 but did not adopt any decisions in connection with the item.<sup>59</sup> More information on the meetings and videoconferences is provided in tables 1 and 2.

In connection with two reports of the Secretary-General,<sup>60</sup> during his briefings the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region focused on the activities of his office in supporting the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region.

In a videoconference held on 22 April,<sup>61</sup> the Special Envoy informed the Council about the public health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic,

<sup>58</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>59</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>60</sup> [S/2020/272](#) and [S/2020/951](#).

<sup>61</sup> See [S/2020/325](#).

highlighting its negative repercussions on the economy and the implications for the peace, security and development of the region. In that context, he informed the Council that the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework had been affected, resulting in the postponement of important meetings that were to be held in the region, including the second Great Lakes Investment and Trade Conference and the tenth Summit of the Regional Oversight Mechanism. Nevertheless, optimism remained given the peaceful political transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the progress in normalizing relations between Uganda and Rwanda, the formation of a unity Government in South Sudan and the diplomatic settlement by the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia of their border dispute. In support of the regional efforts to increase coordination and exchange information among the armed forces of the countries of the region, the Special Envoy had facilitated discussions among the heads of the intelligence services of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. In that regard, the Special Envoy requested the Council's support to enable those countries to secure the necessary technical and financial assistance to implement the measures to be adopted by the Heads of State of the region. The Special Envoy noted, however, that there were still challenges, the greatest of which remained the activities of armed groups, including the illicit exploitation of natural resources. He also referred to the upcoming elections in the region, particularly in Burundi and the Central African Republic, which needed to be closely followed. Faced with challenges that had been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the continuing Ebola virus disease epidemic, he affirmed the need to redouble efforts to support the States and peoples of the Great Lakes region to overcome the two public health crises and to consolidate the progress made so far in implementing the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. For his part, in collaboration with the guarantors of the Framework and international partners, the Special Envoy had announced his five priorities for the following months, namely, mobilizing the international community in helping the countries of the region to address the COVID-19 pandemic; supporting the ongoing facilitation processes; encouraging regional security cooperation by promoting a comprehensive approach, with military and non-military measures, in combating armed groups; engaging in regional and international discussions on the illicit exploitation of and trade in natural resources; and continuing the necessary discussions on the convening of the next summit of the

Framework's Regional Oversight Mechanism and of the Great Lakes Investment and Trade Conference.

During the discussion, Council members<sup>62</sup> expressed support for the work of the Special Envoy and mentioned the importance of a new peace and security strategy for the Great Lakes region. Several Council members<sup>63</sup> also echoed the Secretary-General's ceasefire appeal and highlighted its importance in the light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the humanitarian situation and political processes in the region. Council members further noted the positive developments in the region, at the same time warning about the risk of losing the momentum of regional cooperation. On Burundi, the representative of France expressed France's vigilance and noted that peaceful, inclusive and credible elections would contribute to the region's path towards political stability and peace. Similarly, the representatives of Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States expressed concerns about the electoral environment and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the elections in Burundi. The representative of Tunisia, speaking also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa, noted the ongoing preparations for the general elections in Burundi as the only viable alternative for leading the country to consolidate a peaceful and stable political environment. The representative of the Russian Federation stated that political decisions could lead to long-term stability only if they were taken by the countries themselves.

At its meeting held on 13 October,<sup>64</sup> the Council heard a second semi-annual briefing from the Special Envoy. He noted that overall the situation in the region over the past months had remained stable, with encouraging progress despite the ongoing challenges. On the political front, the Special Envoy welcomed the peaceful transfer of power in Burundi following the May general elections and the fact that the countries of the region were availing themselves of diplomatic means and regional mechanisms to resolve their differences peacefully, as seen in the resolution of the border dispute between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia. The Special Envoy also cited as another positive example the commitment of Rwanda and Uganda to proceed in the process of normalizing their relations through the good offices of Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He noted, however, that the security and humanitarian situations continued

<sup>62</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Russian Federation, and Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa).

<sup>63</sup> China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

<sup>64</sup> See [S/PV.8767](#).

to be cause for concern and made reference to the situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that regard, the activities of armed groups operating in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo continued to cause intolerable human suffering. The impunity enjoyed by those responsible for the crimes traumatized the population and negatively affected relations between the countries of the region. The Special Envoy affirmed that he intended to continue his advocacy to strengthen the fight against impunity, in particular by implementing effectively the Nairobi Declaration on Justice and Good Governance. Regarding the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, the Special Envoy informed the Council about the initiatives he had carried out in line with his five priorities outlined on 22 April. He had submitted the United Nations strategy for peace consolidation and conflict resolution and prevention in the Great Lakes region to the Secretary-General on 12 October. He indicated that 10 priorities had emerged from the various consultations aimed at providing a comprehensive 10-year road map for United Nations action in the region, focusing on a number of concrete priority actions, in particular in the areas of preventive diplomacy, security cooperation, development, the promotion of human rights and strengthening of the roles of women and young people by the year 2023.

During the deliberations, Council members<sup>65</sup> noted the positive developments in the region, while at the same time expressing concern over the security and humanitarian situation, in particular in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Council members<sup>66</sup> reiterated their support for the work of the Special

Envoy and looked forward to the finalization of the strategy for peace consolidation and conflict resolution and prevention in the region. In that regard, the representative of Tunisia, speaking also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa, commended the efforts of the Special Envoy in leading the development of the strategy, which they hoped would help to identify and elaborate priorities and streamline the United Nations peace consolidation, conflict prevention and conflict resolution engagements. Similarly, the representative of Belgium hoped that the strategy would allow for an adequate and coherent United Nations footprint in the context of the gradual exit of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and an adaptation of the United Nations approach and presence in Burundi. Furthermore, the representative of Tunisia, speaking also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa, stated that they were encouraged by the positive response of several Member States in the region to the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, which had been supported by the Council in resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#). With regard to Burundi, Council members noted some positive developments and welcomed the peaceful transfer of power following the last election. The representatives of China and the Russian Federation also noted that Burundi no longer posed a threat to international peace and security and that it should be removed from the agenda of the Council.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Germany, United Kingdom, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and the Russian Federation.

<sup>66</sup> France, Germany, United Kingdom, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa), Indonesia (also on behalf of Viet Nam), Belgium and the Russian Federation.

<sup>67</sup> On 4 December 2020, in connection with the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security", the Council issued a presidential statement relating to Burundi ([S/PRST/2020/12](#)), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to cease his periodic reporting on the situation in Burundi and looked forward to the Secretary-General covering Burundi as part of his regular reporting on the Great Lakes region and Central Africa. For more details, see part I, sect. 36, and part IX, sect. VI.

### Meeting: the situation in the Great Lakes region

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8767</a> 13 October 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for		Democratic Republic of the Congo	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region <sup>a</sup>	11 Council members, <sup>b</sup> all invitees	

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
	the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region (S/2020/951)					

<sup>a</sup> The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region participated in the meeting by videoconference.

<sup>b</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia (also on behalf of Viet Nam), Russian Federation, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa), United Kingdom and United States.

#### **Videoconference: the situation in the Great Lakes region**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
22 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/325</a>	Letter dated 24 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## **4. The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting and adopted two resolutions, both under Chapter VII of the Charter, in connection with the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo. More information on the meetings, including on participants and speakers, is provided in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held four open videoconferences in connection with the item, two of which were held for the announcement of the vote on the resolutions adopted.<sup>68</sup> Council members also held a closed videoconference with countries contributing troops and police to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#).<sup>69</sup> More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, Council members held informal

consultations of the whole and an informal interactive dialogue to discuss the item.<sup>70</sup>

In 2020, the Council was regularly briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of MONUSCO in connection with the reports of the Secretary-General.<sup>71</sup> The Council was also briefed once by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1533 \(2004\)](#) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo<sup>72</sup> and once by the Director of Save Act Mine.<sup>73</sup>

In her briefings to the Council, the Special Representative provided updates about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Mission's activities and the overall conditions in the country. She also reported on the volatile political situation, which had resulted in the announcement by the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, of the end of the ruling coalition in December 2020, as well as the actions undertaken by the Mission to encourage representatives of political

<sup>68</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>69</sup> Council members held a closed videoconference on 2 December 2020 in connection with the item entitled "Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#), annex II, sections A and B"; see [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 22.

<sup>70</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 12. See also [S/2020/258](#).

<sup>71</sup> [S/2020/554](#), [S/2020/919](#) and [S/2020/1150](#).

<sup>72</sup> See [S/2020/987](#).

<sup>73</sup> See [S/2020/598](#).



forces and civil society to resolve their differences through dialogue and avoid any actions that could incite violence.<sup>74</sup> She cautioned that the risk of politicking and positioning ahead of the 2023 elections would become the overriding focus, to the exclusion of the governance reforms and stabilization measures that the country needed.<sup>75</sup> She addressed the continuing security challenges faced by the country, in particular in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, noting that the protection of civilians through an integrated approach remained a central priority for MONUSCO. She also noted that some of the most serious challenges affecting the Democratic Republic of the Congo – from the presence of foreign armed groups to the illegal exploitation of and trafficking in mineral resources – required regional and international efforts to achieve sustainable solutions. In that regard, the Mission would continue to work closely with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region to support the Government as one of the constituents of the United Nations strategy for the Great Lakes region, as well as with other regional organizations. In her briefings, the Special Representative also referred to the joint strategy on the progressive and phased drawdown of MONUSCO,<sup>76</sup> which had been shared with the Council by the Secretary-General on 26 October 2020, representing a common vision for the gradual, responsible and sustainable drawdown and exit of the Mission.<sup>77</sup>

Council members discussed the political developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the light of the tensions within the ruling coalition; violations of human rights; the volatile security conditions, in particular in the eastern provinces of the country; the deteriorating humanitarian situation, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic; the importance of regional cooperation; and the phased drawdown of MONUSCO.

Regarding the political developments, several Council members called on the Congolese political actors to resolve their differences peacefully and to reduce tensions within the ruling coalition through dialogue.<sup>78</sup> With regard to the human rights situation in

the country, Council members were concerned about violations and abuses, including cases of sexual and gender-based violence and violence against children. In that context, some called for accountability and fighting against impunity, strengthening of institutions and continued efforts by the Government to improve the overall human rights environment.<sup>79</sup>

On the humanitarian front, Council members were concerned about the worsening situation intensified by violence and further compounded by flooding, the epidemics of Ebola virus disease, measles and cholera, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>80</sup> In that regard, the representative of Germany noted that the most vulnerable groups – women, children and internally displaced persons – were the hardest hit by the multiple factors affecting the humanitarian situation.<sup>81</sup> Regarding the security situation, Council members expressed concern over the continuing volatile conditions in the eastern parts of the country, condemning attacks on civilians, MONUSCO and the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo. They also noted the importance of security sector reform and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. Several members also voiced their support for the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire and expressed regret at the lack of response to it by the armed groups in the country.<sup>82</sup> Council members also discussed the role and the capacity of the MONUSCO Intervention Brigade in

<sup>74</sup> See [S/PV.8778](#).

<sup>75</sup> See [S/2020/987](#).

<sup>76</sup> [S/2020/1041](#), annex.

<sup>77</sup> See [S/PV.8778](#).

<sup>78</sup> See [S/2020/598](#) (Russian Federation, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia) and Viet Nam); [S/2020/987](#) (South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)); and [S/PV.8778](#) (Germany, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation, China and South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)).

<sup>79</sup> See [S/2020/598](#) (Dominican Republic, Estonia, France and Germany); [S/2020/987](#) (Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom and United States); and [S/PV.8778](#) (France, United States, Germany, Dominican Republic, United Kingdom and Estonia).

<sup>80</sup> See [S/2020/598](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Indonesia, South Africa (also on behalf of Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), United Kingdom and Viet Nam); [S/2020/987](#) (France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia) and Viet Nam); and [S/PV.8778](#) (France, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Germany, Dominican Republic, China and South Africa (speaking also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)).

<sup>81</sup> See [S/2020/598](#) and [S/2020/987](#).

<sup>82</sup> See [S/2020/598](#) (Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation and United Kingdom); and [S/2020/987](#) (Estonia, Indonesia, Russian Federation and Viet Nam).

addressing the threat posed by the armed groups.<sup>83</sup> In that regard, some members asserted the importance of improving the efficiency of the Brigade through its reconfiguration and prompt implementation of mandated reforms, such as the incorporation of additional quick-reaction forces.<sup>84</sup> The representative of South Africa, speaking also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia, noted that the Brigade required the continued support of the Council and needed to be fully trained to remain effective in addressing the threat against the civilian population in the eastern part of the country.<sup>85</sup> With regard to the drawdown of MONUSCO, some Council members affirmed the need to take into account the situation on the ground, with the three African members of the Council and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines expressing concern over the prospect of a hastened and rushed drawdown.<sup>86</sup>

Council members also discussed the importance of regional cooperation in tackling a multiplicity of the challenges facing the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the broader region.<sup>87</sup> Several members stressed the need for regional collaboration in countering illicit exploitation of natural resources and noted that they were encouraged by the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, alongside MONUSCO, in pursuing a regional strategy in that regard.<sup>88</sup> They further welcomed the continued commitment of the Southern African Development Community to assist the Democratic Republic of the

Congo in achieving sustainable peace, security and stability, as well as the cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations in that context.<sup>89</sup>

In 2020, Council members also discussed the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004). On 2 June, the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo submitted its final report, in which the Group of Experts concluded that despite relative political stability and significant changes in the command structures of the Congolese security forces, serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law remained widespread.<sup>90</sup> On 25 June, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2528 (2020), in which it renewed until 1 July 2021 the sanctions measures set out in resolution 2293 (2016) and extended to 1 August 2021 the mandate of the Group of Experts as set forth in resolution 2360 (2017).<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, on 6 October Council members held a videoconference<sup>92</sup> at which the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) provided a briefing to Council members covering the work of the Committee during the previous 12 months. Following the briefing, the representative of France noted that the Committee could do more to address violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by, inter alia, making additional designations. The representative of the Russian Federation affirmed that the restrictions imposed on the country should under no circumstance negatively affect the efficiency of the military operations conducted by the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo against armed groups. The representative of the United States viewed appropriate, targeted and effective sanctions as an essential tool against actors and entities that undermined the peace and security of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition, the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo reiterated his delegation's appeal to the international community through the General Assembly for appropriate, targeted and effective sanctions against armed groups, networks and other accomplices, which, through their harmful activities, were destroying the Government's efforts

<sup>83</sup> See [S/2020/598](#) (Belgium, Russian Federation, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia) and United Kingdom); [S/2020/987](#) (Estonia, France, Russian Federation, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), United Kingdom and United States); and [S/PV.8778](#) (France, United States, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, China and South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)).

<sup>84</sup> See [S/2020/987](#) (France, United Kingdom and United States); and [S/PV.8778](#) (France, United States, Germany, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)).

<sup>85</sup> See [S/2020/987](#).

<sup>86</sup> See [S/2020/598](#) (Russian Federation and South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)); and [S/2020/987](#) (Russian Federation and South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)).

<sup>87</sup> For more information on the situation in the Great Lakes region, see part I, sect. 3.

<sup>88</sup> See [S/2020/598](#) (France, Germany, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), United Kingdom and Viet Nam).

<sup>89</sup> See [S/2020/987](#) (South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)); and [S/PV.8778](#) (Dominican Republic, Belgium, Russian Federation and South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)).

<sup>90</sup> See [S/2020/482](#).

<sup>91</sup> Resolution 2528 (2020), paras. 1 and 3. For more information on the mandates of the Committee and the Group of Experts, see part IX, sect. I.B.

<sup>92</sup> See [S/2020/987](#).

aimed at conservation and the sustainable management of biodiversity and the protected areas located in the east of his country.

On 18 December, the Council adopted resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), under Chapter VII of the Charter, with the abstention of the Russian Federation. By that resolution, the Council extended the mandate of the Mission and the Intervention Brigade for one year until 20 December 2021.<sup>93</sup> The Council reiterated the strategic priorities of MONUSCO, mandating it to focus on protecting civilians and supporting the stabilization and the strengthening of State institutions and key governance and security reforms.<sup>94</sup> The Council also authorized MONUSCO to take all necessary measures to carry out its mandate and requested the Secretary-General to immediately inform the Council should MONUSCO fail to do so.<sup>95</sup> The Council further emphasized the importance of maintaining international support and engagement to

respond rapidly to infectious disease outbreaks, including Ebola virus disease and COVID-19.<sup>96</sup> The Council endorsed the joint strategy on the progressive and phased drawdown of MONUSCO and the broad parameters of the Mission's transition.<sup>97</sup> Furthermore, it requested the Secretary-General to present to the Council no later than September 2021 a transition plan based on the joint strategy, defining the practical modalities of the transfer of tasks to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations country team and other stakeholders.<sup>98</sup> In explaining its abstention, the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation indicated that it could not agree with the new wording of the paragraphs on international humanitarian assistance proposed by the authors of the draft resolution, which diluted the relevant United Nations guiding principles contained in General Assembly resolution [46/182](#). In its statement, the Russian Federation further added that the guiding principles captured the imperative to ensure respect for the sovereignty of States that were recipients of humanitarian aid, which needed to be duly reflected in documents of the Council.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 22.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 24. For more information concerning the mandate of MONUSCO, see part X, sect. I. For more information on past mandates of MONUSCO, see previous supplements covering the period 2010–2019.

<sup>95</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 27. For more information concerning the decisions of the Council relating to Article 42 of the Charter, see part VII, sect. IV.A.

<sup>96</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 37.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 49.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 50.

<sup>99</sup> See [S/2020/1265](#).

**Table 1**  
**Meeting: the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8778</a> 7 December 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) ( <a href="#">S/2020/1150</a> )		Democratic Republic of the Congo	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MONUSCO <sup>a</sup>	12 Council members, <sup>b</sup> all invitees	

<sup>a</sup> The Special Representative of the Secretary-General participated in the meeting by videoconference.

<sup>b</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.



Table 2

**Videoconferences: the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
25 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/598</a>	Letter dated 29 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
25 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/601</a>	Letter dated 26 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2528 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/589</a>
6 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/987</a>	Letter dated 8 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
18 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1265</a>	Letter dated 19 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a> 14-0-1 <sup>a</sup> (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/1253</a>

<sup>a</sup> For: Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; against: none; abstaining: Russian Federation.

## 5. The situation in the Central African Republic

During the period under review, the Council held five meetings and adopted three resolutions, all under Chapter VII of the Charter, in connection with the situation in the Central African Republic. Three of the meetings were convened to adopt a decision of the Council and the remaining two took the form of briefings.<sup>100</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. Council members also held one open videoconference.<sup>101</sup> In addition to meetings and videoconferences, Council members held informal consultations of the whole.<sup>102</sup> The Council also held one closed videoconference with countries contributing troops and police to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).<sup>103</sup> More

information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below.

In 2020, the Council heard three briefings on the reports of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic,<sup>104</sup> consistent with the four-month reporting schedule established by the Council in resolution [2387 \(2017\)](#). Two of those briefings were delivered by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic and Head of MINUSCA at meetings of the Council and one briefing was delivered by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations at an open videoconference. The Council was also briefed by the Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, the Special Envoy of the African Union for the Central African Republic and Head of the African Union Mission for the Central African Republic, the Managing Director for Africa of the European External Action Service and the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

The briefings focused on the political, security, economic and humanitarian situation in the country, in particular developments after the signing of the

<sup>100</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>101</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>102</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 13.

<sup>103</sup> Council members held a closed videoconference on 4 November 2020 in connection with the item entitled “Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#), annex II, sections A and B”; see [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 22.

<sup>104</sup> See [S/2020/124](#), [S/2020/545](#) and [S/2020/994](#).

Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic on 6 February 2019, the issue of the upcoming presidential and legislative elections in 2020 and 2021 and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In that regard, in the light of the first anniversary of the peace agreement, in his briefing at the meeting of the Council on 20 February<sup>105</sup> the Special Representative of the Secretary-General stressed that the inclusive Government that had emerged from the Agreement remained valid and operational and that the signatory parties had reaffirmed their commitment to it, notwithstanding numerous difficulties, including the continued violations of the Agreement by some armed groups. He commended the progress made in connection with the reduction of violence against civilians, the extension of State authority, the establishment of the special mixed security units as provided for in the Agreement, the fight against impunity and the promotion of transitional justice.

At the same meeting, both the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations and the Special Envoy of the African Union for the Central African Republic and Head of the African Union Mission for the Central African Republic outlined the areas of progress and remaining challenges in the country. In terms of progress, both briefers highlighted the gradual return of State authority in the country, the ongoing dialogue between the Government and different stakeholders and the formation of special mixed security units. Among the challenges still facing the country, the two briefers emphasized the continued violence and clashes between the different armed groups, shortcomings in the implementation of the peace agreement and the need to step up the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. The Head of the Delegation of the European Union further elaborated on the role of the European Union in the country, in particular its significant support for the upcoming elections. Noting the concerning security and humanitarian situation in Birao, Ndélé and Bria, the African Union Special Envoy stressed that the implementation of all aspects of the peace agreement was the best political framework for stabilizing the situation in the Central African Republic. He added that it was for that reason that the National Assembly had opened an extraordinary session on 19 February 2020 to review and adopt the draft texts envisioned in the peace agreement. Also at the same meeting, the Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission briefed Council members

<sup>105</sup> See [S/PV.8728](#).

on his visit to Bangui from 11 to 14 February 2020,<sup>106</sup> focusing on the elections, the implementation of the peace agreement and the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan. He also welcomed the verdict of the Bangui Court of Appeal in which the Court condemned the Bangassou militiamen for their abuses against the civilian population and United Nations peacekeepers and said that the Special Criminal Court was pursuing its investigations with the aim of starting trials in early 2021, but was still facing difficulties with recruitment and funding.<sup>107</sup>

On 22 June, Council members held a videoconference<sup>108</sup> at which they heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union and the Managing Director for Africa of the European External Action Service. During the videoconference, the Under-Secretary-General indicated that the political situation was marked by increased mobilization towards the upcoming elections, challenges to legal frameworks and political tensions. He reported that the security situation remained volatile and, despite some progress regarding the implementation of the peace agreement, most notably the adoption of legislation as stipulated therein, some armed groups, including the signatories, continued to use violence for expansionist aims. The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union informed Council members that three months after its suspension due to COVID-19, in May the Executive Monitoring Committee established by the peace agreement had been able to hold its eighth session and the general consensus was that significant progress had been made, in particular with regard to the adoption and enactment of all the laws provided for in the agreement. He also reported on the deployment of the first group of African Union military observers to Bangui. The Managing Director for Africa of the European External Action Service provided a briefing on the assistance by the European Union to the electoral process in the Central African Republic.

On 19 October,<sup>109</sup> the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on progress 20 months after the signing of the peace agreement in the areas of political reform, the restoration of State authority and transitional justice. He also focused on the electoral assistance provided by MINUSCA and international partners and reported that the COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated

<sup>106</sup> For a detailed report on the visit, see [S/2020/131](#), annex.

<sup>107</sup> See [S/PV.8728](#).

<sup>108</sup> See [S/2020/572](#).

<sup>109</sup> See [S/PV.8771](#).

socioeconomic vulnerabilities in the Central African Republic. He underscored that despite the negative impact of the pandemic on the operations of MINUSCA, the Mission had been able to continue to implement its mandate and support the authorities in the fight against COVID-19, in particular by providing logistical and material assistance. He welcomed the establishment of the new European Union Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic to support the country's security sector reform, which would strengthen the work of MINUSCA. The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union welcomed the fact that he would be meeting with the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, the President of the Commission of the Economic Community of Central African States and, potentially, the Vice-President of the European Commission to support the Government and other stakeholders from the Central African Republic to assist the country on its path towards peace and development.

In 2020, Council members continued to discuss the critical factors for the successful implementation of the peace agreement, including political support by the Council, regional actors and the international community. Council members also addressed matters relating to the holding of free, peaceful and inclusive elections in 2020 and 2021, including the support of MINUSCA and regional organizations in that regard, as well as the role of sanctions, in particular the establishment of key benchmarks to serve as a road map that could lead to the easing of the arms embargo.<sup>110</sup> Council members also addressed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the mandate of MINUSCA and the humanitarian and socioeconomic situation in the country.

During the period under review, the Council adopted three resolutions under the item, two in connection with the sanctions measures regarding the Central African Republic and one relating to the mandate of MINUSCA.

With respect to sanctions measures, the Council twice expanded the list of exemptions to the arms embargo during the reporting period.<sup>111</sup> First, by resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#) adopted on 31 January, the

Council expanded the list of exempted items to include unarmed ground military vehicles and ground military vehicles mounted with weapons with a calibre of 14.5 mm or less and ammunition specially designed for such weapons.<sup>112</sup> Secondly, by resolution [2536 \(2020\)](#) adopted on 28 July, the Council added to the list of exemptions rocket-propelled grenades supplied to the Central African Republic security forces, including state civilian law enforcement institutions, and intended solely for support of or use in the Central African Republic process of security sector reform.<sup>113</sup> The Council also twice renewed the provisions on the asset freeze and travel ban measures, as set out in resolution [2399 \(2018\)](#).<sup>114</sup> The Council continued to monitor the progress achieved by the authorities of the Central African Republic on the key benchmarks enumerated in the presidential statement of 9 April 2019.<sup>115</sup> In that regard, stressing the importance of the authorities achieving the key benchmarks in order to contribute to the advancement of security sector reform, the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation processes and necessary weapons and ammunition management reforms, the Council continued to request the Central African Republic authorities to report to the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2127 \(2013\)](#) concerning the Central African Republic on the progress achieved in that regard.<sup>116</sup> The Council further requested the Secretary-General, in close consultation with MINUSCA, the Mine Action Service and the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic, to conduct assessments on the progress achieved by the authorities on the key benchmarks.<sup>117</sup>

Following the adoption of resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#),<sup>118</sup> the representatives of China and the Russian Federation, in explaining their abstentions on the vote, expressed regret that the appeals of the Central African Republic and others for the easing or lifting of the arms embargo had not been considered. The representative of the Russian Federation further noted that the arms embargo on the Central African Republic might have played a positive role in the early stages, but that it was then effectively an obstacle to the rearming of the national army and security forces, the very institutions that bore the primary responsibility for upholding the peace and security of their own

<sup>110</sup> For further details on the discussion, see part II, sect. III.B.

<sup>111</sup> For more information on the sanctions measures concerning the Central African Republic, see part VII, sect. III. For information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2127 \(2013\)](#) concerning the Central African Republic and the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic, see part IX, sect. I.

<sup>112</sup> Resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#), para. 1 (g).

<sup>113</sup> Resolution [2536 \(2020\)](#), para. 1 (g).

<sup>114</sup> Resolutions [2507 \(2020\)](#) and [2536 \(2020\)](#), para. 4.

<sup>115</sup> [S/PRST/2019/3](#).

<sup>116</sup> Resolutions [2507 \(2020\)](#), para. 12, and [2536 \(2020\)](#), fourth preambular paragraph and para. 12.

<sup>117</sup> Resolutions [2507 \(2020\)](#) and [2536 \(2020\)](#), para. 13.

<sup>118</sup> See [S/PV.8712](#).

citizens. The representative of France, as the penholder, emphasized that the Council was always ready to listen to the legitimate concerns of the Central African Republic, underlining that in order to help equip and strengthen the mobility and security of the Central African forces, from September 2019 to the date of the adoption of the resolution, the Council had twice authorized a significant easing of the arms embargo. The representative of the Niger stated that the adoption of the resolution was indeed a response to the legitimate request of the authorities of the Central African Republic to pursue the definitive lifting of the arms embargo on the basis of progress made in the storing of weapons and preventing their diversion. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, while taking note of the Central African Republic's calls for a complete lifting of the arms component of the sanctions measures and recognizing some merit to that request, primarily as it related to enabling the security forces to reclaim territory from armed groups, did not believe that the time was ripe for a complete lifting of arms measures, as there still remained some shortcomings with regard to weapon and ammunition management in the country. Joined by several other speakers, she recognized the commitment by the Central African Republic to achieving progress on the key benchmarks.<sup>119</sup> Some Council members expressed regret that the Council had been unable to reach consensus on the issue and had failed to adopt the resolution unanimously.<sup>120</sup>

On 28 July,<sup>121</sup> the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2536 \(2020\)](#). Following the vote, the representative of France, as the penholder on the resolution, welcomed the unity of the Council on the issue of sanctions measures concerning the Central African Republic and affirmed that the Council remained attentive to the legitimate concerns of the Government. The representative of the United States, speaking also on behalf of Belgium, Estonia and Germany, expressed concern that without better management and tracking of the weapons brought into the country, changes in the sanctions regime would significantly increase the risk of the proliferation of rocket-propelled grenades, both within the Central African Republic and the region. He further expressed

support for the 12-month extension of the sanctions measures, which would allow the Government sufficient time to achieve progress on the key benchmarks. The representative of the United Kingdom expressed concern regarding the further easing of the arms embargo set out in the resolution. The representative of the Russian Federation, while acknowledging that the simplified procedure for supplying grenade launchers to address the needs of the Central African Republic was another small step in support of the Central African people, recalled the demands of the country for lifting of the restrictive sanctions regime, adding that it acted as an obstacle to the rearming of the Central African Republic national army.

During the period under review, the Council extended the mandate of MINUSCA once for a period of one year until 15 November 2021.<sup>122</sup> By resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), which was adopted unanimously on 12 November 2020, the Council welcomed the progress in the implementation of the peace agreement and the work carried out by MINUSCA.<sup>123</sup> The Council reiterated the priority tasks of MINUSCA concerning the protection of civilians and United Nations personnel, support for the peace process, electoral assistance and humanitarian assistance.<sup>124</sup> The Council also specifically requested MINUSCA to contribute to alleviating the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>125</sup> The Council reiterated all of the remaining tasks of MINUSCA, bearing in mind that those tasks together with the priority tasks were mutually reinforcing.<sup>126</sup> The Council recalled its resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), in which it had demanded a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all the situations on its agenda and had called upon all parties to armed conflicts to engage immediately in a durable humanitarian pause for at least 90 consecutive days, so as to enable the safe, timely, unhindered and sustained delivery of humanitarian assistance in accordance with the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>119</sup> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Germany, Estonia, Indonesia, China and United Kingdom.

<sup>120</sup> France, Estonia and United Kingdom.

<sup>121</sup> See [S/PV.8750](#).

<sup>122</sup> Resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), para. 26.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, seventh and eleventh preambular paragraphs.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 31. For more information on the mandate of MINUSCA, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>125</sup> Resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), para. 31 (d).

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 32–33.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, seventeenth preambular paragraph.

Table 1  
Meetings: the situation in the Central African Republic

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8712</a> 31 January 2020	Letter dated 6 December 2019 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic extended pursuant to resolution <a href="#">2454 (2019)</a> addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2019/930</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by France ( <a href="#">S/2020/79</a> )	Central African Republic		13 Council members, <sup>a</sup> invitee	Resolution <a href="#">2507 (2020)</a> 13-0-2 <sup>b</sup> (adopted under Chapter VII)
<a href="#">S/PV.8728</a> 20 February 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic ( <a href="#">S/2020/124</a> )		Central African Republic	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, Special Envoy of the African Union for the Central African Republic and Head of the African Union Mission in the Central African Republic, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission	One Council member (Niger), <sup>c</sup> four invitees <sup>d</sup>	

**Part I. Consideration of questions under the responsibility of  
the Security Council for the maintenance of  
international peace and security**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8750</a> 28 July 2020	Letter dated 8 July 2020 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic extended pursuant to resolution <a href="#">2507 (2020)</a> addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2020/662</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by France ( <a href="#">S/2020/738</a> )			7 Council members <sup>e</sup>	Resolution <a href="#">2536 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII)
<a href="#">S/PV.8771</a> 19 October 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic ( <a href="#">S/2020/994</a> )			Special Representative of the Secretary-General, African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Managing Director for Africa, European External Action Service	12 Council members, <sup>f</sup> all invitees	
<a href="#">S/PV.8776</a> 12 November 2020		Draft resolution submitted by France ( <a href="#">S/2020/1106</a> )	Central African Republic		2 Council members (Indonesia, Russian Federation)	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII)

<sup>a</sup> The representatives of South Africa and Tunisia did not make statements. The representative of the Niger spoke also on behalf of South Africa and Tunisia.

<sup>b</sup> *For*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: China, Russian Federation.

<sup>c</sup> The representative of the Niger spoke also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia.

<sup>d</sup> The African Union Special Envoy and Head of the African Union Mission in the Central African Republic joined by videoconference from Khartoum. The representative of the Central African Republic did not make a statement.

<sup>e</sup> China, Dominican Republic, France, Niger, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States. The representative of the United States spoke also on behalf of Belgium, Estonia and Germany.

<sup>f</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.



Table 2  
**Videoconference: the situation in the Central African Republic**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
22 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/572</a>	Letter dated 24 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## 6. The situation in Guinea-Bissau

During the period under review, the Council held three meetings and adopted one resolution in connection with the situation in Guinea-Bissau. One meeting was convened for the adoption of a decision, while two meetings took the form of briefings.<sup>128</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in the table below. In addition to these meetings, in 2020 Council members also held informal consultations of the whole to discuss the situation in Guinea-Bissau.<sup>129</sup>

On 14 February,<sup>130</sup> the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS). She commended Guinea-Bissau for the completion of its electoral cycle despite the challenges facing the outcome of the presidential election. She also commended state institutions for resorting to legal means to resolve political disputes in connection with the presidential election results, with no military interference and no major human rights violations. She noted that there had been progress in the fight against drug trafficking and organized crime, referring to the national action plan on drug trafficking and transnational organized crime as a road map. She referred to the three-phase transition and drawdown of UNIOGBIS in line with resolution [2458 \(2019\)](#) by 31 December 2020 and mentioned that with the conclusion of the electoral cycle, the Mission had shifted its efforts towards supporting a reform agenda, as envisioned in the Conakry Agreement on the Implementation of the Economic Community of West

African States Road Map for the Resolution of the Political Crisis in Guinea-Bissau and the stability pact.

At the same meeting, the Council heard a briefing by the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. He congratulated Guinea-Bissau on the successful legislative and presidential elections in 2019, while acknowledging the legal challenge of the election results. He discussed the continued drawdown of the Mission, highlighting that the role of the United Nations would be to ensure a coherent and coordinated approach in support of nationally led efforts to take forward policies and programmes to address the root causes of instability and promote peace and development. He also stated that it would be important for the international community to continue to help the Government to strengthen democratic and inclusive institutions to assist in internal reforms, support the engagement of women and youth in peacebuilding and promote and protect human rights. He affirmed that the Peacebuilding Commission was prepared to assist UNIOGBIS and the Government of Guinea-Bissau by providing a platform for coherence and coordination among stakeholders, as well as for the promotion of shared analysis and understanding of the multidimensional peacebuilding challenges in the country. During the discussion, most Council members<sup>131</sup> commended the progress achieved and many of them pledged their commitment to future initiatives, including support for the drawdown of UNIOGBIS. Most Council members cautioned about the risks posed by the lack of political stability, which could lead to a deterioration of the security situation,

<sup>128</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>129</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 15.

<sup>130</sup> See [S/PV.8724](#).

<sup>131</sup> Germany, France, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, China, South Africa, Estonia and Viet Nam.

as well as the issue of drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, which continued to pose a serious threat to the stability of the country. Council members also emphasized the importance of bilateral and multilateral partners in implementing the Conakry Agreement and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) six-point road map.<sup>132</sup> In the light of the changing circumstances in the country and the drawdown of UNIOGBIS, some Council members also addressed the possible lifting or adjusting of the sanctions against Guinea-Bissau,<sup>133</sup> while one Council member supported the maintenance of the sanctions.<sup>134</sup>

The issues outlined above were also addressed by the Council in a decision adopted on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. On 28 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#), extending the mandate of UNIOGBIS for 10 months until 31 December 2020.<sup>135</sup> In the resolution, the Council endorsed the reprioritization of tasks and reconfiguration of UNIOGBIS for its phased drawdown.<sup>136</sup> The Council requested the Mission to continue to focus on supporting the full implementation of the Conakry Agreement and the ECOWAS road map and to facilitate an inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation process.<sup>137</sup> The Council requested the Secretary-General to start the liquidation of UNIOGBIS immediately following the mandate completion date of 31 December 2020, once all substantive staff had left the Mission, and to end the liquidation process no later than 28 February 2021.<sup>138</sup> The Council also requested the Secretary-General, within five months of the adoption of the resolution, to submit a report to the Council on the implementation of the resolution and the drawdown and transition of UNIOGBIS, and to submit a report to the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2048 \(2012\)](#) concerning Guinea-Bissau on the progress made regarding the stabilization of Guinea-Bissau and the restoration of constitutional order and giving recommendations on the sanctions regime, including, but not limited to, its continuation, adjustment or suspension.<sup>139</sup> The Council also decided to review the sanctions measures six months after the adoption of the

resolution.<sup>140</sup> Following the vote on the resolution, certain Council members expressed differing views on the continuation of the sanctions concerning Guinea-Bissau.<sup>141</sup>

On 10 August,<sup>142</sup> the Council heard a second briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. She reported that there had been increasing human rights abuses and political instability between the opposing political parties since her previous briefing. She addressed the particularly fragile situation of Guinea-Bissau as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic due to the country's dire health infrastructure and limited resources, while highlighting the existence of a national response plan to address the pandemic, led by the Resident Coordinator and with the support of the World Health Organization, the World Bank and other United Nations agencies. She also stated that the phased closure of UNIOGBIS, including the transition and the reconfiguration of the United Nations presence, was still proceeding. However, the political crisis and parliamentary paralysis that emerged following the presidential election had prevented the Mission from supporting the urgent reforms outlined in the Conakry Agreement, including the review of the Constitution, the electoral law and the law on political parties. She therefore stated that, regretfully, the mandate of UNIOGBIS was unlikely to be fully implemented before the Mission's departure. She reiterated her plea to Council members for funding as essential to avoid "a financial cliff" and appealed to the Council and to the international community to generously support the Cooperation Framework. She also made reference to the tripartite coordination meetings between UNIOGBIS, ECOWAS and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel to accompany the transition process, and added that the continued role of the Peacebuilding Commission in maintaining the international community's attention on Guinea-Bissau would be of utmost importance following the departure of UNIOGBIS. At the same meeting, the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission also briefed the Council, noting that despite the progress, the challenges to stability and development had deepened with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic during a year of three transitions: first, the drawdown of UNIOGBIS and transfer of tasks to the United Nations country team; secondly, the country's transition to new political leadership, which had not been uneventful; and, thirdly, the closure of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau. He affirmed that continued international engagement and sustained

<sup>132</sup> Niger, France, China, South Africa, Viet Nam and United Kingdom.

<sup>133</sup> Russian Federation and Belgium.

<sup>134</sup> Niger.

<sup>135</sup> Resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#), para. 1. For more information on the mandate of UNIOGBIS, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>136</sup> Resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#), paras. 2 (a) and (b).

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4 (a).

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 8.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 25. For more information on the sanctions measures concerning Guinea-Bissau, see part VII, sect. III.

<sup>140</sup> Resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#), para. 26.

<sup>141</sup> See [S/PV.8736](#) (Niger and Russian Federation).

<sup>142</sup> See [S/PV.8754](#).



focus on the country's peacebuilding priorities would be critical to ensuring economic recovery and sustainable development in Guinea-Bissau. Also at the same meeting, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) affirmed that urgently coordinated action based on shared responsibility was very much needed. Echoing the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>143</sup> she stated that tackling transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking and trafficking in persons, was critical to building peace and working towards lasting political and economic stability in Guinea-Bissau.<sup>144</sup> Most Council members agreed that the situation in Guinea-Bissau remained fragile, and some expressed concern over the political crisis,<sup>145</sup> the violations of human rights<sup>146</sup> and the possible resurgence of drug trafficking

and organized crime.<sup>147</sup> Many Council members called for action towards stability and the implementation of the Conakry Agreement, the six-point ECOWAS road map and a revision of the Constitution.<sup>148</sup> One Council member questioned the need for the maintenance of sanctions measures, arguing that the situation in the country had changed since the coup d'état that took place in 2012,<sup>149</sup> while another stated that the political and military personnel involvement in drug trafficking and organized crime needed to be followed up and borne in mind when discussing the future of the sanctions measures.<sup>150</sup>

<sup>143</sup> See [S/2020/755](#).

<sup>144</sup> See [S/PV.8754](#).

<sup>145</sup> Germany, Estonia, France, United Kingdom and Indonesia.

<sup>146</sup> Germany, Estonia, United States, Dominican Republic, Belgium and United Kingdom.

<sup>147</sup> Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Viet Nam and Indonesia.

<sup>148</sup> Russian Federation, Germany, France, China, Belgium and Viet Nam.

<sup>149</sup> Russian Federation.

<sup>150</sup> Germany.

## Meetings: the situation in Guinea-Bissau

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8724</a> 14 February 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) ( <a href="#">S/2020/105</a> )		Guinea-Bissau	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and Head of UNIOGBIS, Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission	All Council members, <sup>a</sup> all invitees	
<a href="#">S/PV.8736</a> 28 February 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on Developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of UNIOGBIS ( <a href="#">S/2020/105</a> )				2 Council members (Niger and Russian Federation)	Resolution <a href="#">2512 (2020)</a> 15-0-0
<a href="#">S/PV.8754</a> 10 August 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on developments		Guinea-Bissau	Special Representative of the Secretary-	12 Council members, <sup>b</sup> all invitees <sup>c</sup>	

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
	in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of UNIOGBIS (S/2020/755)				General, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations on behalf of the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission	

<sup>a</sup> The Niger was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Abroad.

<sup>b</sup> The representative of the Niger spoke also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia.

<sup>c</sup> The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UNDOC participated in the meeting by videoconference from Bissau and Vienna, respectively.

## 7. Central African region

During the period under review, the Council held two open videoconferences in connection with the Central African region.<sup>151</sup> The Council considered developments in Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Congo, the Gulf of Guinea and the Sahel. More information on the videoconferences is given in the table below.

During the period under review, consistent with the six-month reporting period requested by the Council in the statement by the President of the Council of 10 August 2018,<sup>152</sup> the Council heard two briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) with regard to the reports of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa.<sup>153</sup> In his briefings, the Special Representative apprised the Council on the activities of UNOCA, its continued cooperation with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the United Nations Office

for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and its activities as the secretariat for the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. The Special Representative updated the Council on the human rights and security situation in the region, including the continued threats posed by terrorism and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, as well as the impact of climate change on the security and prosperity of Central African countries. In 2020, the Special Representative also briefed the Council on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region, in particular the negative socioeconomic effects of the pandemic and the efforts of countries in the region, UNOCA and regional organizations to combat the threats posed by the disease.

At the videoconference held on 12 June,<sup>154</sup> the Special Representative recalled that a major consequence of the pandemic was the economic crisis. He noted, however, that the Governments in Central Africa and regional institutions had been able to adapt to the new situation created by the crisis and ensure the continuity of certain crucial activities. In that regard, at its extraordinary ministerial meeting held on 3 and

<sup>151</sup> See S/2020/542 and S/2020/1188.

<sup>152</sup> S/PRST/2018/17.

<sup>153</sup> See S/2020/463 and S/2020/1154.

<sup>154</sup> See S/2020/542.

4 June 2020, ECCAS had adopted four axes of a regional response strategy to combat COVID-19, namely, preventing the spread of the virus, limiting the death rate and managing positive cases, addressing the socioeconomic and security impact of COVID-19, and responding to the cross-border security issues created by the pandemic. Regarding political and security developments in the region, in addition to providing briefings to Council members on specific situations in each of the countries of the region, the Special Representative strongly condemned the deliberate attacks on civilians and the destruction of private property and public infrastructure by terrorist and armed groups, and welcomed the mobilization of the armies of Cameroon and Chad, including within the framework of the Multinational Joint Task Force, to fight terrorism in the Lake Chad basin. He informed the Council that Operation Wrath of Boma, launched by the Chadian army between late March and early April 2020, seemed to have considerably weakened Boko Haram. He also updated the Council on the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) which, although also weakened, continued to kill and abduct civilians, and called on regional actors, including the African Union and ECCAS, as well as international partners, to strengthen their cooperation and mobilize the resources necessary to defeat LRA, within the framework of the Regional Strategy to Address the Threat and Impact of the Activities of the Lord's Resistance Army.

At the meeting on 9 December,<sup>155</sup> the Special Representative of the Secretary-General reported to the Council that the pandemic seemed to be generally under control in the subregion, indicating that the early measures enforced by the Governments of the subregion to contain and reduce the spread of the pandemic had proven effective. He noted, however, that that effectiveness came at a high socioeconomic cost, as the economic slowdown triggered by the pandemic and the different restrictive measures had further depleted the already limited capacity of States to provide basic social services to their populations. Regarding political developments in the region, the Special Representative updated the Council on the preparations for the holding of elections in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo and Sao Tome and Principe, as well as on other political developments in the region, including the implementation of a special status for the north-west and south-west regions in Cameroon, political consultations to discuss preparations for the 2021 presidential election in the Congo and votes on the

<sup>155</sup> See [S/2020/1188](#).

amendments to the Constitution in Chad. Regarding the security situation, the Special Representative recalled with great concern the violence in the far north, north-west and south-west regions of Cameroon, the increase in attacks and kidnappings by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin and the intensification of attacks by terrorist groups in Cameroon and Chad. He also addressed the issue of transhumance in Central Africa and the increase in maritime organized crime in the Gulf of Guinea, in particular drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, stressing in that regard the need for coordination between Central and West Africa through existing mechanisms, such as the Interregional Coordination Centre for Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea, the Regional Coordination Centre for Maritime Security in Central Africa and the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in West Africa, to effectively respond to threats. The Special Representative also briefed the Council on his engagements with key United Nations, national and international partners in the subregion on various matters, including during his recent visits to Cameroon and the Congo and at the meeting of the heads of United Nations presences in Central Africa on strengthening coordination in supporting regional efforts to address the impact of climate change, prevent election-related violence and fight against hate speech.

In 2020, the Council's deliberations focused on major political and security developments, as well as on the humanitarian, human rights and socioeconomic challenges affecting the Central African region, including those resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. On the political front, several Council members specifically addressed the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic and the issue of elections in the country scheduled for 2020 and 2021.<sup>156</sup> Council members also discussed the national dialogue in Cameroon and the steps taken by the Government of Cameroon to implement the recommendations of the major national dialogue of October 2019, including the passing of legislation granting special status to the north-west and south-west regions.<sup>157</sup> Some Council members welcomed the

<sup>156</sup> See [S/2020/542](#) (France, Russian Federation and United Kingdom); and [S/2020/1188](#) (Estonia, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States).

<sup>157</sup> [S/2020/542](#) (Dominican Republic, Estonia, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and United Kingdom); and [S/2020/1188](#) (Belgium, Russian Federation, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and United Kingdom).

efforts aimed at improving relations among Central African States, in particularly the efforts of Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to ease tensions and strengthen relations between the countries of the Great Lakes region.<sup>158</sup>

Concerning the security situation, deliberations focused on the continued security threats posed by Boko Haram and LRA to the Central African region and beyond,<sup>159</sup> maritime organized crime and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea,<sup>160</sup> as well as tensions in the north-west and south-west regions of Cameroon.<sup>161</sup> Some Council members also addressed the adverse effects of

climate change on security in the region.<sup>162</sup> With respect to the humanitarian, socioeconomic and human rights challenges, Council members focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the livelihoods of Central African populations and security in the region, as well as the work of UNOCA. The Council also continued to address the adverse effects of climate change on the populations of Central Africa and the region's geopolitical situation. Some Council members acknowledged that the effects of climate change had triggered displacement and negatively affected the efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic,<sup>163</sup> and some discussed the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad basin, including malnutrition, spread of diseases and displacement of thousands of people into neighbouring countries.<sup>164</sup>

In addition, in 2020 Council members continued to focus on the role of UNOCA and its cooperation with the African Union, ECCAS and other international, regional and subregional organizations and United Nations regional offices in resolving conflicts, addressing the humanitarian and human rights challenges and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in the region.

<sup>158</sup> See [S/2020/542](#) (Dominican Republic, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa), United Kingdom and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/1188](#) (Dominican Republic, Estonia, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and Viet Nam).

<sup>159</sup> See [S/2020/542](#) (Dominican Republic, France, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/1188](#) (China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Russian Federation, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa), United Kingdom and Viet Nam).

<sup>160</sup> See [S/2020/542](#) (France and Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa)); and [S/2020/1188](#) (China, France, Russian Federation and Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa)).

<sup>161</sup> See [S/2020/542](#) (Dominican Republic, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa), United Kingdom and United States); and [S/2020/1188](#) (Dominican Republic, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa), United Kingdom and Viet Nam).

<sup>162</sup> See [S/2020/542](#) (Dominican Republic, Estonia, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/1188](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and United Kingdom).

<sup>163</sup> See [S/2020/542](#) (Dominican Republic and Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa)).

<sup>164</sup> See [S/2020/542](#) (Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and United Kingdom); and [S/2020/1188](#) (Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) and Viet Nam).

## Videoconferences: Central African region

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
12 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/542</a>	Letter dated 16 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
9 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1188</a>	Letter dated 14 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## 8. Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

During the period under review, the Council held six meetings in connection with the item entitled “Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan”. Three of those meetings took the form of briefings and three were convened for the adoption of a decision.<sup>165</sup> In addition, Council members held 18 videoconferences and adopted 10 resolutions under the item.<sup>166</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and decisions, and on the videoconferences is given in tables 1 to 6 below. In addition to meetings and videoconferences, in 2020 Council members held informal consultations of the whole and an informal interactive dialogue in connection with the item.<sup>167</sup> The Council also held one closed meeting with countries contributing troops and police to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#).<sup>168</sup>

Consistent with prior practice, the Council considered several distinct topics under the item, namely the situation in the Sudan and the mandates of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the newly established United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS); bilateral relations between the Sudan and South Sudan, the situation in the Abyei Area and the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA); and the situation in South

Sudan and the mandate of UNMISS.<sup>169</sup> The Council also discussed the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) concerning the Sudan, the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2206 \(2015\)](#) concerning South Sudan and their respective Panels of Experts,<sup>170</sup> as well as the implementation of resolution [1593 \(2005\)](#), by which the Council had referred the situation in Darfur to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

In relation to the Sudan, Council members were briefed three times by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, and once by the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support.<sup>171</sup>

In her briefing at the first open videoconference, held on 24 April,<sup>172</sup> the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs stated that, six months after the establishment of the transition, the Sudan continued to face significant challenges, including political fragility, difficult humanitarian and socioeconomic conditions and a risk of wider spread of COVID-19.

In a subsequent videoconference, held on 8 December,<sup>173</sup> the Under-Secretary-General added that the humanitarian situation had been gripped by severe flooding, intercommunal violence, prolonged displacement and the arrival of over 48,000 people fleeing the conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. She called on the international community to continue

<sup>165</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>166</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>167</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 27. See also [S/2020/258](#) and [S/2020/344](#).

<sup>168</sup> Held on 3 March under the item entitled “Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#), annex II, sections A and B” (see [S/PV.8740](#)).

<sup>169</sup> For more information on the mandates of UNAMID, UNISFA, UNITAMS and UNMISS, see part X.

<sup>170</sup> For more information on the Committees and their respective Panels of Experts, see part IX, sect. I.B.

<sup>171</sup> See [S/2020/336](#), [S/PV.8761](#) and [S/2020/1183](#).

<sup>172</sup> See [S/2020/336](#).

<sup>173</sup> See [S/2020/1183](#).



to support the economic recovery of the Sudan and welcomed the intention of the United States to rescind the country's designation as a State sponsor of terrorism, which would facilitate access to critical international financial assistance. Regarding the peace process, the Under-Secretary-General noted the signing of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan between the Transitional Government of the Sudan, the Sudanese Revolutionary Front alliance and the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi on 3 October 2020. The agreement provided for a 39-month transitional period, membership and participation of the signatories in the Sovereign Council, the Transitional Government and the Transitional Legislative Council, and the establishment of an advisory Council of Partners for the Transitional Period. The Under-Secretary-General called on all parties to ensure the functioning of clearly defined institutions that were inclusive and effective. In addition, she noted that women remained underrepresented in transitional structures, with only 3 women among the 18 cabinet ministers and with only one female representative in the Council of Partners.

At the meeting of the Council held on 25 September,<sup>174</sup> the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs informed Council members that following the establishment of UNITAMS on 3 June 2020 the Mission would, in accordance with its mandate, focus on four objectives, namely, assisting the political transition; supporting peace processes; bolstering peacebuilding, civilian protection and the rule of law; and promoting the mobilization of economic, development and humanitarian assistance. At the videoconference held on 8 December,<sup>175</sup> the Under-Secretary-General welcomed the steps taken by the Transitional Government to ensure the protection of civilians in Darfur, including through the formulation of the national plan for civilian protection. The effective protection of civilians, however, would be achieved only through key efforts such as the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement, which was a major step towards ending years of conflict, addressing the root causes and building sustainable peace.

In his briefing on 25 September,<sup>176</sup> the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations stressed the need to translate the Juba Peace Agreement into a single and unfractured vision for the future of the Sudan, bring all stakeholders on board, create the joint security forces and secure sufficient international

support. In his briefing on 24 April,<sup>177</sup> he informed Council members that with regard to the security situation in Darfur, intercommunal fighting in late 2019 and early 2020 had left 65 people dead, 46,000 internally displaced and 11,000 as refugees in Chad. Briefing the Council on 8 December,<sup>178</sup> the Under-Secretary-General informed the members that there had been a spike in clashes involving elements of the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid and a continuation of attacks against internally displaced persons and protestors. He welcomed and expressed support for the commitment of the Transitional Government to assume responsibility for the protection of civilians in Darfur and noted the beginning of the deployment of a Sudanese civilian protection force.

In connection with the drawdown of UNAMID, at the open videoconference held on 24 April,<sup>179</sup> the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations informed Council members that the Transitional Government's emergency restrictions in response to the pandemic, coupled with the suspension of United Nations peacekeeping rotations, had had a severe impact on the ability of UNAMID to implement its mandate and had rendered the scheduled drawdown and liquidation plan by the end of the Mission's mandate on 31 October 2020 unrealistic. In his briefing at the open videoconference on 8 December,<sup>180</sup> he noted that following discussions between the African Union, the United Nations and the Sudan within the framework of the Tripartite Coordination Mechanism, it had been recommended to terminate UNAMID by 31 December 2020, followed by a six-month period of drawdown and liquidation. Noting that the process would be a major undertaking, he underscored the need for coordination of international support for the Transitional Government and the parties to the Juba Peace Agreement, for the transition to UNITAMS to consolidate the gains made in peacebuilding, and for coordinated political advocacy to support an orderly and safe drawdown and closure of the UNAMID team sites.

At the same videoconference, the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support brought to the attention of Council members key operational aspects of and challenges to the expected drawdown and closure of UNAMID and the start-up of UNITAMS. The orderly and safe drawdown of the personnel of a mission of the size of UNAMID would take no less than 6 months, followed by a period of

<sup>174</sup> See [S/PV.8761](#).

<sup>175</sup> See [S/2020/1183](#).

<sup>176</sup> See [S/PV.8761](#).

<sup>177</sup> See [S/2020/336](#).

<sup>178</sup> See [S/2020/1183](#).

<sup>179</sup> See [S/2020/336](#).

<sup>180</sup> See [S/2020/1183](#).

9 to 12 months for asset disposal and liquidation the ongoing full cooperation of the Transitional Government and local authorities. Moreover, a streamlined coordination mechanism with the Government would provide a basis for addressing challenges in the drawdown, while the leadership of remaining United Nations personnel and the full cooperation of countries contributing troops and police was also important for a safe and orderly drawdown and handover of programmatic responsibilities to UNITAMS.

In their discussions during the meeting and videoconferences, Council members welcomed the progress made in the political transition, in particular with the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement. They expressed concern about the humanitarian and socioeconomic situation in the Sudan, including the potential impact of the pandemic and the arrival of refugees from Ethiopia, and underscored the need for increased international financial support to the country. Several Council members called for the lifting of sanction measures imposed against the Sudan.<sup>181</sup> Some Council members expressed concern about the increase in intercommunal violence in Darfur and called on the Transitional Government to ensure the protection of civilians.<sup>182</sup> Council members stressed the importance of a responsible and orderly drawdown and closure of UNAMID that took into account the situation on the ground<sup>183</sup> and ensured close coordination with the Transitional Government.<sup>184</sup> Council members also addressed the mandate and objectives of UNITAMS, with particular emphasis on that Mission's support for the Government's priorities during the transitional period<sup>185</sup> and the strengthening of the capacities of the Sudan to protect civilians.<sup>186</sup>

<sup>181</sup> See [S/2020/336](#) (China, Indonesia, Russian Federation and South Africa); and [S/PV.8761](#) (China, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia) and Russian Federation).

<sup>182</sup> See [S/2020/336](#) (Estonia and Germany); [S/PV.8761](#) (United Kingdom, France and United States); and [S/2020/1183](#) (Belgium, United Kingdom and United States).

<sup>183</sup> See [S/2020/336](#) (China, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, South Africa and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/1183](#) (Estonia, France and Niger).

<sup>184</sup> See [S/2020/336](#) (China, France, South Africa and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/1183](#) (Germany, Indonesia, Niger and Russian Federation).

<sup>185</sup> See [S/PV.8761](#) (China and Estonia); and [S/2020/1183](#) (China and Estonia).

<sup>186</sup> See [S/PV.8761](#) (France, Estonia and Dominican Republic); and [S/2020/1183](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic and Estonia).

Concerning UNAMID, the Council unanimously adopted resolutions [2517 \(2020\)](#) of 30 March, [2523 \(2020\)](#) of 29 May and [2525 \(2020\)](#) of 3 June, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, by which it maintained the Mission's authorized troop and police ceilings and extended the timelines for its decision on the courses of action regarding the drawdown and exit of UNAMID.<sup>187</sup> By resolution [2525 \(2020\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of UNAMID for two months from 31 October to 31 December 2020 and modified its priorities to focus on protection of civilians, including to support the capacity of the Transitional Government in that regard.<sup>188</sup> On 3 June, the Council also unanimously adopted resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), by which it established UNITAMS for an initial period of 12 months as a follow-up presence to UNAMID to support the political transition, peace processes between the Government and the armed groups, peacebuilding and the protection of civilians, and the mobilization and coordination of economic and humanitarian assistance.<sup>189</sup>

By resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), adopted on 22 December, the Council unanimously welcomed the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement on 3 October 2020 and encouraged the signatories to begin swiftly the process of implementation, in particular of key provisions pertaining to security arrangements and addressing the root causes of conflict in Darfur and Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States.<sup>190</sup> The Council decided to terminate the mandate of UNAMID on 31 December 2020 and requested the Secretary-General to complete the withdrawal of all uniformed and civilian personnel by 30 June 2021.<sup>191</sup> The Council authorized, for the duration of the drawdown and liquidation period, the retention of a guard unit from within the Mission's existing footprint to protect its personnel, facilities and assets.<sup>192</sup> In addition, the Council urged the Transitional Government to fully and swiftly implement the national plan for civilian protection and to protect civilians in Darfur in accordance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law.<sup>193</sup>

Consistent with established practice pursuant to resolution [1593 \(2005\)](#), the Council heard two briefings in relation to Darfur by the Prosecutor of the

<sup>187</sup> Resolutions [2517 \(2020\)](#), [2523 \(2020\)](#) and [2525 \(2020\)](#), paras. 1 and 2.

<sup>188</sup> Resolution [2525 \(2020\)](#), para. 3.

<sup>189</sup> Resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), para. 2.

<sup>190</sup> Resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), eighth and ninth preambular paragraphs.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 1 and 2.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 3.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4. See [S/2020/429](#).

International Criminal Court in 2020.<sup>194</sup> The Prosecutor noted the transfer of the first of five suspects, Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman, to the Court on 9 June 2020 following his surrender to the authorities in the Central African Republic.<sup>195</sup> With respect to the four remaining suspects, she recalled that the former President of the Sudan, Omer Hassan Al-Bashir, was serving a two-year sentence in the Sudan for a conviction relating to financial corruption, Ahmad Harun and Abdel Raheem Hussein were reportedly in the custody of national authorities awaiting criminal charges, while Abdallah Banda remained at large.<sup>196</sup> In October 2020, the Prosecutor had led the first mission of her office to the Sudan in 13 years, during which she stressed to the Transitional Government the need for her investigators to have access to the territory of the Sudan. She underscored to Council members that while fully respecting the principle of complementarity, it was essential to ensure that all suspects were brought to justice through fair, objective and independent proceedings, either before the Court or in the Sudanese courts, guided by the requirements of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.<sup>197</sup>

Council members also heard three briefings<sup>198</sup> by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan on the work of the Committee and its Panel of Experts. The Chair noted that the Panel had submitted its interim report for 2020, in which the Panel stated that the parties in the Sudan continued to transfer arms and other military material into Darfur, in violation of the arms embargo, and that the implementation of the travel ban and asset freeze also remained a challenge.<sup>199</sup> Despite the restrictions due to the pandemic, the Panel had conducted its first visit to the Sudan in October and November 2020.<sup>200</sup> By resolution 2508 (2020) of 11 February, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council had agreed unanimously to renew the mandate of the Panel of Experts for a period of 13 months until 12 March 2021.<sup>201</sup> The Council expressed its intention to establish clear, well-defined and measurable key benchmarks that could serve in guiding the Council to review measures on the Government of the Sudan.<sup>202</sup>

With respect to the Abyei Area and relations between the Sudan and South Sudan, Council members were briefed twice by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa.<sup>203</sup> In his briefing on 28 April,<sup>204</sup> the Under-Secretary-General said that, despite improving relations between the Sudan and South Sudan, it remained very unlikely that progress would be made in determining the final status of the Abyei Area in the short or medium term. Moreover, the situation in Abyei remained volatile, with episodes of heightened intercommunal tensions, most notably following the killing of 33 Ngok Dinka by Misseriya armed elements in Kolom on 22 January 2020. At his briefing on 22 October,<sup>205</sup> the Under-Secretary-General informed the Council members that minimum progress had been made with respect to implementing the benchmarks of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and the decisions of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism of 19 February 2020 because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, including opening the border crossing corridors, border demarcation and the operational activities of the Joint Border Mechanism. Furthermore, delays in the issuance of visas for the UNISFA police component, including the formed police units, had had a very negative impact on mandate implementation.

In his briefing on 28 April,<sup>206</sup> the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General stated that the Sudan and South Sudan had been consolidating their improved relations, notably through the constructive roles played in each other's peace processes and cooperation on oil management. At the meeting of the Council on 22 October,<sup>207</sup> the Special Envoy highlighted the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement and the initiation of bilateral discussions on 6 September 2020 to review the 2012 cooperation agreements, including on the Abyei Area. In his earlier briefing,<sup>208</sup> the Special Envoy had expressed the hope that the rapprochement and strengthened relations between the two countries would subsequently provide incentives to address the outstanding issues under the cooperation agreements, including Abyei. In their statements following the briefings, Council members noted the improvement in relations, with several members stating that the momentum should be used to resolve outstanding

<sup>194</sup> See [S/2020/538](#) and [S/2020/1192](#).

<sup>195</sup> See [S/2020/1192](#).

<sup>196</sup> See [S/2020/538](#).

<sup>197</sup> See [S/2020/1192](#).

<sup>198</sup> See [S/2020/528](#), [S/2020/913](#) and [S/2020/1235](#).

<sup>199</sup> See [S/2020/913](#).

<sup>200</sup> See [S/2020/1235](#).

<sup>201</sup> Resolution 2508 (2020), para. 2.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4.

<sup>203</sup> See [S/2020/351](#) and [S/PV.8772](#).

<sup>204</sup> See [S/2020/351](#).

<sup>205</sup> See [S/PV.8772](#).

<sup>206</sup> See [S/2020/351](#).

<sup>207</sup> See [S/PV.8772](#).

<sup>208</sup> See [S/2020/351](#).



issues related to the Abyei Area and the border.<sup>209</sup> In addition, noting with concern the impact of restrictions on the ability of UNISFA to implement its mandate, a number of Council members urged the parties to fully support UNISFA in the deployment of additional police personnel, the appointment of a civilian deputy head of mission and the establishment of the Abyei police service.<sup>210</sup> Some Council members stressed the importance of considering the views of the parties, the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and countries contributing troops with respect to the future mandate of UNISFA.<sup>211</sup>

By resolutions [2519 \(2020\)](#) of 14 May and [2550 \(2020\)](#) of 12 November, the Council twice unanimously extended the mandate of UNISFA to support the Joint Border Mechanism and, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, also extended the Mission's mandate in connection with the Abyei Area, while maintaining its authorized troop and police levels.<sup>212</sup> By resolution [2550 \(2020\)](#), the Council reiterated its request to the Sudan and South Sudan to demonstrate measurable progress on border demarcation, including with respect to facilitating the work of the Joint Border Mechanism, withdrawing their forces from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone and reopening border crossing corridors. The Council requested the Secretary-General to hold joint consultations with the Governments of Ethiopia, South Sudan and the Sudan and relevant stakeholders to develop options no later than 31 March 2021 for the responsible drawdown and exit of UNISFA, including an option that was not limited by the implementation of the 2011 agreements on Abyei.<sup>213</sup>

In connection with the situation in South Sudan, Council members were briefed four times by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of UNMISS<sup>214</sup> and twice by the

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.<sup>215</sup> Council members also heard three briefings from representatives of civil society organizations.<sup>216</sup> In his briefing on 4 March,<sup>217</sup> the Special Representative reported notable progress in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan of 2018. On 15 February 2020, the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir Mayardit, had agreed to return South Sudan to its pre-2015 position of 10 states, while adding three administrative areas. With that shift, Riek Machar, leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition, had accepted the challenge to join the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity as First Vice-President. At his briefing on 15 December,<sup>218</sup> the Special Representative informed the Council that with the formation of the Transitional Government, 9 out of 10 governor positions had been filled, the Council of Ministers had commenced its meetings and most national institutions were functioning, at least at a basic level. However, the implementation of other aspects of the Revitalized Agreement was lagging. Transitional security arrangements aimed at unifying security forces were stalled, leaving combatants in training centres often without adequate food or shelter. The initial hold-up in the appointment of governors and county commissioners had left a local vacuum of power and made it difficult to nip in the bud brewing intercommunal violence. Moreover, in 2020, more than 2,000 civilians had lost their lives in local-level conflict, which was being weaponized by external actors acting in their own economic or political interests.

At his briefing on 16 September,<sup>219</sup> with regard to the mandate of UNMISS the Special Representative stated that the political violence of the past had largely subsided, despite delays in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. Given that the external threats that had led to the establishment of sites for the protection of civilians no longer existed, UNMISS was gradually withdrawing its troops and police from static duties at those areas and redeploying them to hotspots where people were in immediate danger. In his briefing on 15 December,<sup>220</sup> he noted that the Bor, Wau and Juba sites had been successfully transitioned to conventional displacement camps and that planning for the same process was under way at Bentiu. Noting the

<sup>209</sup> See [S/2020/351](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Niger, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United States and Viet Nam); and [S/PV.8772](#) (United Kingdom, Indonesia, Germany, Estonia, France and Tunisia).

<sup>210</sup> See [S/2020/351](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam); and [S/PV.8772](#) (United States, United Kingdom, Indonesia, Germany, Estonia, Dominican Republic, France, Tunisia and Belgium).

<sup>211</sup> See [S/2020/351](#) (China and Viet Nam); and [S/PV.8772](#) (Russian Federation).

<sup>212</sup> Resolutions [2519 \(2020\)](#), paras. 1, 2 and 3, and [2550 \(2020\)](#), paras. 1 and 2.

<sup>213</sup> Resolution [2550 \(2020\)](#), para. 31.

<sup>214</sup> See [S/PV.8741](#), [S/2020/582](#), [S/2020/914](#) and [S/2020/1237](#).

<sup>215</sup> See [S/2020/914](#) and [S/2020/1237](#).

<sup>216</sup> See [S/PV.8741](#), [S/2020/582](#) and [S/2020/914](#).

<sup>217</sup> See [S/PV.8741](#).

<sup>218</sup> See [S/2020/1237](#).

<sup>219</sup> See [S/2020/914](#).

<sup>220</sup> See [S/2020/1231](#).

outcome of the independent strategic review of UNMISS,<sup>221</sup> the Special Representative observed that the Mission's mandate needed to change as circumstances did.<sup>222</sup> In that context, he underscored the importance for UNMISS to continue supporting the political process as its central task, to be more mobile and undertake increased outreach to protect civilians, and to support police capacity-building, the preparations for elections, security sector reform and, ultimately, disarmament and reintegration.

In his statement to the Council on 16 September,<sup>223</sup> the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs reported that, despite some encouraging developments since the signing of the Revitalized Agreement and the formation of the Transitional Government, humanitarian needs were again rising as a result of more violence, floods and the COVID-19 pandemic, which was bringing a host of health and wider consequences, including increasing food insecurity. A total of 7.5 million people needed humanitarian assistance. Violence in 2020 had resulted in hundreds of deaths, another 157,000 people becoming displaced and the abduction of large numbers of women and children. Although 1.1 million displaced people had been able to return, 1.6 million remained internally displaced and another 2.2 million were refugees in neighbouring countries. Women and girls faced extreme levels of sexual and gender-based violence. The pandemic, along with increased violence in some areas, had magnified humanitarian access challenges, while humanitarian workers had faced an increase in attacks and a deteriorating operational environment. The Under-Secretary-General sought the support of the Council in continuing to back efforts to find a political solution to end the violence, to use its influence to ensure that humanitarian relief operations were facilitated and aid workers were protected and to provide additional resources for the Humanitarian Response Plan for South Sudan. In his remarks at the open videoconference held on 15 December,<sup>224</sup> the Under-Secretary-General reported that, according to the global Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, five counties in Jonglei, Warrap and Northern Bahr el-Ghazal States faced "catastrophic" levels of food insecurity, with a sixth county presenting a "famine likely" situation. At nearly \$2 billion, the Humanitarian Response Plan for 2020, the largest ever for the country, was only two thirds funded, and the needs were expected to be even higher in 2021.

<sup>221</sup> See [S/2020/1224](#).

<sup>222</sup> See [S/2020/1231](#).

<sup>223</sup> See [S/2020/914](#).

<sup>224</sup> See [S/2020/1237](#).

In her statement to the Council at the meeting held on 4 March,<sup>225</sup> the Coordinator of the Women's Monthly Forum on Peace and Political Processes in South Sudan, a national civil society organization, expressed the hope that, with the breakthrough in the peace process, the Transitional Government would tackle issues such as the education of girls, child marriage, creating jobs for youth and providing basic services for communities. Serious challenges remained, however, with a critical need for humanitarian assistance, extreme risks of rape and other forms of sexual or gender-based violence against women and girls, inadequate conditions for women at unified police training centres and the need for greater efforts to achieve the 35 per cent quota for women in the transitional bodies. She urged the Council to maintain engagement with the parties to ensure the swift implementation of the peace agreement, express support for transitional justice and accountability for gender-based violence, renew the call for the fulfilment of the 35 per cent quota and ensure that UNMISS consulted a wide range of women's civil society organizations to guide its work in the protection of civilians, confidence-building and mediation.

Briefing Council members on 23 June,<sup>226</sup> the Executive Director of the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization, a South Sudanese civil society organization, stated that the political will to implement the Revitalized Agreement was lacking and noted multiple violations of the cessation of hostilities and the lack of criminal prosecution for violations of human rights and humanitarian law. He urged the Council to insist on the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan and the Compensation and Reparation Authority, pressure the parties to complete the formation of the transitional legislative, local government and transitional justice institutions and ensure the safety of and access for humanitarian workers. He further urged the Council to support the official launch of the implementation plan on the prevention of sexual violence in accordance with the joint communiqué between South Sudan and the United Nations of December 2014, support the protection of civic space and ensure that peacekeeping forces increased engagement with communities and enhanced protection for individuals and communities. On 16 September,<sup>227</sup> the Gender and Social Justice Manager of the Assistance Mission for Africa, a non-governmental organization, briefed Council members on ways to address the ongoing intercommunal conflicts in South Sudan and how to

<sup>225</sup> See [S/PV.8741](#).

<sup>226</sup> See [S/2020/582](#).

<sup>227</sup> See [S/2020/914](#).

achieve the meaningful participation of women in governance and peacebuilding. She urged the Council to hold UNMISS accountable for its mandate to protect civilians and consult with communities in the protection of civilians sites so as to ensure that return, relocation and integration efforts were safe, dignified and voluntary.

In their discussions on South Sudan, Council members welcomed the establishment of the Transitional Government and commended the mediation efforts of IGAD, the African Union and other partners. Going forward, they called for full respect of the ceasefire and the implementation of the provisions of the Revitalized Agreement concerning security arrangements, the establishment of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly and transitional justice mechanisms and financial transparency. Council members called on the Government and armed groups to facilitate humanitarian access and to take action to prevent intercommunal violence. Several Council members further called for the meaningful participation of women, youth, civil society and other groups in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement<sup>228</sup> and for the prevention of and accountability for sexual and gender-based violence and violations against children.<sup>229</sup>

Concerning the decisions on UNMISS, by resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#) of 12 March, the Council extended the mandate of the Mission for a period of one year until 15 March 2021, introducing some modifications to its tasks while maintaining its overall composition.<sup>230</sup> The Council requested the Secretary-General to conduct an independent strategic review of UNMISS no later than 15 December 2020, with detailed recommendations for the possible reconfiguration of its mandate and composition to account for developments in the peace process.<sup>231</sup>

In addition to the regular briefings relating to South Sudan and UNMISS, on 15 December Council

members heard a briefing by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2206 \(2015\)](#) concerning South Sudan, in which he provided a summary of the four videoconferences and one meeting the Committee held on the item in 2020, including its discussions on the final report of the Panel of Experts.<sup>232</sup> By resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#) of 29 May, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council extended the travel ban, asset freeze and arms embargo on South Sudan until 31 May 2021 and the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 1 July 2021.<sup>233</sup> The Council decided to review the arms embargo measures in the light of progress achieved in the implementation of all the provisions of the Revitalized Agreement and adherence to the ceasefire<sup>234</sup> and to review the travel ban and asset freeze in the light of progress on the Agreement and the developments related to human rights violations and abuses.<sup>235</sup> The resolution also provided that the Council would conduct midterm reviews of the extended measures no later than 15 December 2020.<sup>236</sup>

Resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#) was adopted with 12 votes in favour and 3 abstentions, by China, the Russian Federation and South Africa. In the written statements submitted following the vote,<sup>237</sup> the Council members that had abstained underscored the need to adjust the sanctions measures in the light of the improved situation in South Sudan and as a means of facilitating the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. The delegation of the Russian Federation considered that it was not appropriate to condition the review of the sanctions measures on the human rights situation in the country. In contrast, the delegation of the United States asserted that the resolution recognized the positive steps taken by the leaders of South Sudan to advance the peace process and clearly

<sup>228</sup> See [S/PV.8741](#) (United States, France, United Kingdom, Dominican Republic, Estonia, South Africa, Germany and Tunisia); [S/2020/582](#) (Dominican Republic and South Africa); [S/2020/914](#) (Dominican Republic and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines); and [S/2020/1237](#) (Dominican Republic, Germany and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines).

<sup>229</sup> See [S/PV.8741](#) (France, Dominican Republic, Estonia and South Africa); [S/2020/582](#) (Dominican Republic); [S/2020/914](#) (Dominican Republic and Estonia); and [S/2020/1237](#) (Dominican Republic, Germany and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines).

<sup>230</sup> Resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#), paras. 6 and 7.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 39.

<sup>232</sup> See [S/2020/1237](#). See also [S/2020/342](#).

<sup>233</sup> Resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#), paras. 3, 11 and 18.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 12.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 4 and 12. Pursuant to resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#), the Secretary-General submitted a report to the Council containing an assessment of the role of the arms embargo in facilitating the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and articulating options for the elaboration of benchmarks ([S/2020/1067](#)). In a letter dated 16 December 2020 from the President of the Council addressed to the Secretary-General, Council members requested the Secretary-General to conduct a Headquarters-based desk review and consultations and to report to the Council with recommendations on benchmarks to assess the arms embargo measures by 31 March 2021 ([S/2020/1277](#)). For more information on the sanctions measures concerning South Sudan, see part VII, sect. III.

<sup>237</sup> See [S/2020/469](#).

stated that the Council would review the sanctions measures based on progress achieved in implementing the peace agreement. The delegation noted that the renewed measures created space for peace to thrive in South Sudan by reducing the flow of weapons to one of Africa's deadliest conflicts and encouraging the critical

reforms outlined in the peace agreement. Several other Council members<sup>238</sup> noted their decision to vote in favour of the resolution given that the text provided for a future review of the measures.

<sup>238</sup> Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Viet Nam.

**Table 1  
Meetings: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8718</a> 11 February 2020	Letter dated 14 January 2020 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2020/36</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by the United States ( <a href="#">S/2020/110</a> )	Sudan		2 Council members (China, Russian Federation), invitee	Resolution <a href="#">2508 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII)
<a href="#">S/PV.8761</a> 25 September 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Assistance Mission in the Sudan ( <a href="#">S/2020/912</a> )		Sudan	Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations	12 Council members, <sup>a</sup> all invitees <sup>b</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, United Kingdom, Russian Federation, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>b</sup> The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations participated in the meeting by videoconference.

**Table 2  
Videoconferences: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – the Sudan**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
30 March 2020 <sup>a</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/267</a>	Letter dated 31 March 2020 from the President of the Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2517 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/248</a>

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<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
24 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/336</a>	Letter dated 28 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/468</a>	Letter dated 29 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2523 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/461</a>
3 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/496</a>	Letter dated 4 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/494</a>
3 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/497</a>	Letter dated 4 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2525 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/495</a>
9 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/528</a>	Letter dated 11 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
10 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/538</a>	Letter dated 11 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
15 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/913</a>	Letter dated 17 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
8 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1183</a>	Letter dated 18 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
10 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1192</a>	Letter dated 16 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
11 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1235</a>	Letter dated 17 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
22 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1280</a>	Letter dated 22 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2559 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/1276</a>

<sup>a</sup> Owing to technical difficulties, instead of an open videoconference to announce the vote on resolution [2517 \(2020\)](#), the videoconference was closed. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.



**Table 3**  
**Meetings: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – the Sudan, South Sudan and Abyei**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8772</a> 22 October 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei (S/2020/1019)		Sudan	Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa	11 Council members, <sup>a</sup> all invitees	
<a href="#">S/PV.8774</a> 12 November 2020		Draft resolution submitted by United States (S/2020/1098)			2 Council members (Germany, United States)	Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII)

**Table 4**  
**Videoconferences: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – the Sudan, South Sudan and Abyei**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
28 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/351</a>	Letter dated 30 April 2020 from the President of the Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
14 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/408</a>	Letter dated 14 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2519 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/405</a>

**Table 5**  
**Meetings: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – South Sudan**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8741</a> 4 March 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan (covering the period from 1 December 2019 to 15 February 2020) (S/2020/145)		South Sudan	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, Coordinator of	All Council members, all invitees <sup>a</sup>	

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<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
					the Women's Monthly Forum on Peace and Political Processes in South Sudan	
<a href="#">S/PV.8744</a> 12 March 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan ( <a href="#">S/2020/145</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by the United States ( <a href="#">S/2020/197</a> )			2 Council members (Germany, United States)	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII)

<sup>a</sup> The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Coordinator of the Women's Monthly Forum on Peace and Political Processes in South Sudan participated in the meeting by videoconference from Juba.

Table 6  
**Videoconferences: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – South Sudan**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
29 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/469</a>	Letter dated 29 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2521 (2020)</a> 12-0-3 <sup>a</sup> (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/462</a>
23 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/582</a>	Letter dated 25 June 2020 from the President of the Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
16 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/914</a>	Letter dated 18 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
15 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1237</a>	Letter dated 17 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<sup>a</sup> *For*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: China, Russian Federation, South Africa.

## 9. Peace consolidation in West Africa

During the period under review, the Council held three meetings under the item entitled "Peace consolidation in West Africa". One of the meetings took the form of a briefing and two meetings were

convened for the adoption of a decision.<sup>239</sup> More information on the meetings, including invitees, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below.

<sup>239</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.



In addition, Council members held a videoconference in connection with the item.<sup>240</sup> More information on the videoconference is given in table 2 below. In addition to the meetings and the videoconference, Council members held informal consultations of the whole to discuss the item.<sup>241</sup>

On 8 January,<sup>242</sup> the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS). During his briefing, he presented the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOWAS and focused on the surge in terrorist attacks against civilian and military targets. He noted that Governments, local actors, regional organizations and the international community were mobilizing across West Africa and the Sahel to respond to terrorism and violent extremism and called upon regional and subregional leaders to follow through on pledges made so as to ensure the most effective support for Governments in the region. He also noted that farmer-herder clashes remained some of the most violent local conflicts in the region, exacerbated by climate change. Despite the worrying trends in terms of security, he highlighted the positive political developments in many parts of West Africa and the Sahel, in particular with regard to the dialogue with citizens across political divides and the conduct of elections. He mentioned that unresolved grievances, incomplete national reconciliation processes and the sentiment that institutions and processes were being manipulated carried risks of tensions and manifestations of political violence. In that regard, he stated that UNOWAS would continue to work closely with all national stakeholders and regional partners, especially the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to promote consensus and inclusiveness in all the elections to be conducted in the region.

During the briefing, Council members expressed concern about the deteriorating security situation in the region related to violent extremism, terrorism and criminal activity. In that regard, some Council members expressed their support for the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel and for UNOWAS, including for the strengthening of its mandate.<sup>243</sup> Council members also agreed that the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel

required more international support.<sup>244</sup> Some Council members emphasized the need for a development-focused political and security approach to tackle poverty, unemployment and other underlying causes of instability.<sup>245</sup> In that connection, Council members reflected on the nexus between climate change and conflict in the region, welcomed the reference in the report of the Secretary-General to the adverse consequences of climate change in the Lake Chad basin and parts of the Sahel, and expressed support for the mandate of UNOWAS to consider the impact of climate change on security as part of its conflict prevention approach.<sup>246</sup> In addition, in the light of the risk of political and election-related tensions, Council members stressed the need to hold peaceful presidential elections in six West African countries: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, the Niger and Togo.<sup>247</sup>

On 31 January, Council members agreed to renew the mandate of UNOWAS for an additional period of three years, from 1 February 2020 to 31 January 2023, as stated in a letter from the President of the Council to the Secretary-General. The members of the Council requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council every six months on the fulfilment by UNOWAS of its mandate.<sup>248</sup>

On 11 February, Council members met to issue a presidential statement, in which they expressed their full support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in carrying out his mandate and the ongoing activities undertaken by UNOWAS.<sup>249</sup> Council members emphasized that security and stability in Mali were inextricably linked to that of the Sahel and West Africa, as well as to that of Libya and North Africa.<sup>250</sup> Council members expressed concern regarding the continued deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin, as well as over the challenging security situation in West Africa, fuelled, among other things, by terrorism and transnational organized crime, and called for a continued national, regional and international

<sup>240</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>241</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 32. See also [S/2020/258](#).

<sup>242</sup> See [S/PV.8698](#).

<sup>243</sup> Niger, France, Indonesia, South Africa, Germany and Tunisia.

<sup>244</sup> Dominican Republic, China, Indonesia, Tunisia and Russian Federation.

<sup>245</sup> Niger, Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, China and United Kingdom.

<sup>246</sup> Belgium, France, Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Germany, Russian Federation and Viet Nam. See also [S/2019/1005](#).

<sup>247</sup> See [S/PV.8698](#) (Niger, France, United Kingdom, United States, South Africa, Tunisia, Russian Federation and Viet Nam).

<sup>248</sup> See [S/2020/85](#) and [S/2019/1009](#). For more information on the mandate of UNOWAS, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>249</sup> See [S/PRST/2020/2](#), fourth paragraph.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, sixth paragraph.

engagement to help to address the peace and security challenges.<sup>251</sup> Council members also welcomed the leadership demonstrated by countries in West Africa and the Sahel in spearheading initiatives to address security challenges in the region and commended their efforts, as well as those of the African Union and ECOWAS, including through the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. They encouraged Member States to support those efforts by providing the necessary assistance and resources.<sup>252</sup> Council members emphasized the need for national stakeholders in upcoming elections to ensure genuinely free and fair, credible, timely and peaceful elections.<sup>253</sup> Council members also recognized the adverse effects of climate change, energy poverty, ecological changes and natural disasters, including through drought, desertification, land degradation and food insecurity, among other factors, on the stability of the West Africa and the Sahel region. They continued to stress the need for long-term strategies, based on risk assessments, by Governments and the United Nations to support stabilization and build resilience and encouraged UNOWAS to continue to integrate that information in its activities.<sup>254</sup>

On 9 July, Council members held a videoconference in connection with the item.<sup>255</sup> At the videoconference,<sup>256</sup> the members of the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative. He presented the latest report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOWAS<sup>257</sup> and said that since his last briefing to the Council in January, attacks by violent extremists and intercommunal violence had continued to undermine peace and security in the region, particularly in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin.<sup>258</sup> He stated that this had resulted in dire implications for the humanitarian and human rights situation in the region and that terrorist attacks had been accompanied by the forced recruitment of children and abductions in Burkina Faso, Mali, the Niger and Nigeria. He added that the growing linkages between terrorism, organized crime and intercommunal violence could not be overemphasized. Terrorists had continued to exploit latent ethnic animosities and the absence of the State in peripheral areas to advance their agenda. In that regard, he said that the United Nations had to remain committed to working with all partners to enhance a

more holistic and sustainable approach to the challenges. He added that the international community also needed to increase its support for the full operationalization of the Regional Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience Strategy for Areas Affected by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin Region, while accelerating the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. He noted that climate change and its effects were amplifying farmer-herder conflicts, increasing social tensions and fostering rural-urban migration, violence and food insecurity and that the COVID-19 pandemic was exacerbating pre-existing conflict drivers, with grave implications for peace and security in West Africa and the Sahel. He said that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the region had witnessed a number of positive developments, including the relatively peaceful conduct of the presidential elections in Togo, local elections in Benin and the completion of the work of the Constitutional Review Commission in the Gambia.

Council members reiterated their support for the work of UNOWAS and the Special Representative and stressed the need for continued international, regional and subregional cooperation.<sup>259</sup> Council members expressed concern about the deteriorating security situation in the region, in particular condemning the spread of terrorism and organized crime,<sup>260</sup> and commended the role played by the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel.<sup>261</sup> Council members noted with deep concern the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was exacerbating existing grievances and the humanitarian situation in the region.<sup>262</sup> Some Council members stressed the security implications of climate change.<sup>263</sup> Some Council members also emphasized the importance of including women in decision-making and peace processes.<sup>264</sup> In several statements, participants expressed concern about human rights violations in the region.<sup>265</sup> Council members called for

<sup>251</sup> Ibid., eighth paragraph.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., eleventh paragraph.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., fourteenth paragraph.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid., eighteenth paragraph.

<sup>255</sup> See [S/2020/706](#). See also [S/2021/9](#).

<sup>256</sup> See [S/2020/706](#).

<sup>257</sup> [S/2020/585](#).

<sup>258</sup> See [S/2020/706](#).

<sup>259</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany and Russian Federation.

<sup>260</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>261</sup> China, Estonia, Indonesia and Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia).

<sup>262</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>263</sup> Belgium, Germany, Indonesia and Viet Nam.

<sup>264</sup> Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Niger and Viet Nam.

<sup>265</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

peaceful, inclusive and transparent elections in the presidential elections in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea and the Niger and agreed on the importance of political processes and dialogue.<sup>266</sup>

On 28 July, the Council held a meeting to issue a presidential statement in which it expressed continued concern regarding the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel and Lake Chad basin, as well as about the challenging security situation in West Africa, fuelled, among other things, by terrorism, transnational organized crime committed at sea, conflicts between pastoralists and farmers and transnational organized crime.<sup>267</sup> In the presidential statement, the Council reiterated its support for the

Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire, as also expressed in resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), and expressed concern about the potential of the global COVID-19 pandemic to further exacerbate existing fragilities in the region, undermine development, worsen the humanitarian situation and affect disproportionately women and girls, children, refugees, internally displaced persons, older persons and persons with disabilities and, in that regard, called for international support for the efforts of the countries of region and a coordinated, inclusive, comprehensive and global response.<sup>268</sup> The Council also underscored the importance of addressing the underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism and the need for a holistic approach to address the root causes of intercommunal violence.<sup>269</sup>

<sup>266</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>267</sup> See [S/PRST/2020/7](#), seventh paragraph.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, ninth paragraph.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*, twelfth paragraph.

**Table 1**  
**Meetings: peace consolidation in West Africa**

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8698</a> 8 January 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) ( <a href="#">S/2019/1005</a> )			Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel and Head of UNOWAS	All Council members, invitee	
<a href="#">S/PV.8720</a> 11 February 2020						<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/2</a>
<a href="#">S/PV.8752</a> 28 July 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOWAS ( <a href="#">S/2020/585</a> )					<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/7</a>

Table 2  
**Videoconferences: peace consolidation in West Africa**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
9 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/706</a>	Letter dated 13 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## 10. Peace and security in Africa

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting, in the form of an open debate, and issued one presidential statement in connection with the item entitled “Peace and security in Africa”.<sup>270</sup> More information on the meeting, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is provided in table 1 below. Council members also held three open videoconferences in connection with the item. More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below.

In 2020, Council members held two open videoconferences focusing on the operations of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel on the basis of reports of the Secretary-General on the Joint Force.<sup>271</sup> In addition, Council members held an open debate to discuss terrorism and violent extremism in Africa and an open videoconference on the situation regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

On 11 March, at the initiative of China, which held the Presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>272</sup> the Council held an open debate under the sub-item entitled “Countering terrorism and extremism in Africa”.<sup>273</sup> The Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, and the Assistant-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator. Speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General noted that Africa continued to face vulnerabilities that threatened its peace and security, among which were terrorism and violent extremism, which continued to grow in various parts of

the continent, notably in Somalia and East Africa, West Africa, the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin. Recalling the statement of the Secretary-General that the phenomenon could not be addressed without addressing its underlying factors, she stated that the threat of terrorism was often a consequence of development, humanitarian, human rights and security challenges.

In her remarks on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the Permanent Observer of the African Union noted the evolving approaches of the African Union in response to the increasing sophistication of tools employed by terrorist groups, including technology. She emphasized the importance of addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism in an integrated and comprehensive manner, understanding the motivation, particularly for young people, to join the ranks of extremist groups, and paying more attention to the factors that lay beyond the immediate local context. The Assistant-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Administrator of UNDP emphasized that an integrated and balanced approach to security and development was needed to effectively address the challenges posed by violent extremism.

Following the briefings, some speakers emphasized the need to focus on the root causes and structural causes of terrorism and extremism in Africa.<sup>274</sup> In addition, some speakers called for the strengthening

<sup>270</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>271</sup> See [S/2020/373](#) and [S/2020/1074](#).

<sup>272</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 26 February 2020 ([S/2020/161](#)).

<sup>273</sup> See [S/PV.8743](#).

<sup>274</sup> See [S/PV.8743](#) (China, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation, Tunisia, Germany, France, Viet Nam, Estonia, Indonesia, European Union, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Côte d’Ivoire, Morocco and Ethiopia); and [S/PV.8743 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Algeria, Eritrea and Senegal).

of international, regional and subregional cooperation,<sup>275</sup> and others called for the implementation of relevant Council resolutions.<sup>276</sup>

At the same meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement.<sup>277</sup> In the presidential statement, the Council noted the increasing threat posed to peace and security in Africa by terrorism, especially in the Sahel, the Lake Chad basin and the Horn of Africa, and underlined the importance of prompt and effective implementation of its resolutions related to the fight against terrorism.<sup>278</sup> The Council also commended the efforts and progress made by African countries, the African Union and other African regional and subregional organizations in countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.<sup>279</sup> In addition, the Council stressed the need to continue to provide and strengthen support to African Member States at the national, subregional and regional levels<sup>280</sup> and called on the international community to strengthen its political commitment and consider mobilizing more sustainable and predictable resources and expertise to strengthen the capacity of African countries in countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.<sup>281</sup> The Council underscored the importance of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach and stressed the importance of cooperation with all relevant stakeholders in countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism in Africa, and in that regard encouraged the participation and leadership of women and the constructive engagement of youth in that process.<sup>282</sup>

Further to the letters submitted respectively by Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan,<sup>283</sup> on 29 June Council

<sup>275</sup> See [S/PV.8743](#) (China, Dominican Republic, Tunisia, United Kingdom, France, Viet Nam, Estonia, Indonesia, Sierra Leon, Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Ethiopia and Guinea); and [S/PV.8743 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Japan, Kenya, Eritrea, Angola and Senegal).

<sup>276</sup> See [S/PV.8743](#) (China, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, Viet Nam, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Guinea); and [S/PV.8743 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Angola).

<sup>277</sup> [S/PRST/2020/5](#).

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, first and third paragraphs.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*, fifth paragraph.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, nineteenth paragraph. See also seventeenth paragraph.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, twenty-first paragraph.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*, twelfth paragraph.

<sup>283</sup> See [S/2020/355](#), [S/2020/409](#), [S/2020/566](#), [S/2020/567](#), [S/2020/586](#), [S/2020/617](#) and [S/2020/623](#). For more information on referral of disputes or situations to the attention of the Council by States, see part VI, sect. I.A.

members held an open videoconference<sup>284</sup> in connection with the item to discuss the issues arising from the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam by Ethiopia. At the videoconference, Council members heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. In her remarks, the Under-Secretary-General noted that the Blue Nile was an important transboundary water resource critical for the livelihoods and development of the people of Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan. The Under-Secretary-General recalled that the three Blue Nile riparian countries had signed the 2015 Agreement on Declaration of Principles on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, in which they had committed to cooperation, equitable and reasonable utilization, security and the peaceful settlement of disputes, and had formed a national independent scientific research group in 2018 to discuss the filling and operation of the Dam. She noted the various mediation efforts of the African Union, South Africa, the Sudan, the United States and the European Union, following the inconclusive negotiations among the three countries in February 2020. The Under-Secretary-General reiterated the call of the Secretary-General for the parties to resolve peacefully all outstanding differences with urgency.

In their statements following the briefing, some Council members called on the three States to solve their differences through dialogue,<sup>285</sup> while others urged them to avoid unilateral actions that would undermine the negotiations.<sup>286</sup> The representative of Egypt expressed the view that the unilateral filling and operation of the Dam would heighten tensions and could provoke crises and conflicts that would further destabilize an already troubled region. In that context, he stated that it was important for the Council to consider the matter. The representative of Ethiopia stated that his country did not believe that the dispute related to the Dam had a legitimate place in the Council. He also said that the role of regional organizations was ignored when it was brought to the Council's attention, which contravened Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations.<sup>287</sup>

In relation to the activities of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, Council members heard briefings in June and November 2020 in the

<sup>284</sup> See [S/2020/636](#).

<sup>285</sup> China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>286</sup> France, Indonesia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>287</sup> For more information on the practice of the Council in relation to Chapter VI of the Charter, including Article 33, see part VI.



context of two open videoconferences. On 5 June,<sup>288</sup> Council members were briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mauritania, in his capacity as Chair of the Group of Five for the Sahel. In his remarks, the Under-Secretary-General noted that the strengthening of the Joint Force was only one strand in the comprehensive international approach required to tackle the root causes of instability in Mali and the Sahel region. In that regard, he underscored that improving governance, eradicating poverty and protecting the human rights of all citizens remained critical. On the support provided by the international community for the operationalization of the Joint Force during the reporting period, especially by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), he noted, *inter alia*, that the rate at which the support provided by MINUSMA was collected and disbursed by the Force had increased from 21 per cent to almost 50 per cent. The Under-Secretary-General also reiterated the call by the Secretary-General for a comprehensive support package for the Joint Force, funded by assessed contributions. In the view of the Under-Secretary-General, that would allow for predictable and sustainable support and would also make it easier to pursue a long-term strategy to phase out the support and render the Joint Force autonomous. In his intervention, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mauritania commended the close collaboration between the Joint Force and MINUSMA and reaffirmed the support of the Group of Five for the Sahel for MINUSMA and for the extension and strengthening of the Mission's mandate. He also communicated the request of the Group of Five for the Council to consider the Joint Force under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

In the statements that followed the briefings, Council members expressed concern at the security situation in the Sahel region,<sup>289</sup> as well as the deteriorating security situation in the region.<sup>290</sup> Some Council members also highlighted the need to address the root causes of instability in the region.<sup>291</sup> Furthermore, certain Council members noted the progress achieved by the Joint Force, including with regard to its counter-terrorism operations carried out during the reporting period and the improvement in its

capabilities.<sup>292</sup> Lastly, some Council members discussed the subject of adherence to human rights and international humanitarian law in counter-terrorism efforts by the Joint Force.<sup>293</sup>

On 16 November,<sup>294</sup> Council members were briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, the Managing Director for Africa of the European External Action Service, on behalf of the European Union, and the representative of Canada in his capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. In his remarks, the Under-Secretary-General noted, in relation to the support model between MINUSMA and the Joint Force, that the issue of predictability of funding remained a matter of concern. In that regard, he emphasized that the Joint Force played a critical role in the regional response to violent extremism and that it was essential for the Joint Force to receive the required assistance to carry out its mandated tasks. Concerning the support that the international community, particularly MINUSMA, had provided to the Joint Force during the reporting period, he stated, *inter alia*, that further to the Council's authorization for MINUSMA to engage commercial contractors to deliver life-support consumables to Joint Force contingents operating outside Mali, the Mission had begun to make appropriate arrangements to implement such support. The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union reported that the African Union had decided, in February 2020, to deploy 3,000 troops to the Sahel to strengthen the ongoing efforts to address the security situation in the region, and that it had adopted its Sahel strategy, which focused on governance, security and integrated development with a main objective of addressing the root causes of the challenges facing the Sahel region. He also stated that it was of utmost importance for the United Nations to consider taking the necessary steps that would guarantee sustainable and predictable funding for the Joint Force from United Nations assessed contributions, as doing so would undoubtedly enhance the capabilities of the regional force. The Managing Director for Africa of the European External Action Service said that the sixth ministerial meeting between the European Union and the Group of Five for the Sahel, held on 9 November 2020, had allowed for

<sup>288</sup> See [S/2020/515](#).

<sup>289</sup> China, Belgium, Estonia, Russian Federation and Viet Nam.

<sup>290</sup> Dominican Republic and Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia).

<sup>291</sup> China, Estonia, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>292</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>293</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia) and United Kingdom.

<sup>294</sup> See [S/2020/1126](#).



an initial exchange on the ongoing review of the European Union Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel and added in that regard that the future approach was more ambitious. The Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission noted that the Commission had listened carefully to the needs and recommendations of women peacebuilders and business leaders from the Sahel region. He noted that the complex challenges required a comprehensive approach to address the root causes of conflict in the Sahel, prevent further escalation of conflict, build and sustain peace and promote sustainable development.

Following the briefings, some Council members called for investigations into potential violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the Joint Force.<sup>295</sup> In addition, some Council members encouraged the participation of women and youth in the peace and security architecture of the region.<sup>296</sup> Speaking on behalf of the Group of Five for the Sahel, the representative of Mali reiterated the call for a mandate under Chapter VII of the Charter as well as predictable and sustainable funding for the Joint Force.

<sup>295</sup> Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>296</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, France and Viet Nam.

**Table 1**  
**Meetings: peace and security in Africa**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8743</a> and <a href="#">S/PV.8743 (Resumption 1)</a> 11 March 2020	Countering terrorism and extremism in Africa  Letter dated 26 February 2020 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General ( <a href="#">S/2020/161</a> )		16 invitees <sup>a</sup>	Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Assistant-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the United Nations Development Programme Administrator, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations	12 Council members <sup>b</sup> all invitees <sup>c</sup>	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/5</a>

<sup>a</sup> Algeria, Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Japan, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Togo.

<sup>b</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa), United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>c</sup> The Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations spoke on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Turkey also aligned themselves with the statement.

Table 2  
**Videoconferences: peace and security in Africa**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
5 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/515</a>	Letter dated 9 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/636</a>	Letter dated 1 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
16 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1126</a>	Letter dated 18 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## 11. The situation in Libya

During the period under review, the Council held four meetings under the item entitled “The situation in Libya”.<sup>297</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. Council members also held seven open videoconferences in connection with the item.<sup>298</sup> More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. The Council adopted four resolutions, including two under Chapter VII of the Charter.<sup>299</sup> In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, Council members held closed videoconferences, informal consultations of the whole and an informal interactive dialogue to discuss the item.<sup>300</sup>

In 2020, the Council was briefed once by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), who resigned in early March. Subsequently, the regular briefings to the Council were provided by the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNSMIL. Briefings by the Special Representative and the Acting Special

Representative focused on the political, security, humanitarian and socioeconomic developments in Libya. Other briefers included the Secretary-General, the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) concerning Libya, who briefed the Council on the activities and developments relating to the work of the Committee and its Panel of Experts, and the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, whose briefings were focused mainly on the Court’s ongoing investigations regarding the situation in Libya.

In January, the Council heard the last briefing by the Special Representative, during which he provided updates on the Berlin Conference held on 19 January 2020, describing the conference as a serious effort to try to unify a discordant international community and to give hope to the beleaguered Libyans, in the form of a “protective international umbrella”. He urged the Council to adopt a resolution to endorse the conclusions of the Berlin Conference. The Special Representative further expressed concern that the recent truce held in name only and reported that foreign sponsors were providing the warring parties in Libya with equipment and fighters, in brazen violation of the arms embargo and the pledges made by representatives of those countries in Berlin. The Special Representative expressed “deep anger and disappointment” over the actions of “unscrupulous actors inside and outside Libya”.<sup>301</sup>

<sup>297</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>298</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>299</sup> Resolutions [2509 \(2020\)](#) (adopted under Chapter VII), [2510 \(2020\)](#), [2526 \(2020\)](#) (adopted under Chapter VII) and [2542 \(2020\)](#).

<sup>300</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 38. See also [S/2020/258](#), [S/2020/344](#), [S/2020/558](#), [S/2020/789](#), [S/2020/1102](#) and [S/2021/203](#).

<sup>301</sup> See [S/PV.8710](#). The Secretary-General had briefed the Council on the outcomes of the Berlin conference on 21 January 2020 (see [S/2020/258](#)).

Subsequently, on 12 February, the Council adopted resolution [2510 \(2020\)](#), in which it welcomed the Berlin Conference convened on 19 January 2020 and endorsed the Conference conclusions, as contained in a letter from the representative of Germany to the President of the Security Council.<sup>302</sup> In the resolution, the Council requested the Secretary-General to take forward as quickly as possible the tasks ascribed to UNSMIL in the operationalization paper annexed to the letter from the representative of Germany and to make recommendations to the Council on the options reflected in that paper.<sup>303</sup> The Council welcomed the nomination of representatives to the 5+5 Joint Military Commission and called for the meetings of the Commission to continue to take place with full participation and without further delay in order to agree on a permanent ceasefire.<sup>304</sup> The Council condemned the increase in levels of violence and demanded that the parties commit to a lasting ceasefire according to the terms agreed by the Joint Military Commission.<sup>305</sup> The Council recalled the commitments made at Berlin to abide by the arms embargo and demanded full compliance, including by all Member States, with the arms embargo imposed under resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) as modified by subsequent resolutions, including by ceasing all support for and withdrawing all armed mercenary personnel, and demanded that all Member States not intervene in the conflict or take measures that exacerbate the conflict.<sup>306</sup> Furthermore, the Council requested the Secretary-General to report on the progress regarding the work of the International Follow-Up Committee on Libya called for at the Berlin Conference.<sup>307</sup> After the vote, most Council members highlighted the importance of the resolution in signalling the Council's broad support for a political process that strived for unity and peace in Libya and would bring an end to hostilities and foreign interference.<sup>308</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation indicated that his delegation had abstained on the vote as the resolution was not viable since the consent of the

Libyan parties had not been obtained and that the Council should have waited for the outcome of the Libyan consultations before adopting the resolution. The representative of the United States expressed disappointment that the resolution had not been adopted unanimously, despite commitments agreed to by leaders in Berlin, including the Russian Federation. The representative of the United Kingdom stressed that the Council was a sovereign body that did not act only when parties asked it to act and that "consensus should never mean, and has never meant, the lowest common denominator". Having taken note of the fact that the resolution had not been adopted unanimously, the representative of China said that the views of all sides should be fully respected during consultations. The representative of Libya said that the resolution had raised hopes, while questioning whether the Council would be able to put an end to the obstructionists and the flow of mercenaries.

Briefing Council members during her first open videoconference on 19 May,<sup>309</sup> the Acting Special Representative reported on the alarmingly high levels of violence and military build-up in the country, as well as the brokering by UNSMIL of a ceasefire agreement between the major parties to the conflict. In the wake of military developments, the Acting Special Representative observed that there could be a window to resume political activity. In that regard, she welcomed the constructive stance taken by the Prime Minister and the President of the House of Representatives. Noting with appreciation the support expressed by participants in the Berlin Conference, she also called for a halt to the inflow of military support from abroad in violation of the United Nations arms embargo. She stressed that, collectively, the Council could apply consistent and credible pressure on those regional and international actors that were fuelling the conflict.<sup>310</sup>

On 8 July, Council members held a high-level open videoconference<sup>311</sup> at which they were briefed by

<sup>302</sup> Resolution [2510 \(2020\)](#), paras. 1 and 2. See also [S/2020/63](#). The result of the vote was as follows: *For*: Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: Russian Federation.

<sup>303</sup> Resolution [2510 \(2020\)](#), para. 3.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4.

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 6.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 10.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 12.

<sup>308</sup> See [S/PV.8722](#) (Germany, Tunisia, China, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Estonia, United States and United Kingdom).

<sup>309</sup> See [S/2020/421](#).

<sup>310</sup> See also [S/2020/360](#).

<sup>311</sup> See [S/2020/686](#). China was represented by its State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs; Germany was represented by its Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs; the Niger was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Abroad; Tunisia was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs; South Africa was represented by its Minister for International Relations and Cooperation; and the United Kingdom was represented by its Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa. Statements were delivered by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria;

the Secretary-General. Noting that the meeting came six months after the Berlin Conference, the Secretary-General reported that the conflict had entered a new phase, where foreign interference had reached unprecedented levels, including the delivery of sophisticated equipment and in terms of the number of mercenaries involved in the fighting. The Secretary-General expressed concern about the alarming military build-up around Sirte and the high level of direct foreign interference in the conflict in violation of the United Nations arms embargo, Council resolutions and the commitments made by Member States in Berlin. He stressed the need to seize all opportunities to unblock the political stalemate and added that de-escalation efforts, including the creation of a possible demilitarized zone, were being undertaken by UNSMIL. The political situation in eastern Libya indicated renewed support for a political solution, however such openings were fragile given that the parties' positions continued to be determined by military developments and support from external backers. Meanwhile, developments on the ground had yielded an agreement to reconvene the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, which had held a third round of talks in June. Regarding the Berlin process, meetings of the plenary of the International Follow-up Committee continued to take place and the political, security and economic working groups were all operational and contributing to the ongoing efforts of UNSMIL to facilitate a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned dialogue.

On 2 September,<sup>312</sup> Council members held an open videoconference at which the Acting Special Representative briefed them on the Secretary-General's report on UNSMIL.<sup>313</sup> She reiterated that Libya was at a decisive turning point and that the Council's support would help to determine the future of the country.

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the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece; the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy; the Minister for Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates of Morocco; the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission; the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States; the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates; the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, African Integration, International Cooperation and the Diaspora of Chad; the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey; and by the representatives of the Congo, Libya, the Netherlands, the Sudan and Switzerland. For further details on the discussion, see part III, sect. III.

<sup>312</sup> See [S/2020/879](#).

<sup>313</sup> See [S/2020/832](#).

Describing military developments, including the situation around Sirte, she noted that continued foreign interference in the conflict constituted an alarming breach of Libya's sovereignty and a blatant violation of the United Nations arms embargo, not to mention of the commitments undertaken by the participants at the Berlin Conference. The partial lifting of the oil blockade on 18 August, which had been in place since January 2020, had had a minimal impact on the severe energy crisis faced by Libya. The situation in the country had produced fertile ground for social unrest and she confirmed once more that the status quo was unsustainable. Stressing the need to press for immediate de-escalation and a return to the political process, she reported that some glimmers of hope had appeared from within the country. On 21 August, the President of the Presidency Council and the Speaker of the House of Representatives had issued simultaneous, yet separate, statements calling for an immediate ceasefire, the lifting of the oil blockade and a return to the political process under United Nations auspices. The Acting Special Representative noted that those statements had been met with overwhelming expressions of support from all political affiliations in the country and international partners alike. She remained optimistic that there was a chance to move forward with intra-Libyan political and security discussions. On the military front, UNSMIL had continued discussions with delegations of both sides under the auspices of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission.

At an open videoconference on 19 November,<sup>314</sup> the Acting Special Representative reported that efforts by UNSMIL, with the support of the Council and the International Follow-up Committee, to facilitate dialogue among the Libyan parties had resulted in the signing of a countrywide permanent ceasefire agreement in Geneva on 23 October by the 5+5 Joint Military Commission.<sup>315</sup> She noted that the historic agreement provided for the withdrawal of all military units and armed groups from the front lines and the departure of all mercenaries and foreign fighters from the entire Libyan territory within a period of 90 days. To expedite the operationalization of the agreement, two subsequent rounds of discussions had taken place on Libyan soil. Tangible progress had been achieved as part of the package of confidence-building measures agreed in Geneva, and following arrangements to remove foreign forces from the oil installations, the National Oil Corporation had lifted the force majeure status on oil installations, ending the oil blockade that

<sup>314</sup> See [S/2020/1129](#).

<sup>315</sup> See [S/2020/1043](#).

had been imposed on the country for more than nine months. The Acting Special Representative reported that on 9 November she had convened in Tunis the first in-person session of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, on the basis of the Berlin Conference conclusions endorsed by the Council in resolution [2510 \(2020\)](#). On 15 November, the 75 participants in the Political Dialogue Forum had adopted a political road map to presidential and parliamentary elections to be held on 24 December 2021. The Acting Special Representative expressed particular gratitude to the women participants, who had played a critical role in the Political Dialogue Forum and made important contributions as bridge-builders. Furthermore, she stressed the need to respect the principle of non-interference in Libya's internal affairs and the full implementation of the United Nations arms embargo on Libya and called upon the Council to use the tools at its disposal to do so, including to prevent obstructionists from jeopardizing the rare opportunity to restore peace in Libya. In conclusion, the Acting Special Representative expressed optimism about the way forward in Libya, while acknowledging the many challenges ahead, and stated that she had witnessed in the preceding months "the potential for a paradigm shift".

In addition, the Acting Special Representative reported in her various briefings<sup>316</sup> on the situation of migrants and asylum seekers in Libya, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and the economic and institutional challenges in Libya.

During the period under review, the Council was briefed by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) concerning Libya on 30 January, 19 May and 2 September. Thereafter, until the end of the year, there were no further briefings by the Chair. During a videoconference on 19 November, the representative of Germany explained that the presentation of the Committee's activities planned for that meeting had to be cancelled owing to the blockade of one member of the Committee.<sup>317</sup> During the briefings,<sup>318</sup> the Chair reported on the activities and developments relating to the work of the Committee and its Panel of Experts. The Chair's briefings highlighted the violations of the sanctions

regime, in particular the arms embargo, exemption requests with respect to the travel ban and arms embargo, the implementation of the assets freeze and the illicit exports of petroleum from Libya. The Chair also recalled that the primary responsibility to implement sanctions measures rested with Member States and encouraged them to continue supporting the work of the Panel of Experts.

The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court briefed the Council twice to report on the progress and challenges relating to the Court's ongoing investigations regarding the situation in Libya. During a videoconference on 5 May,<sup>319</sup> the Prosecutor informed Council members that despite the limitations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, her team was forging ahead with its judicial work and investigations. She highlighted the issues of arbitrary detention and the increasing number of enforced disappearances and use of hate speech. Regarding the disappearance of parliamentarian Siham Sergewa, the Prosecutor reported that her Office had obtained and was verifying information that could point to those responsible. She also informed Council members on the status of the Court's efforts to arrest three Libyan suspects who remained at large, namely, Saif al-Islam al-Qadhafi, Al-Tuhamy Mohamed Khaled and Mahmoud al-Werfalli. With regard to Saif al-Islam al-Qadhafi, the Appeals Chamber had unanimously ruled that his case was admissible before the Court and she noted that his arrest warrant therefore remained enforceable. During the second videoconference, on 10 November,<sup>320</sup> the Prosecutor noted that her Office's request for General Khalifa Haftar to arrest and surrender Mr. Al-Werfalli to the Court had gone unheeded. Noting that Al-Tuhamy Khaled was still alleged to be in Egypt, she urged all relevant States, including Egypt, to ensure that fugitives wanted by the Court were surrendered without delay. The Prosecutor further reported that there had been significant progress in the investigations since May 2020. She stated that multiple mass graves had been discovered in the city of Tarhunah and south of Tripoli and that her Office continued to receive information on attacks and crimes against civilians.

In their deliberations in 2020, Council members expressed deep concern about the escalating violence in Libya.<sup>321</sup> In response to violations of the sanctions

<sup>316</sup> See [S/2020/421](#), [S/2020/879](#) and [S/2020/1129](#).

<sup>317</sup> See [S/2020/1129](#).

<sup>318</sup> See [S/PV.8710](#), [S/2020/421](#) and [S/2020/879](#). For further details on the sanctions measures concerning Libya, see part VII, sect. III. For more information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) concerning Libya and its Panel of Experts, see part IX, sect. I.

<sup>319</sup> See [S/2020/371](#).

<sup>320</sup> See [S/2020/1108](#).

<sup>321</sup> See [S/PV.8710](#) (United Kingdom, United States, France, Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Indonesia, Russian Federation, China, Belgium, South Africa, Germany, Estonia, Niger, Tunisia and Viet Nam).



regime, particularly the arms embargo, Council members called on all parties to fully respect, strictly implement and comply with the obligations established by the arms embargo, particularly in view of the endorsement of the Berlin Conference conclusions.<sup>322</sup> They welcomed the 23 October 2020 ceasefire agreement and urged all actors, both inside and outside Libya, to support its full implementation, including through the immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces and mercenaries from that country.<sup>323</sup> Council members welcomed the progress made on the political track and expressed their full support for the UNSMIL-facilitated Libyan Political Dialogue Forum,<sup>324</sup> with some particularly emphasizing the need for the participation of women.<sup>325</sup>

In deliberations following the briefing by the Prosecutor, several Council members expressed their support for the International Criminal Court as an important pillar of the rules-based international order, with some noting that the Prosecutor and her team must be able to exercise their functions without obstruction.<sup>326</sup> In contrast, the representative of the Russian Federation contended that the activities of the Court in Libya were becoming increasingly irrelevant and suggested that when peace was firmly established, Libyans would be able to decide for themselves how to address the issue of justice.<sup>327</sup> He also suggested that the Court had chosen a strategy of discriminate justice

and not to take real steps to investigate the acts committed by all sides in the Libyan conflict.<sup>328</sup> Other Council members highlighted the principle of complementarity of the Court to Libya's national jurisdiction.<sup>329</sup> While reiterating his country's long-standing and principled objection to any assertion of jurisdiction by the Court over nationals of States that are not party to the Rome Statute, absent a Council referral or the consent of such States, the representative of the United States affirmed that his country continued to be a strong supporter of meaningful accountability and justice for victims of atrocities through appropriate mechanisms. Other Council members stressed that ending impunity for grave crimes was necessary to achieve a lasting peaceful solution for the crisis in Libya and called on all parties to cooperate with the Court and faithfully carry out their obligations to execute the outstanding arrest warrants.<sup>330</sup> Furthermore, several Council members called for the enforcement of the arms embargo.<sup>331</sup>

In his statements, the representative of Libya highlighted the suffering and frustration of the people of Libya. He reminded the Council of its responsibility towards Libya, in particular with regard to holding accountable those responsible for foreign interference and war crimes in the conflict.<sup>332</sup> He noted that the launch of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum was a "ray of hope" for Libyans, while underscoring that the role of the Libyan parties in the dialogue was crucial for the process to succeed. He also called on the Council to adopt a binding resolution supporting the consensus reached by Libyans in the various dialogues, including a road map and a constitutional provision on holding elections on 24 December 2021, and to grant UNSMIL a mandate to provide technical and logistical support for the electoral process.<sup>333</sup>

The matters outlined above were also addressed by the Council in the resolutions adopted during the period under review. In addition to resolution 2510

<sup>322</sup> See [S/PV.8710](#) (United Kingdom, United States, France, Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Indonesia, Russian Federation, China, Belgium, South Africa, Germany, Estonia, Niger, Tunisia and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/686](#) (China, Germany, Niger, Tunisia, South Africa, United Kingdom, Belgium, Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United States and Viet Nam). For more information, see part VII, sect. III.

<sup>323</sup> See [S/2020/1129](#) (Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Viet Nam, Niger, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States).

<sup>324</sup> See [S/2020/879](#) (Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States); and [S/2020/1108](#) (Belgium, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam).

<sup>325</sup> See [S/2020/686](#) (Viet Nam); [S/2020/879](#) (United Kingdom); and [S/2020/1129](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and United Kingdom).

<sup>326</sup> See [S/2020/371](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and United Kingdom); and [S/2020/1108](#) (Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia).

<sup>327</sup> See [S/2020/371](#).

<sup>328</sup> See [S/2020/1108](#).

<sup>329</sup> See [S/2020/371](#) (Dominican Republic, Indonesia, South Africa, Tunisia and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/1108](#) (France, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia).

<sup>330</sup> See [S/2020/371](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, South Africa and United Kingdom); and [S/2020/1108](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and United Kingdom).

<sup>331</sup> See [S/2020/371](#) (China, Niger and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/1108](#) (China, Germany, Niger, South Africa, Tunisia and Viet Nam).

<sup>332</sup> See [S/2020/371](#), [S/2020/1108](#) and [S/2020/1129](#).

<sup>333</sup> See [S/2020/1129](#).



(2020) described above, on 11 February the Council adopted, not unanimously, resolution 2509 (2020) under Chapter VII of the Charter. In that resolution, the Council decided to extend until 30 April 2021 the authorizations provided and measures imposed by resolutions 2146 (2014) and 2441 (2018) and to modify the period for designating vessels for some or all of the measures contained in resolution 2146 (2014) to one year, renewable by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011).<sup>334</sup> The Council also extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts established by resolution 1973 (2011) until 15 May 2021, and requested that the Panel closely follow and report to the Committee any information relating to the illicit export from or illicit import to Libya of petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products.<sup>335</sup> The Council also called on all Member States to comply fully with the arms embargo and not to intervene in the conflict or take measures that exacerbated the conflict.<sup>336</sup> In his statement after the vote, the representative of the Russian Federation noted that his country had abstained as the resolution had included new language on the illicit importation of oil products into Libya. He noted that the Council should not forget about the oil needs of the Libyans living in the east of the country.<sup>337</sup>

On 5 June, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2526 (2020), by which it extended for 12 months the authorizations set out in resolution 2473 (2019), by which it had authorized Member States, acting nationally or through regional organizations, to inspect vessels they had reasonable grounds to believe were carrying arms or related materiel to or from Libya in order to ensure strict implementation of the arms embargo on the high seas off the coast of Libya, and to use all measures commensurate to the specific circumstances to carry out such inspections.<sup>338</sup>

On 15 September, the Council adopted, not unanimously, resolution 2542 (2020), by which it

extended the mandate of UNSMIL until 15 September 2021.<sup>339</sup> Among other tasks, the Council requested UNSMIL, in full accordance with the principles of national ownership, to further the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement; support efforts by the Government of National Accord to stabilize post-conflict zones; monitor and report violations of human rights and humanitarian law, including sexual violence in conflict; and support the provision of essential services and delivery of humanitarian assistance, including in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>340</sup> By the resolution, the Council also decided that UNSMIL would be led by a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General who would exercise overall leadership of UNSMIL with a particular focus on good offices and mediation with Libyan and international actors to end the conflict and that, under the authority of the Special Envoy, an UNSMIL Coordinator would be in charge of the day-to-day operations and management of UNSMIL, and requested the Secretary-General to appoint his Special Envoy without delay.<sup>341</sup> The Council further requested the Secretary-General to assess the steps required to reach a ceasefire and the possible role of UNSMIL in providing scalable ceasefire support, as well as to conduct an independent strategic review of UNSMIL.<sup>342</sup> Following the vote,<sup>343</sup> several Council members expressed support for UNSMIL and welcomed the collaboration between UNSMIL, regional organizations and Libya's neighbours.<sup>344</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation stated that his country had abstained in the vote as not all of its amendments had been reflected in the text and that monitoring by UNSMIL of a cessation of hostilities in Libya should only be carried out at the request of and with the agreement of the Libyan parties. The representative of China noted that issues relating to human rights, gender and ceasefire monitoring had not been properly resolved in the resolution. Responding to the concerns raised by the Russian Federation and China, the representative of the United Kingdom, as penholder, noted that the new language added to the resolution in response to the Russian Federation's concerns made it clear that UNSMIL would only be involved in implementing a ceasefire once it was agreed by the Libyan parties. He further stated that a number of references supporting

<sup>334</sup> Resolution 2509 (2020), para. 2. See also resolution 2441 (2018), para. 2, and resolution 2146 (2014), para. 11.

<sup>335</sup> Resolution 2509 (2020), paras. 3 and 11.

<sup>336</sup> Resolution 2509 (2020), para. 6. For more information on the sanctions measures concerning Libya, see part VII, sect. III. For more information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya and its Panel of Experts, see part IX, sect. I.

<sup>337</sup> See S/PV.8719.

<sup>338</sup> Resolution 2526 (2020), para. 1. See also resolution 2292 (2016), para. 3. For more information concerning the decisions of the Council relating to Article 42 of the Charter during the period under review, see part VII, sect. IV.A.

<sup>339</sup> Resolution 2542 (2020), para. 1. For further details on the mandate of UNSMIL, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>340</sup> Resolution 2542 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2. For further details on the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Libya, see part IX, sect. VI.

<sup>342</sup> Resolution 2542 (2020), paras. 4 and 5.

<sup>343</sup> See S/PV.8758.

<sup>344</sup> South Africa, Viet Nam, Russian Federation, China, Indonesia and Tunisia.

the human rights agenda and on conflict-related sexual violence had been removed at China's request so as to reach a compromise with other members of the Council, who felt that they were important issues.

Developments in Libya were also considered under the item "Maintenance of international peace and security".<sup>345</sup>

<sup>345</sup> For further details, see part I, sect. 35.

Table 1  
Meetings: the situation in Libya

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8710</a> 30 January 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) ( <a href="#">S/2020/41</a> )		Libya	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNSMIL	All Council members, <sup>a</sup> all invitees <sup>b</sup>	
<a href="#">S/PV.8719</a> 11 February 2020		Draft resolution submitted by Germany and United Kingdom ( <a href="#">S/2020/111</a> )			2 Council members (China, Russian Federation)	Resolution <a href="#">2509 (2020)</a> 14-0-1 <sup>c</sup> (adopted under Chapter VII)
<a href="#">S/PV.8722</a> 12 February 2020		Draft resolution submitted by United Kingdom ( <a href="#">S/2020/113</a> )	Libya		9 Council members, <sup>d</sup> Libya	Resolution <a href="#">2510 (2020)</a> 14-0-1 <sup>e</sup>
<a href="#">S/PV.8758</a> 15 September 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on UNSMIL ( <a href="#">S/2020/832</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by United Kingdom ( <a href="#">S/2020/896</a> )			7 Council members <sup>f</sup>	Resolution <a href="#">2542 (2020)</a> 13-0-2 <sup>g</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The representative of Germany briefed the Council in his capacity as the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) concerning Libya.

<sup>b</sup> The Special Representative participated in the meeting by videoconference from Brazzaville.

<sup>c</sup> *For*: Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: Russian Federation.

<sup>d</sup> China, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam. The Niger associated itself with the statement by Tunisia.

<sup>e</sup> *For*: Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: Russian Federation.

<sup>f</sup> China, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

<sup>g</sup> *For*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: China, Russian Federation.

Table 2  
**Videoconferences: the situation in Libya**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
5 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/371</a>	Letter dated 7 May from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
19 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/421</a>	Letter dated 21 May from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
5 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/509</a>	Letter dated 5 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2526 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/504</a>
8 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/686</a>	Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
2 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/879</a>	Letter dated 4 September from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
10 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1108</a>	Letter dated 13 November from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
19 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1129</a>	Letter dated 23 November from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## 12. The situation in Mali

During the period under review, the Council held four meetings in connection with the item entitled “The situation in Mali”. Three of the meetings took the form of briefings and one was convened for the adoption of decisions.<sup>346</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. Council members also held four open videoconferences in connection with the item, two of which were devoted to the announcement of the adoption of resolutions.<sup>347</sup> More

information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. In 2020, the Council adopted two resolutions under Chapter VII of the Charter and issued one presidential statement. In addition to the meetings and open videoconferences, Council members also held informal consultations of the whole and closed videoconferences,<sup>348</sup> including a closed videoconference with countries contributing troops and police to the United Nations

<sup>346</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>347</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>348</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 39. See also [S/2021/9](#).

Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#).<sup>349</sup>

In 2020, the Council was briefed twice by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of MINUSMA and once by the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations and the High Representative of the African Union for Mali and the Sahel. Briefings were conducted in connection with the quarterly reports of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali.<sup>350</sup> The Council was also briefed once by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2374 \(2017\)](#) concerning Mali.

At the meeting held on 15 January,<sup>351</sup> the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations informed the Council that the situation in Mali and the wider Sahel region was deteriorating at an alarming rate and referred to the wounding of 18 peacekeepers during an attack on the MINUSMA camp in Tessalit the week before. Politically, the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali of 2015 had been slow and uneven. While important decisions had been postponed, significant progress had been made on the inclusive national dialogue. The Under-Secretary-General was particularly encouraged by the high participation of women and he commended the Coordination des mouvements de l’Azawad for joining the final stages of the dialogue, but also expressed regret at the absence of opposition parties. He also referred to the progress regarding the disarmament and integration of former combatants into the Malian Defence and Security Forces and the creation of a legal framework for the establishment of the Northern Development Zone.

Concerning the mandate of MINUSMA, the Under-Secretary-General highlighted that in recent months, in line with resolution [2480 \(2019\)](#), the Mission had done its utmost to support the stabilization and restoration of State authority in central Mali, while continuing to support the implementation of the peace agreement. The increased presence and activity of MINUSMA in the Mopti region had contributed to preventing a further escalation of intercommunal violence and large-scale massacres. He stated that the Mission’s added focus on central Mali had required it

to divert key capabilities from Gao to Mopti, and that it was not feasible to implement its additional strategic priority in the centre of the country without additional resources. In order to address that challenge, MINUSMA had developed a plan to adapt its uniformed components within the authorized troop and police strength, while taking into account the needs of the civilian component, to effectively implement its mandate in central and northern Mali. The Under-Secretary-General reported that the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel had been unable to take full advantage of MINUSMA operational and logistical support, in line with resolutions [2391 \(2017\)](#) and [2480 \(2019\)](#), as the Force did not have the capacity to transport the essential consumables that MINUSMA provided to all its sectors and contingents.

At an open videoconference on 7 April,<sup>352</sup> the Special Representative of the Secretary-General informed Council members that despite the exceptional circumstances posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, MINUSMA was continuing to fulfil the mission entrusted to it by the Council in accordance with resolution [2480 \(2019\)](#), in particular the implementation of the peace agreement and supporting the political framework for the management of the crisis in the centre of the country. On the implementation of the peace agreement, he reported that the first reconstituted units of the defence forces had been redeployed to the north and that the Prime Minister’s visit to the northern regions was a demonstration of trust-building among the parties to the agreement. The first round of the legislative elections had been conducted in a peaceful atmosphere and at the national level the 30 per cent quota for women had been respected. On the management of the crisis in the centre of the country, MINUSMA continued to implement its adaptation plan and a hotline had been established in Mopti to serve the civilian population as part of the Mission’s efforts to respond to early warnings. In relation to regional security cooperation, MINUSMA continued to provide logistical support to the Joint Force and, in that context, the construction work on the Joint Force headquarters in Bamako had started.

In his statement at the open videoconference held on 11 June,<sup>353</sup> the Secretary-General stated that the multifaceted crises in Mali and the Sahel continued to take a heavy toll on the people across the region, with terrorist and criminal groups expanding their activities and exploiting long-standing tensions along community lines and with the onset of the COVID-19

<sup>349</sup> The closed videoconference was held on 10 June 2021 in connection with the item entitled “Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#), annex II, sections A and B”; see [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 22.

<sup>350</sup> See [S/2019/983](#), [S/2020/223](#), [S/2020/476](#), and [S/2020/952](#).

<sup>351</sup> See [S/PV.8703](#).

<sup>352</sup> See [S/2020/286](#).

<sup>353</sup> See [S/2020/541](#).

pandemic. In spite of protracted delays in the implementation of the peace agreement, he acknowledged that important progress had been made over the previous year and encouraged the signatories to the agreement to strengthen mutual trust and work together to keep up the momentum in the peace process. Efforts to combat impunity remained essential to curbing the violence in the centre of the country and more needed to be done by the authorities to demonstrate their commitment in that regard. The Secretary-General highlighted the need to bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers.

The Secretary-General also expressed concern about the situation in central Mali and stated that he was appalled by allegations of summary killings and executions of civilians. He also mentioned that MINUSMA and the Secretariat had taken important steps to enhance the Mission's presence in central Mali and to better protect civilians, and the adaptation plan remained a viable proposal for a more agile, mobile and flexible operation. The humanitarian situation was equally concerning, with the number of people in need of assistance expected to increase to 5 million over the following months. He called for swift and determined international action to address the most urgent humanitarian needs and mitigate the destabilizing effects of COVID-19. The Secretary-General commended the Malian defence forces, the Joint Force and the French forces for stepping up their operations and improving coordination in the Liptako-Gourma region with the aim of defeating terrorist groups operating in that critical area. He also stressed that support for the Group of Five for the Sahel remained vital and reiterated his call for a comprehensive support package, funded by assessed contributions, to allow for predictable and sustainable support for the Joint Force.

At the same videoconference, the High Representative of the African Union for Mali and the Sahel stated that Mali and the Sahel region faced a triple crisis involving health, economic and security factors owing to COVID-19. He noted the drastic deterioration of the security situation in the Liptako-Gourma area with an increase in the number and intensity of terrorist group actions and the continuation of intercommunal conflict. The difficult security situation had exacerbated the humanitarian situation and weakened respect for human rights, resulting in a growing number of displaced persons and a lack of basic social services. In response, Mali had launched a new military initiative, Operation Maliko, which had shown tangible results, the Joint Force had grown in strength and the cooperation and coordination

mechanism set up in Pau, France, seemed to be working properly. He also addressed the political situation and the implementation of the peace agreement and expressed hope that the next Government would be able to create new momentum in the implementation of the agreement by adopting a new timetable for completing the priority actions that had already been identified.

At the meeting held on 8 October,<sup>354</sup> the Special Representative of the Secretary-General noted that the period covered by the report of the Secretary-General<sup>355</sup> was marked by significant sociopolitical developments. He made reference to his statement during a closed videoconference held on 27 July, in which he had explained that the main causes of the crisis at that time were the weakening of central institutions, the loss of confidence in political actors and the rise of religious leaders; the delay in the implementation of the peace agreement and the worsening socioeconomic situation; and the deterioration of the security situation, in particular in the centre of the country. He highlighted the paralysis in Mali's institutions, notably the Constitutional Court and the National Assembly. It was in that context of deadlock that the mutiny of 18 August 2020 had led to the resignation of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita. He noted that the coup de force was condemned by the entire international community. In addition to condemning that unconstitutional change, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) had decided to suspend Mali from all of its institutions and had applied sanctions, including the closure of borders, an air embargo and the suspension of financial transactions, until a civil transition was put in place. He also indicated that days of national consultation had been organized from 10 to 12 September, which led to the adoption of a transition charter, complementing the Constitution. As provided for in the charter, a President had been appointed for the transition in the person of Bah N'Daw, a retired Colonel-Major and former Minister of Defence. In addition to the President, a Vice-President and a Prime Minister had been appointed and a Government had been formed on 5 October made up of 25 members, in accordance with the recommendations of the inclusive national dialogue. With the formation of the new Government and the lifting of sanctions, the Special Representative expressed hope for the swift establishment of the national transitional council, which would serve as the legislative body throughout the 18-month transitional period.

<sup>354</sup> See [S/PV.8765](#).

<sup>355</sup> [S/2020/952](#).



On 17 November the Council held a meeting<sup>356</sup> to hear a briefing by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2374 \(2017\)](#) concerning Mali. The Chair informed the Council about the activities of the Committee in 2020, highlighting the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its working methods. He also reported that since the Committee was established, eight individuals had been placed on the sanctions list pursuant to resolution [2374 \(2017\)](#).

In the discussions in the Council during the period under review, Council members noted the deteriorating security environment in Mali and in the wider Sahel region. Against that backdrop, Council members focused, *inter alia*, on the implementation of the peace agreement, on the role of MINUSMA in support of the agreement and the definition of its mandate and strength and on the use of sanctions to promote peace and security in Mali. Council members noted the positive progress regarding the implementation of the agreement, underscoring that there was no viable alternative for achieving peace and stability in the country. Some Council members emphasized the importance of increasing women's participation in Mali's political process.<sup>357</sup> Council members also expressed support for the development of the MINUSMA adaptation plan for central Mali, which was aimed at achieving the mandate priorities laid out in resolution [2480 \(2019\)](#). In addition, Council members expressed different views on the force strength of MINUSMA and concerning the focus of its mandate.<sup>358</sup> Regarding the sanctions regime, Council members cautioned that those that hindered the implementation of the peace agreement risked facing sanctions pursuant to resolution [2374 \(2017\)](#).<sup>359</sup> Some Council members expressed regret that the Council had failed to seize the opportunity to strengthen the sanctions and to expand the mandate of the Panel of

Experts.<sup>360</sup> In addition, Council members highlighted the key role played by ECOWAS in handling the political crisis following the 18 August 2020 coup d'état.<sup>361</sup>

During the period under review, the Council adopted two resolutions in connection with the item, one relating to the mandate of MINUSMA and one in connection with the sanctions measures in Mali. On 29 June, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, extending the mandate of MINUSMA until 30 June 2021 and renewing its authorization to MINUSMA to use all necessary means to carry out its mandate.<sup>362</sup> The Council also expressed its full support for the continuation of the implementation of the MINUSMA adaptation plan and encouraged Member States to contribute to the plan by providing the capabilities needed for its success, particularly air assets.<sup>363</sup> While reiterating the first and second strategic priorities of MINUSMA, the Council added new elements and modified some of the existing tasks.<sup>364</sup> In addition, the Secretary-General was requested to develop and present to the Council by 31 March 2021 a long-term road map focusing on benchmarks and conditions that would open the way for a possible exit strategy for MINUSMA.<sup>365</sup> On 31 August, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2541 \(2020\)](#), extending until 31 August 2021 the asset freeze and travel ban imposed by the Council in resolution [2374 \(2017\)](#).<sup>366</sup> The Council also extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 30 September 2021.<sup>367</sup>

In addition, on 15 October, the Council issued a presidential statement welcoming the establishment of the transitional arrangements in Mali, including the appointment of a transitional president, vice-president,

<sup>356</sup> See [S/PV.8777](#).

<sup>357</sup> See, in particular, [S/PV.8703](#) (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominican Republic, Germany, Estonia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam); [S/2020/286](#) (Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia) and Viet Nam); [S/2020/541](#) (France, Dominican Republic, Tunisia, Estonia, South Africa, United Kingdom and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines); and [S/PV.8765](#) (France, Viet Nam, Estonia, United Kingdom, United States, Belgium and Dominican Republic).

<sup>358</sup> See [S/PV.8703](#) (United States and Russian Federation); [S/2020/286](#) (Germany); and [S/2020/541](#) (Niger).

<sup>359</sup> See, in particular, [S/PV.8703](#) (France, United States, Belgium and United Kingdom); [S/2020/541](#) (France); and [S/PV.8765](#) (United States and Dominican Republic).

<sup>360</sup> See [S/2020/867](#).

<sup>361</sup> See [S/PV.8765](#) (France, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), China, Viet Nam (also on behalf of Indonesia), Estonia, United States, Germany, Dominican Republic and Russian Federation).

<sup>362</sup> Resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), paras. 16 and 18. For more information on the mandate of MINUSMA, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>363</sup> Resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), para. 23.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 28 and 29. For more details, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>365</sup> Resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), para. 64.

<sup>366</sup> Resolution [2541 \(2020\)](#), para. 1. For more information on the sanctions measures concerning Mali, see part VII, sect. III.

<sup>367</sup> Resolution [2541 \(2020\)](#), para. 3. For more information on the Committee and the Panel of Experts, see part IX, sect. I.



prime minister and government and the issuance of a transition charter.<sup>368</sup> The Council underlined that the transition needed to be conducted in accordance with the transition charter, leading to constitutional order and elections within 18 months.<sup>369</sup> In the presidential statement, the Council reiterated the strategic importance of the full, effective and inclusive implementation of the peace agreement and called on the transitional authorities to take ownership of the document and on the signatory armed groups to fulfil

their commitment to its implementation.<sup>370</sup> The Council commended the continued commitment of and mediation efforts by ECOWAS over the past months in Mali and encouraged it to accompany Mali in the implementation of the transition road map.<sup>371</sup> The Council took note of the 5 October 2020 declaration by ECOWAS on the transitional arrangements and the lifting of sanctions and on the decision of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union to lift its suspension of Mali from African Union activities.<sup>372</sup>

<sup>368</sup> S/PRST/2020/10, first paragraph.

<sup>369</sup> Ibid., third paragraph.

<sup>370</sup> Ibid., fourth paragraph.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid., second paragraph.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid.

**Table 1  
Meetings: the situation in Mali**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.8703 15 January 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2019/983)		Mali	Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations	13 Council members, <sup>a</sup> all invitees <sup>b</sup>	
S/PV.8765 8 October 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2020/952)		Mali	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali	11 Council members, <sup>c</sup> all invitees <sup>d</sup>	
S/PV.8769 15 October 2020						S/PRST/2020/10
S/PV.8777 17 November 2020					Dominican Republic <sup>e</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger (also on behalf of South Africa and Tunisia), Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>b</sup> Mali was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, who participated in the meeting by videoconference from Bamako.

<sup>c</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam (also on behalf of Indonesia, the other member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on the Council).

<sup>d</sup> The Special Representative participated in the meeting by videoconference from Bamako.

<sup>e</sup> The representative of the Dominican Republic spoke in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali.

Table 2  
Videoconferences: the situation in Mali

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
7 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/286</a>	Letter dated 9 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
11 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/541</a>	Letter dated 15 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/625</a>	Letter dated 30 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/613</a>
31 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/867</a>	Letter dated 31 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2541 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/859</a>

## Americas

### 13. The question concerning Haiti

During the period under review, the Council held two meetings and adopted one resolution in connection with the item entitled “The question concerning Haiti”. One meeting took the form of a briefing and the other meeting was convened for the adoption of a decision.<sup>373</sup> With the adoption of resolution [2547 \(2020\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of the

United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) for a period of one year until 15 October 2021.<sup>374</sup> In addition, Council members held two open videoconferences under the item.<sup>375</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers

<sup>373</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>374</sup> Resolution [2547 \(2020\)](#), para. 1. For more information on the mandate of BINUH, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>375</sup> For information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

and decisions, and the videoconferences is given in tables 1 and 2 below. In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, Council members held informal consultations of the whole in connection with the item.<sup>376</sup> In 2020, the Council was briefed three times by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of BINUH and once each by the Executive Director of Fondasyon Je Klere and by the President of the Haitian Bars Federation. Discussions in the Council during this period focused on the mandate of BINUH and the political impasse in Haiti between the Government and the opposition, following the indefinite postponement of the legislative elections in October 2019.

In her briefing at the meeting held on 20 February,<sup>377</sup> the Special Representative of the Secretary-General stated that the political impasse had paralysed the functioning of Haitian institutions, aggravated the country's economy and fuelled continued insecurity. She was working alongside the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States and the Apostolic Nuncio to Haiti to create an environment conducive to reaching a negotiated resolution that would ensure that the most vulnerable received much needed basic services from the State and lay the groundwork for the timely holding of elections. Political actors had yet to settle on a formula that would lead to the designation of a consensual prime minister and the formation of a new Government, or agree on the remaining length of the term of the President, Jovenel Moïse. Entering its second year with a caretaker Government, Haiti's economy was forecast to sink deeper into recession and 4.6 million citizens were estimated to require humanitarian assistance.

Making reference to the Secretary-General's report,<sup>378</sup> the Special Representative noted that BINUH and the United Nations country team in Haiti had developed an integrated strategic framework with a focused strategy aimed at assisting institutions to address the root causes of instability.<sup>379</sup> The collective success of the United Nations would be measured by the progress made on the six benchmarks, namely, facilitating a political consensus, addressing gang violence, strengthening the police, justice and corrections sectors, promoting human rights, helping to address unemployment and socioeconomic grievances, and encouraging the presence of the State in

communities through the provision of basic services and efforts to enhance resilience.

At the open videoconference held on 19 June,<sup>380</sup> the Special Representative of the Secretary-General informed Council members that the spread of COVID-19 was accelerating in Haiti and its effects were only starting to be felt by its citizens, a majority of whom were already living in bleak socioeconomic conditions. As a result of the multiple, interconnected crises that had affected the country in recent years, Haiti's economy had contracted by 1.2 per cent in 2019 and was projected to shrink by a further 4 per cent in 2020. In the absence of adequate resources to support Haiti's emergence from the recession, the hard-won security and development gains achieved over the past decade and a half were at risk of coming undone and a primarily domestic problem risked being transformed into a regional issue.

In terms of the security and political situation, the Special Representative noted a marked increase in the frequency and intensity of clashes between rival armed gangs as they tried to exert influence on the outcome of elections in the most populous neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince. Despite the call from parts of the opposition for Haitians to come together to face the pandemic, an initiative that had allowed the newly appointed Prime Minister, Joseph Joute, to govern, a growing number of opposition figures were contesting the length of Mr. Moïse's term in office as President and calling for a transitional administration to take over. A reform of the Constitution was required to create the conditions for institutional stability, good governance and the rule of law. Through the use of its good offices, BINUH had continued to encourage actors from across the political spectrum to constructively engage with one another. The Office had also advised the Haitian National Police in the successful resolution of long-standing labour disputes within its ranks and assisted judicial actors in devising a virtual system to hold hearings during the pandemic.

In her briefing on 5 October,<sup>381</sup> the Special Representative noted the assassination of the President of the Port-au-Prince Bar Association on 28 August 2020 and the increasing prevalence of unrest, sometimes in the form of violent protests. Gangs continued to challenge the authority of the State, while a fringe group of disaffected police officers had brought disorder to Port-au-Prince on several occasions. Although the Haitian National Police had consistently proved its operational proficiency, it

<sup>376</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 7.

<sup>377</sup> See [S/PV.8729](#).

<sup>378</sup> See [S/2020/123](#).

<sup>379</sup> See [S/PV.8729](#).

<sup>380</sup> See [S/2020/568](#).

<sup>381</sup> See [S/2020/979](#).

required at least an additional 10,000 well-trained and well-equipped police officers to meet internationally accepted policing standards. Similarly, continued support, steadfast political resolve and decisive action was necessary to ensure that the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, which was being operationalized, was capable of performing its tasks. As the country was preparing to enter a new electoral cycle, it was paramount that key aspects of the process, such as the electoral framework and calendar, were addressed so as to reduce the risk of contested elections and further violence. She urged Member States to amplify their support for a process that, if properly managed, would contribute to renewing Haiti's elected leadership, lead to a greater representation of women in political life and reinvigorate the social contract between Haitian citizens and the State.

In her statement at the meeting on 20 February,<sup>382</sup> the Executive Director of Fondasyon Je Klere, a Haitian human rights organization which conducted human rights training, monitoring and inquiries with respect to public institutions, stated that Haiti was facing widespread and systematic violations of human rights. She cited examples of violations of the right to life, physical integrity and dignity, with numerous accounts of killings, kidnappings, beheadings, rapes, diversion of supplies, abductions and forcible confinement committed by armed gangs. The Executive Director expressed the view that those crimes were being committed with the support, at least tacitly, of the Government, while the perpetrators enjoyed official impunity. Drawing attention to the fight against corruption, she stressed the need for the implementation of the law on wealth declaration and the holding of fair and equitable trials on the management of the PetroCaribe funds. The Executive Director called on the Council to support ensuring the success of the transition period in Haiti and a return to democratic order; weakening of the firepower of armed gangs; the organization of trials in relation to the PetroCaribe funds, the La Saline and Carrefour Feuilles massacres and cases of rape; ending corruption; and auditing the police with a view to boosting its credibility and ensuring that it was able to discharge its mission to protect and serve.

On 19 June,<sup>383</sup> the President of the Bars Federation of Haiti pointed to a massive rise in human rights violations in Haiti, with the incident at La Saline in 2018 as one of many. According to the President of the Federation, the problem was primarily one of

impunity, while the question of the involvement of the authorities was also raised in many reports, including those of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) and BINUH. Those shortcomings were closely linked to the dysfunction in the justice system, while a perversion of the electoral process had led to interference, violence and the instrumentalization of power. In connection with the role of the United Nations in Haiti, he raised the question of reparation for the victims of the cholera tragedy and accountability for sexual abuse by peacekeepers. Regarding the mandate of BINUH, he noted that respect for human rights and supporting a weak State were conflicting mandates and cautioned that by linking its fate to the State, the Office risked losing objectivity, even if only in the interpretation of indicators. The President of the Federation called for the strategy of continued international support to be revisited when there was a lack of national will and stressed that civil society actors needed to be listened to and supported.

In their discussions during the meeting and open videoconferences, Council members expressed concern regarding the continued political impasse in Haiti, increased levels of insecurity and human rights violations, including gang violence, as well as deteriorating humanitarian and socioeconomic conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Council members called on all political stakeholders to engage in an inclusive and open dialogue to define a calendar for legislative elections, leading to the formation of a new Government and constitutional reform. A number of Council members stressed the responsibility of the Haitian authorities for ensuring the security of their citizens and the rule of law and for addressing the underlying causes of instability.<sup>384</sup> Statements referred to the importance of full accountability for human rights violations, including the incidents at La Saline in 2018 and Bel Air in 2019,<sup>385</sup> and for corruption.<sup>386</sup> Some speakers welcomed the progress made in the professionalization of the Haitian National Police, but noted that sustainable resources and increased capacity

<sup>384</sup> See [S/PV.8729](#) (United States, China, Viet Nam, Niger and Belgium); [S/2020/568](#) (Indonesia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines); and [S/2020/979](#) (China, France, Indonesia and Viet Nam).

<sup>385</sup> See [S/PV.8729](#) (United States, Germany, Estonia and Belgium); [S/2020/568](#) (Belgium, Estonia, France, United Kingdom and United States); and [S/2020/979](#) (Estonia, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (also on behalf of the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia) and United States).

<sup>386</sup> See [S/PV.8729](#) (United States, France, Tunisia, Germany, Estonia and Belgium); and [S/2020/979](#) (France, Germany and Indonesia).

<sup>382</sup> See [S/PV.8729](#).

<sup>383</sup> See [S/2020/568](#).

were required to enable it to function effectively.<sup>387</sup> The representatives of France, Tunisia, Germany and the United Kingdom recognized that the deployment of BINUH in 2019 was undertaken within the context of particularly difficult circumstances in Haiti.<sup>388</sup> Council members commended and underscored the important work of the Office in facilitating political dialogue and supporting justice and governance reforms. Recalling its disagreement with regard to the withdrawal of MINUJUSTH in the midst of a fragile elections process, the representative of the Dominican Republic expressed hope that the decision to do so, without an adequately equipped police force, would serve as a lesson to illustrate what the Council should not repeat in another country.<sup>389</sup>

On 15 October, the Council adopted resolution [2547 \(2020\)](#) by which it extended the existing mandate of BINUH for a period of one year until 15 October 2021.<sup>390</sup> The Council reiterated the essential constitutional role of Haiti's Parliament and the urgent need for an inclusive inter-Haitian national dialogue to address longstanding drivers of instability by creating a sustainable and commonly accepted framework to permit the organization of free, fair and transparent elections as soon as technically feasible.<sup>391</sup>

Resolution [2457 \(2020\)](#) was adopted with 13 votes in favour and two abstentions, by China and the Russian Federation. In their statements after the vote,<sup>392</sup> the representative of China indicated that, in adopting a mere technical rollover resolution, the Council had failed to demonstrate the importance it attached to the grim situation in Haiti. Moreover, the draft did not take into account the constructive and highly consensual amendments proposed by his country's delegation related to human rights, reducing violence, protecting civilians, implementing good governance, combating corruption and conducting free, fair, transparent and credible presidential elections. The representative of the Russian Federation added that the document failed to mention the most serious problems with violence vis-à-vis civilians, encroachment on human rights and corruption, and the need to respect the country's Constitution when adopting momentous decisions. While voting in favour of the resolution, the representative of the Dominican Republic expressed regret that Council members had not had a more extensive, cross-cutting and inclusive conversation in order to come up with a more robust, multidimensional mandate for BINUH, including at least the strengthening of human rights safeguards and accountability. The representative of the United States maintained that the resolution ensured that BINUH had the mandate to continue efforts to support democratic institutions, strengthen the rule of law, promote stability and protect human rights, in partnership with the United States, Haiti's neighbours, the core group and the international community. The representative of France welcomed the fact that the resolution recalled the urgent need to engage in a nationwide dialogue in order to facilitate the conduct of free, fair and transparent elections.

<sup>387</sup> See [S/PV.8729](#) (United States, Tunisia, Germany, United Kingdom, Estonia, Indonesia and Haiti); [S/2020/568](#) (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (also on behalf of the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia) and United States); and [S/2020/979](#) (Dominican Republic, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (also on behalf of the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia) and United States).

<sup>388</sup> See [S/PV.8729](#).

<sup>389</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>390</sup> Resolution [2547 \(2020\)](#), para. 1.

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*, third preambular paragraph.

<sup>392</sup> See [S/PV.8768](#).

**Table 1**  
**Meetings: the question concerning Haiti**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8729</a> 20 February 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) ( <a href="#">S/2020/123</a> )		Haiti	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of BINUH, Executive Director of Fondasyon Je Klere	All Council members, all invitees <sup>a</sup>	

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8768</a> 15 October 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on BINUH (S/2020/944)	Draft resolution submitted by the United States (S/2020/1011)			5 Council members (China, Dominican Republic, France, Russian Federation, United States)	Resolution 2547 (2020) 15-0-2 <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The Special Representative and the Executive Director of Fondasyon Je Klere participated in the meeting by video conference from Port-au-Prince.

<sup>b</sup> *For*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: China, Russian Federation.

Table 2  
**Videoconferences: the question concerning Haiti**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
19 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/568</a>	Letter dated 23 June 2020 from the President of the Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
5 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/979</a>	Letter dated 7 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## 14. Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)

During the period under review, the Council held three meetings and adopted one resolution under the item entitled “Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)”. More information on the meeting, including on participants and speakers, is provided in table 1 below. Council members also held two open videoconferences in connection with the item.<sup>393</sup> More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, Council

members held informal consultations of the whole in connection with the item.<sup>394</sup>

In 2020, Council members received quarterly briefings under the item by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Colombia and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia in connection with the reports of the Secretary-General.<sup>395</sup> Council members were also briefed once by a member of the Municipal Association of Women and once by a consultant of the World Wildlife Fund and Colombian Ambassador for One Young World. Colombia was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs in the

<sup>393</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>394</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 41.

<sup>395</sup> [S/2019/988](#), [S/2020/603](#), [S/2020/943](#) and [S/2020/1301](#).



meetings and videoconferences held during the period under review.

In his first briefing in 2020,<sup>396</sup> the Special Representative of the Secretary-General encouraged the parties to deepen their dialogue regarding any differences on the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, especially through the mechanisms provided for in the Agreement itself, such as the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement. He noted that social mobilization had opened an opportunity for constructive dialogue on peace implementation. He also highlighted the adoption of the reintegration road map on 27 December 2019, which established the framework for the long-term reintegration process and the approval of collective productive projects.

In his briefing to the Council on 14 October,<sup>397</sup> the Special Representative stated that while some of the fundamental processes provided for in the peace agreement, such as the laying down of arms by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army, were complete and irreversible, others, such as the reintegration of former combatants into civilian life, the search for truth, reparations and restorative justice for victims and the transformation of rural Colombia, were still under construction.

In terms of achievements in reintegration, the Special Representative noted at the same briefing that the vast majority of former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army combatants remained engaged in the process, with nearly one third of them having received funding for productive projects. He had previously noted, at his briefing on 14 July,<sup>398</sup> that many productive initiatives approved by the National Reintegration Committee had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, making it even more urgent to ensure their sustainability, including through technical assistance, the allocation of land and access to markets.

At his briefings on 14 April and 14 July,<sup>399</sup> the Special Representative described the insecurity facing former combatants of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army, communities, human rights defenders and social leaders as the most serious threat to peacebuilding in Colombia. He expressed particular concern about the increased reports of gender-based violence in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as attacks on women social leaders, crop substitution leaders and former combatants in

Putumayo Department. He called on all parties to redouble measures to improve protection for vulnerable groups. At his briefing on 14 October,<sup>400</sup> the Special Representative also stressed the importance for the National Commission on Security Guarantees to finalize and implement the public policy to dismantle illegal armed groups, criminal organizations and support networks. On transitional justice, the Special Representative highlighted the work of the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-repetition, such as the dialogue of the Truth Commission with Colombian civil society to foster reconciliation and to discuss the causes of the continued violence in several regions. He further noted that several top Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia party leaders had admitted responsibility for their role in crimes committed during the conflict.

Beyond the peace agreement, during the open videoconference held on 14 April,<sup>401</sup> the Special Representative noted the decision of the National Liberation Army to declare a one-month unilateral ceasefire in April following the appeal of the Secretary-General for a worldwide ceasefire in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. In his remarks at the same videoconference, the consultant of the World Wildlife Fund and Colombian Ambassador for One Young World provided examples of the positive impact of the peace agreement, such as the implementation of productive projects for former combatants and their communities. The main challenges to the peace process included the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ongoing violence against social leaders and the absence of the State in rural communities, leaving the vacuum to be filled by drug cartels and illegal armed groups. He also called on all actors to make real efforts to implement the gender provisions of the peace agreement.

In her briefing to the Council on 14 July,<sup>402</sup> a member of the Municipal Association of Women and defender of Afro-Colombian territorial and human rights stated that attacks on leaders and human rights defenders in Colombia stood as proof of how communities, particularly women, were enduring a profound violation of the right to life as a consequence of armed conflict, the absence of a State presence in their territories and a militaristically focused intervention as a response by the Government. She demanded from the President of Colombia, Iván Duque Márquez, the full implementation in the territories of the comprehensive programmes on security and protection for communities with differential gender and ethnic approaches, compliance with the peace agreement in a comprehensive manner, the investigation and prosecution of the material and

<sup>396</sup> See [S/PV.8702](#).

<sup>397</sup> See [S/2020/1023](#).

<sup>398</sup> See [S/PV.8749](#).

<sup>399</sup> See [S/2020/305](#) and [S/PV.8749](#).

<sup>400</sup> See [S/2020/1023](#).

<sup>401</sup> See [S/2020/305](#).

<sup>402</sup> See [S/PV.8749](#).

intellectual authors of violations of human rights, the structural transformation of rural Colombia, integrating regions, eradicating poverty and ensuring the rights of all citizens and for the Government to make peace a priority in the country's public agenda. She called on the international community to encourage armed actors to agree on a humanitarian agreement to, inter alia, respect human rights and territorial autonomy, protect communities and visit the territories, assist peacebuilding initiatives, including with political commitment, and promote the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) to strengthen the participation, protection and leadership of women and youth in building and maintaining peace.

Discussions in the Council during the period under review were focused on the status of the implementation of the Final Agreement, signed between the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army in 2016. Council members expressed deep concern about the rising number of attacks and killings of former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia combatants, community and social leaders and human rights defenders, including women, members of indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities and other vulnerable groups. They called for greater protection of former combatants and vulnerable groups through the approval of protection requests by the National Protection Unit, implementation of the policy to dismantle illegal armed groups by the National Commission on Security Guarantees and greater presence of State authority in affected areas.

Speakers underscored the importance of further progress on rural reform and development and countering illicit drugs, including crop substitution. Speakers further discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the peace agreement, including the humanitarian, socioeconomic and security

challenges the virus posed in Colombia. In that regard, while noting the one-month ceasefire announced by the National Liberation Army at the start of the pandemic in April 2020, Council members underscored the importance of a complete cessation of hostilities between the armed groups and the Government.<sup>403</sup> Speakers further expressed their full support for the work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia in support of the peace agreement, with several of them also expressing support for the possible amendment of its mandate to include the verification of the implementation of sanctions imposed by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace.<sup>404</sup>

On 25 September, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2545 (2020), welcoming the progress made towards peace since the adoption of the peace agreement and urging the parties to work together to sustain progress and address challenges, in particular the continued violence in conflict-affected areas.<sup>405</sup> The Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia for a period of one year until 25 September 2021.<sup>406</sup> In addition, recalling that the peace agreement envisaged a role for the Mission in verifying compliance with the sentences of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, the Council expressed its readiness to consider, in a timely manner, the addition of that task to the mandate.<sup>407</sup>

<sup>403</sup> See S/2020/305 (Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (speaking on behalf of Niger, South Africa and Tunisia) and United Kingdom).

<sup>404</sup> See S/2020/1023 (Belgium, France, Germany, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States and Colombia).

<sup>405</sup> Resolution 2545 (2020), third preambular paragraph.

<sup>406</sup> *Ibid.*, fifth preambular paragraph and para. 1.

<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 3. For more information on the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, see part X, sect. II.

Table 1

**Meetings: identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.8702 13 January 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (S/2019/988)		Colombia	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Colombia and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia	All Council members, all invitees <sup>a</sup>	

**Part I. Consideration of questions under the responsibility of  
the Security Council for the maintenance of  
international peace and security**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8749</a> 14 July 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia ( <a href="#">S/2020/603</a> )		Colombia	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, Member of the Municipal Association of Women and defender of Afro-Colombian territorial and human rights	12 Council members, <sup>b</sup> all invitees <sup>c</sup>	
<a href="#">S/PV.8760</a> 25 September 2020		Draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom ( <a href="#">S/2020/937</a> )	Colombia			Resolution <a href="#">2545 (2020)</a> 15-0-0

<sup>a</sup> Colombia was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>b</sup> The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines spoke also on behalf of the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia.

<sup>c</sup> The representative of Colombia and the Special Representative participated in the meeting by videoconference from Bogotá. The member of the Municipal Association of Women and defender of Afro-Colombian territorial and human rights participated in the meeting by videoconference from Cauca.

Table 2

**Videoconferences: identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2016/53](#))**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
14 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/305</a>	Letter dated 16 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
14 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1023</a>	Letter dated 16 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## 15. The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

During the period under review, the Council held no meetings and adopted no decisions in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela”. Council members held one open videoconference in connection with the item. More information on the videoconference is provided in the table below.<sup>408</sup>

During the open videoconference,<sup>409</sup> Council members were briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs on the political and humanitarian situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. She recalled the identical letters dated 13 May 2020 addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Council<sup>410</sup> in which the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela alleged that on 3 and 4 May 2020 armed groups of mercenaries and terrorists, organized, trained, financed and protected by the Governments of Colombia and the United States, had illegally entered the Venezuelan territory with the involvement of an extremist sector of the Venezuelan opposition. Colombia and the United States, as well as the Venezuelan opposition, had rejected the allegations of their involvement.<sup>411</sup> The Under-Secretary-General recalled the statement of the Secretary-General on 4 May that the United Nations stood against any escalation of the situation and that the only way to resolve it was through political dialogue and full respect for human rights.

The Under-Secretary-General updated Council members on what she described as a deepening protracted crisis in the country, noting the suspension of discussions between lawmakers from the Government and the opposition on the modalities for the holding of presidential and legislative elections. The Under-Secretary-General also expressed concern regarding the politicization of humanitarian aid, the operational constraints imposed by fuel shortages and reports of human rights violations in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the Under-Secretary-General stated that the economic sanctions imposed on the country were exacerbating an already critical situation. In that regard, she recalled the appeal of the Secretary-General for the waiving of sanctions that could undermine the capacity of countries to respond to the pandemic and the call of the United Nations

High Commissioner for Human Rights for humanitarian exemptions to such measures to be given broad and practical effect. She also recalled the support expressed by the Secretary-General for a negotiated solution to the crisis and his offer of good offices, concluding that an agreement that strengthened democratic governance, with full respect for human rights, was more urgent than ever.

Participants expressed diverging views in connection with the information presented in the letter from the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. While the representatives of the United Kingdom, the United States and Colombia rejected the allegations in the letter regarding the involvement of the Governments of the United States and Colombia, the representative of the Russian Federation described the allegations contained in the letter as a clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela urged the Council to recognize the acts of aggression and demand that the perpetrators immediately bring to an end the use of force and the commission of further attacks. Several Council members also shared their views regarding the importance of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States<sup>412</sup> and the prohibition on the use of force.<sup>413</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation presented a draft Council press statement prepared by his delegation which, inter alia, rejected the use or threat of use of force, reaffirmed relevant resolutions on the condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and on the use of mercenaries.<sup>414</sup> The draft press statement further called for the current situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to be resolved through a dialogue by Venezuelans, without interference, and through peaceful and political means.

Most Council members expressed the view that only a peaceful political dialogue would resolve the crisis in the country.<sup>415</sup> Several Council members called for a peaceful democratic transition in the

<sup>408</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>409</sup> See [S/2020/435](#).

<sup>410</sup> See [S/2020/399](#).

<sup>411</sup> See [S/2020/435](#).

<sup>412</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Indonesia and South Africa.

<sup>413</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Viet Nam. For more information on the principle of the prohibition of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state under Article 2 (4) of the Charter of the United Nations, see part III, sect. II.

<sup>414</sup> See [S/2020/435](#).

<sup>415</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

country,<sup>416</sup> as well as the conduct of transparent, free and fair presidential and legislative elections.<sup>417</sup> Council members expressed concern regarding the humanitarian situation, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, with several of them also condemning the politicization of humanitarian assistance.<sup>418</sup> Several Council members expressed concern regarding the increase in human rights violations.<sup>419</sup> Several Council members deplored the

humanitarian and socioeconomic impact of sanctions measures imposed on the country,<sup>420</sup> while the representatives of France and Germany maintained that the sanctions measures imposed by the European Union did not impede international humanitarian assistance. The representative of Indonesia expressed regret at the lack of unity in the Council to move forward to address the situation in the country, including its already dire humanitarian challenges.

<sup>416</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia and Germany.

<sup>417</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, France and Germany.

<sup>418</sup> Belgium, France and Germany.

<sup>419</sup> Estonia, France and Germany.

<sup>420</sup> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Viet Nam.

### **Videoconference: the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
20 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/435</a>	Letter dated 22 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## **Asia**

### **16. The situation in Afghanistan**

During the period under review, the Council held two meetings under the item entitled “The situation in Afghanistan”. Both were convened to adopt a resolution, namely, resolutions [2513 \(2020\)](#) and [2543 \(2020\)](#), the second of which was adopted to extend the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).<sup>421</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is provided in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held a total of four videoconferences in connection with the situation in Afghanistan.<sup>422</sup> More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below.

In 2020, Council members were briefed at quarterly videoconferences<sup>423</sup> by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA and the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for

Afghanistan and Officer in Charge of UNAMA in connection with the reports of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan.<sup>424</sup> The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and her Deputy discussed in their briefings the outcome of the presidential election of September 2019, the developments in the peace process further to resolution [2513 \(2020\)](#) and the security and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Council members were also briefed<sup>425</sup> by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Chair of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1988 \(2011\)](#) and the Afghan Youth Representative to the United Nations. In addition, in a videoconference held on 3 September,<sup>426</sup> Council members heard a briefing by the Chief Executive of MOBY Group. In addition to the briefers, the representatives of Afghanistan and the Islamic

<sup>421</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II sect. II.

<sup>422</sup> For information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>423</sup> See [S/2020/274](#), [S/2020/597](#), [S/2020/891](#) and [S/2020/1274](#).

<sup>424</sup> See [S/2020/210](#), [S/2020/549](#), [S/2020/809](#) and [S/2020/1182](#).

<sup>425</sup> See [S/2020/597](#) and [S/2020/1274](#).

<sup>426</sup> See [S/2020/891](#).



Republic of Iran each delivered a statement at one of the videoconferences.<sup>427</sup>

On 10 March, the Council held a meeting at which it unanimously adopted resolution [2513 \(2020\)](#), in which the Council welcomed the Joint Declaration between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the United States of America for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan and the Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan between the United States of America and the Taliban.<sup>428</sup> In the resolution, the Council urged the Government of Afghanistan to advance the peace process, including by participating in intra-Afghan negotiations through a diverse and inclusive negotiating team composed of Afghan political and civil society leaders, including women.<sup>429</sup> The Council called on the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban to pursue in good faith additional confidence-building measures to create conditions conducive to a swift beginning and the success of intra-Afghan negotiations and a durable peace.<sup>430</sup> Furthermore, the Council requested the Secretary-General to include in his quarterly reports on Afghanistan, as requested in paragraph 9 of resolution [2489 \(2019\)](#), developments related to the efforts set out in the resolution.<sup>431</sup>

In statements after the vote,<sup>432</sup> the representative of the United States expressed regret that the presidential electoral process and the high levels of violence by the Taliban had delayed the start of the intra-Afghan negotiations. She stated that the United States would carefully monitor and assess whether the Taliban lived up to its commitments and urged the Taliban to also reduce violence against Afghan forces. She also stressed that her country would continue to support the goal of a lasting peace in Afghanistan and hoped that other Council members would join in doing so as well. Germany and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines acknowledged the importance of including language in the resolution in relation to the meaningful and effective participation of women in the peace process. As an expression of the responsibility as co-penholders, together with Indonesia, the representative of Germany affirmed that the two countries were united in their determination to ensure that the Council continued to closely follow and support the peace process in Afghanistan. He also

added that he would have welcomed having clear references in the resolution to the Afghan Constitution, as well as to human rights and the importance of respecting such rights in general, which he said remained the indispensable basis for the future development of the country. The representative of the Russian Federation affirmed that the resolution opened up a window of opportunity for the achievement of national reconciliation in Afghanistan and added that one of the prerequisites for the long-term stabilization of the country was the review of the sanctions decisions taken by the Council vis-à-vis the Taliban movement and their synchronization with the relevant national measures.

At a videoconference on 31 March,<sup>433</sup> the Deputy Special Representative reported that while the Independent Election Commission had declared the current President, Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, as the winner of the presidential election, his runner-up, Abdullah Abdullah, had rejected the outcome and unilaterally claimed victory, prompting serious concern over the future of the country. Despite the political impasse, the Deputy Special Representative reported that the Afghan establishment had been able to agree on a diverse negotiating team for potential intra-Afghan talks. Notwithstanding the logistical challenges imposed by COVID-19, representatives of Afghanistan and the Taliban had held three videoconferences to discuss prisoner releases, which was an important confidence-building measure to start the peace process. The Deputy Special Representative further briefed the Council on the signing of the agreement between the United States and the Taliban on 29 February 2020, which provided for a conditions-based, full withdrawal of international military forces from Afghanistan and a commitment for the Taliban to reduce violence against international military forces. Regarding the security situation, the Deputy Special Representative noted an increased level of violence and expressed concern about the ongoing threat to civilians posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan. On the humanitarian situation, she highlighted the Secretary-General's call for an immediate global ceasefire so that the necessary resources could be provided to combating COVID-19, which was of particular concern given Afghanistan's fragile health system, its highly vulnerable population and the economic and social impact of the loss of livelihoods.

During her first briefing to Council members, on 25 June,<sup>434</sup> the new Special Representative of the

<sup>427</sup> See [S/2020/1274](#) (Islamic Republic of Iran); and the statement to the press dated 17 December 2020 ([SC/14391](#)) (Afghanistan).

<sup>428</sup> Resolution [2513 \(2020\)](#), para. 1. See also [S/2020/184](#) and [S/2020/185](#).

<sup>429</sup> Resolution [2513 \(2020\)](#), para. 4.

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 5.

<sup>431</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 9.

<sup>432</sup> See [S/PV.8742](#).

<sup>433</sup> See [S/2020/274](#).

<sup>434</sup> See [S/2020/597](#).



Secretary-General welcomed the political agreement between Mr. Ghani and Mr. Abdullah. She expressed cautious optimism on the start of the talks between Afghanistan and the Taliban, noting that both sides had agreed that talks could start within a week of the completion of prisoner releases. The Special Representative welcomed brief respites from the spiralling levels of violence following the United States-Taliban agreement and a three-day ceasefire for Eid al-Fitr by the Taliban and the Government, and stressed the importance of a reduction in violence to create an environment conducive for peace talks. Regarding the humanitarian situation, the Special Representative noted that the humanitarian response plan had been updated to incorporate the COVID-19 requirements for 2020, reflecting a total of \$1.1 billion to provide immediate humanitarian assistance. Following the Special Representative's briefing, the Executive Director of UNODC reported on the findings of the UNODC *World Drug Report 2020*, which showed that Afghanistan remained the world's biggest producer of opium despite the COVID-19 pandemic and that drug use in the country was exacerbated by the availability of trafficked weapons supporting the drug trade and terrorism. The Executive Director described synthetic drugs as a new danger to the country and the region and highlighted that COVID-19 could further drive illicit opium poppy cultivation. During the same videoconference, the Chair of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission briefed the Council on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and on the role of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission in the Afghan peace process. The Chair described the Commission's work on the peace process, which was focused on contributing to an inclusive process, a durable outcome and mechanisms for the preservation and expansion of human rights.

On 3 September, Council members held a videoconference<sup>435</sup> at which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General reported that pre-talks had started between representatives of Afghanistan and representatives of the Taliban. She called that a historic moment and expressed hope that the following days would bring the formal launch of the intra-Afghan negotiations. Noting the continuing high level of violence in the country, she hoped that a humanitarian ceasefire would be one of the first items on the agenda of those negotiations. She added that one of the flagship issues for the United Nations in achieving a sustainable peace would be the role of human rights and stressed the importance of women's representation

<sup>435</sup> See [S/2020/891](#).

at the peace table. Noting the importance of strong and trusted public institutions, the Special Representative welcomed the Government's announcement of the formation of its cabinet and of appointments to the High Council for National Reconciliation. On the humanitarian front, the Special Representative reported that the COVID-19 pandemic had hit Afghanistan hard, with millions of Afghans having suffered lost income and livelihoods. Council members also heard a briefing by the Chief Executive of MOBY Group, who spoke about the media and news sector, freedom of the press and the safety of journalists in Afghanistan. He presented his views on how the Council and the international community could support the peace process.

In addition to resolution [2513 \(2020\)](#), on 15 September the Council adopted resolution [2543 \(2020\)](#), by which it extended the mandate of UNAMA for 12 months until 17 September 2021.<sup>436</sup> In the same resolution, the Council welcomed the ongoing efforts by UNAMA in the implementation of the mandated tasks, priorities and related resources of UNAMA, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>437</sup> Specifically, the Council decided that UNAMA and the Special Representative would continue to lead and coordinate the international civilian efforts with a particular focus on a series of priorities, including good offices in support of the peace process, elections support, governance, regional cooperation, human rights and accountability and the protection of civilians, especially women, children, displaced persons and minorities.<sup>438</sup> Welcoming the start of intra-Afghan negotiations in Doha on 12 September 2020, the Council also strongly encouraged the negotiating parties to continue pursuing confidence-building measures, including additional reductions in violence, and encouraged them to engage in good faith. The Council also called for the implementation of the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire as supported in resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) and emphasized the importance of the implementation of resolution [2513 \(2020\)](#).<sup>439</sup>

Following the vote,<sup>440</sup> Council members welcomed the unanimous adoption of the resolution given the initiation of intra-Afghan negotiations in Doha on 12 September 2020. The representatives of Germany and Indonesia as co-penholders emphasized

<sup>436</sup> Resolution [2543 \(2020\)](#), para. 5.

<sup>437</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 3.

<sup>438</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 6. For more information on the mandate of UNAMA, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>439</sup> Resolution [2543 \(2020\)](#), paras. 3 and 4.

<sup>440</sup> See [S/PV.8759](#).

that the resolution sent a strong signal of international unity. Council members offered their views on the necessary elements to achieve peace and stability, such as human rights,<sup>441</sup> including women's participation, a reduction of violence and improved security<sup>442</sup> and socioeconomic development.<sup>443</sup> In that regard, the representative of China added that through his country's promotion of the Belt and Road Initiative, China remained committed to helping Afghanistan forge closer trade and economic ties with countries of the region, especially its neighbours. The representative of the United States commended the penholders for their cooperative spirit, but clarified that the United States would have serious concerns if, contrary to their understanding, UNAMA were to interpret resolution 2543 (2020) as mandating UNAMA to support illegitimate investigations of the International Criminal Court against United States personnel. In that regard, he reiterated that the United States was not a party to the Rome Statute and had consistently rejected assertions by the Court of jurisdiction over United States personnel, affirming that his country would not tolerate any attempts to subject Americans to the Court's jurisdiction.

During her last briefing of the year, in a videoconference held on 17 December,<sup>444</sup> the Special Representative welcomed progress in the talks between Afghanistan and the Taliban. She had met with women negotiators on her recent trips to Doha and again underlined the importance of including women, young people, minorities, victims of the conflict and religious leaders in the peace process. Taking note of the recent formation of the High Council for National Reconciliation, which allowed Afghanistan to establish a broad base for consolidating its negotiating positions, she invited the Taliban to also broaden its consultations with Afghan constituencies. The Special Representative reiterated the importance of stability and cooperation in the region and highlighted regional efforts on counter-narcotics and transnational organized crime, including discussions within the UNODC regional steering committee. Reporting on the security situation, the Special Representative shared a sense that violence and insecurity were higher than ever in Afghanistan. She called upon the Government of Afghanistan to take effective measures to protect the media and journalists and upon the Taliban to refrain from attacking civilian targets. In closing, the Special Representative reported on the devastating humanitarian effects of COVID-19, including hunger and malnutrition and the erosion of

livelihoods, with women and children being particularly affected. She shared that the larger United Nations family had scaled up its efforts to ensure that work was getting done to respond to the pandemic, in coordination with the Government and civil society. She noted that 2020 had brought a profound shift in the country with the United States-Taliban agreement, the United States-Afghan Government joint declaration, three months of intra-Afghan negotiations, the renewal of pledges from international donors and a revitalized regional cooperation effort. Following the Special Representative's briefing, Council members heard briefings from the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) and the Afghan Youth Representative to the United Nations. While expressing optimism about the ongoing negotiations in Doha, the Chair of the Committee highlighted two key challenges reflected in the latest report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team,<sup>445</sup> namely, the continuous close relations between the Taliban and Al-Qaida and the Taliban's ongoing profiting from narcotics.

In her briefing,<sup>446</sup> the Afghan Youth Representative told the Council about the young students, journalists, human rights activists and security forces who had lost their lives to terrorism and called for an end to the "daily slaughter of young Afghans". She also called for the inclusion of young Afghans in an Afghan-owned peace process taking place in Afghanistan without the interference of foreigners.

In 2020, Council members' discussions focused on the outcome of the presidential election, the peace process and the security and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. Council members specifically reiterated their support for an inclusive Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process<sup>447</sup> and welcomed the launch of the intra-Afghan negotiations<sup>448</sup> and the first agreements on the rules and procedures for the negotiations thereunder.<sup>449</sup> Council members also urged that the progress made in guaranteeing fundamental

<sup>445</sup> See [S/2020/415](#).

<sup>446</sup> See [S/2020/1274](#).

<sup>447</sup> See [S/2020/274](#) (China, Germany, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/597](#) (Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United States and Viet Nam).

<sup>448</sup> See [S/PV.8759](#) (Germany, Indonesia, Estonia, China and Belgium); and [S/2020/1274](#) (China, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam).

<sup>449</sup> See [S/2020/1274](#) (China, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam).

<sup>441</sup> Indonesia, France, Estonia and Dominican Republic.

<sup>442</sup> France and Estonia.

<sup>443</sup> Estonia and China.

<sup>444</sup> See [S/2020/1274](#).

rights under the Afghan Constitution, especially for women, be protected.<sup>450</sup> Council members also expressed concern about the compounding impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing and escalating violence in Afghanistan and called for all parties to heed the Secretary-General's call for a humanitarian ceasefire in the light of the pandemic.<sup>451</sup>

<sup>450</sup> See [S/2020/274](#) (Belgium, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Niger, South Africa and United States); [S/2020/597](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Indonesia and Tunisia); and [S/2020/1274](#) (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Niger, South Africa and United Kingdom).

<sup>451</sup> See [S/2020/274](#) (Belgium, France, Germany, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom and Viet Nam); [S/2020/597](#) (France, Germany, South Africa, Tunisia and Viet Nam); [S/2020/1274](#) (China, Estonia, France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia).

They called for the international community to increase their support for Afghanistan, including through UNAMA, to ensure continued delivery of humanitarian aid to the population facing the impact of the pandemic.<sup>452</sup>

Developments in Afghanistan were also considered under the item entitled "Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts".<sup>453</sup>

<sup>452</sup> See [S/2020/274](#) (France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam); [S/2020/597](#) (Dominican Republic, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/1274](#) (China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United States and Viet Nam).

<sup>453</sup> See part I, sect. 29.

**Table 1  
Meetings: the situation in Afghanistan**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8742</a> 10 March 2020		Draft resolution submitted by the United States ( <a href="#">S/2020/191</a> )			13 Council members <sup>a</sup>	Resolution <a href="#">2513 (2020)</a> 15-0-0
<a href="#">S/PV.8759</a> 15 September 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for peace and security ( <a href="#">S/2020/809</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by Germany and Indonesia ( <a href="#">S/2020/903</a> )	Afghanistan		9 Council members, <sup>b</sup> all invitees	Resolution <a href="#">2543 (2020)</a> 15-0-0

<sup>a</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>b</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Tunisia and United States.

**Table 2  
Videoconferences: the situation in Afghanistan**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
31 March 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/274</a>	Letter dated 31 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
25 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/597</a>	Letter dated 29 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
3 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/891</a>	Letter dated 8 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
17 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1274</a>	Letter dated 22 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## Europe

### 17. The situation in Cyprus

In 2020, the Council held three meetings, adopted two resolutions and issued one presidential statement concerning the situation in Cyprus. All three meetings were held for the adoption of a decision.<sup>454</sup> More information on the meetings, including on outcomes, is given in the table below. Council members also held a private meeting and a closed videoconference with countries contributing troops and police to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#).<sup>455</sup> In addition to meetings and videoconferences, Council members also held informal consultations of the whole to discuss the situation in Cyprus.<sup>456</sup>

On 30 January, in connection with the reports of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus,<sup>457</sup> the Council held a meeting at which it unanimously adopted resolution [2506 \(2020\)](#), extending the mandate of UNFICYP for a period of six months until 31 July 2020.<sup>458</sup> In that resolution, the Council expressed concern at the deterioration of the

law and order situation in Pyla, and urged both sides to continue to work with UNFICYP to establish effective measures to tackle criminal activities.<sup>459</sup> The Council welcomed the trilateral meeting of the leaders and the Secretary-General held on 25 November 2019 in Berlin, at which both sides reaffirmed their commitment to a bicomunal, bizonal federation with political equality.<sup>460</sup>

Recalling its resolution [2483 \(2019\)](#), the Council called upon the two leaders to, inter alia, reaffirm their political support for all the technical committees and improve the Committees' performance.<sup>461</sup> The Council also called for the establishment of an effective mechanism for direct military contacts between the sides and the relevant involved parties and urged UNFICYP, as a facilitator through its liaison role, to submit proposals in that regard.<sup>462</sup> In addition, the Council expressed serious concern at the increased number of violations of the military status quo along the ceasefire lines and called on the sides and all involved parties to respect the mandated authority of UNFICYP in the buffer zone.<sup>463</sup> The Council also requested the Secretary-General to submit by 10 July 2020 a report on his good offices, in particular on progress towards reaching a consensus starting point for meaningful results-oriented negotiations leading to

<sup>454</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>455</sup> The private meeting was held on 16 January and the closed videoconference was held on 16 July in connection with the item entitled "Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#), annex II, sections A and B"; see [S/PV.8705](#) and [S/2021/9](#).

<sup>456</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 1. See also [S/2020/258](#).

<sup>457</sup> See [S/2019/883](#) and [S/2020/23](#).

<sup>458</sup> Resolution [2506 \(2020\)](#), para. 10. For more information on the mandate of UNFICYP, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>459</sup> Resolution [2506 \(2020\)](#), eighth preambular paragraph.

<sup>460</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 1.

<sup>461</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 5.

<sup>462</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 6.

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 11.

a settlement and to also submit a report on the implementation of the resolution.<sup>464</sup>

On 28 July, in connection with the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>465</sup> the Council adopted resolution [2537 \(2020\)](#), by which it extended the mandate of UNFICYP for a further period of six months until 31 January 2021.<sup>466</sup> On the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council recognized the impact of the pandemic on the island and the efforts made by both communities to suppress the spread of the virus and mitigate its effects.<sup>467</sup> The Council also recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic had restricted opportunities and capacity for negotiation, while expressing concern that the uncoordinated decisions to close the crossing points along the Green Line in response to the pandemic had prevented most bicomunal engagement and that the prolonged closure of the crossing points threatened to set back the progress made since 2003.<sup>468</sup> Recalling its resolution [2506 \(2020\)](#), the Council called on the two leaders to ensure effective coordination and cooperation on health matters, including in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other infectious diseases that had island-wide implications, including through the effective use of the expertise available in the bicomunal Technical Committees on Health, Crisis Management, Humanitarian Affairs and Economic and Commercial Matters.<sup>469</sup> While noting that the opening of the crossings since 2003 had been an important confidence-building measure between both communities, and one that was essential for the settlement process, the Council called for the reopening of all the crossing points and the return to the operating status that existed prior to 29 February 2020 as soon as practically achievable, and for any continuing restrictions on movement across the island to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to be coordinated and not go beyond what was

necessary to protect public health.<sup>470</sup> Furthermore, the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit by 10 January 2021 a report on his good offices, in particular on progress towards reaching a consensus starting point for meaningful results-oriented negotiations leading to a settlement and to also submit a report on the implementation of the resolution.<sup>471</sup>

At its meeting on 9 October, the Council issued a presidential statement,<sup>472</sup> by which it reaffirmed the status of Varosha as set out in previous Council resolutions, including resolutions [550 \(1984\)](#) and [789 \(1992\)](#), and reiterated that no actions should be carried out in relation to Varosha that were not in accordance with those resolutions.<sup>473</sup> The Council expressed its deep concern regarding the announcement in Ankara on 6 October on opening the coastline of Varosha and called for the reversal of that course of action and for the avoidance of any unilateral actions that could raise tensions on the island.<sup>474</sup> The Council also stressed the importance of full respect and implementation of its resolutions, while reaffirming its commitment to an enduring, comprehensive and just settlement in accordance with the wishes of the Cypriot people and based on a bicomunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as set out in relevant Council resolutions. In that regard, the Council called on the Cypriot sides and the guarantor Powers to engage in dialogue constructively and with a sense of urgency following the electoral process in the Turkish Cypriot community.<sup>475</sup> The Council further reiterated its support for the Secretary-General, including his intention to convene a meeting as agreed between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders in their meeting with the Secretary-General in November 2019.<sup>476</sup>

<sup>464</sup> Ibid., para. 17.

<sup>465</sup> See [S/2020/682](#).

<sup>466</sup> Resolution [2537 \(2020\)](#), para. 11.

<sup>467</sup> Ibid., eighth preambular paragraph.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid., ninth preambular paragraph.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (c).

<sup>470</sup> Ibid., para. 8.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid., para. 18.

<sup>472</sup> [S/PRST/2020/9](#).

<sup>473</sup> Ibid., first paragraph.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid., second paragraph.

<sup>475</sup> Ibid., third and fourth paragraphs.

<sup>476</sup> Ibid., fifth paragraph.

## Meetings: the situation in Cyprus

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8709</a> 30 January 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus ( <a href="#">S/2020/23</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom ( <a href="#">S/2020/78</a> )				Resolution <a href="#">2506 (2020)</a> 15-0-0



<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8751</a> 28 July 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus ( <a href="#">S/2020/682</a> )  Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus ( <a href="#">S/2020/685</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom ( <a href="#">S/2020/741</a> )				Resolution <a href="#">2537 (2020)</a> 15-0-0
<a href="#">S/PV.8766</a> 9 October 2020						<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/9</a>

## 18. Items relating to the situation in the former Yugoslavia

### A. The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In 2020, the members of the Council held two open videoconferences and adopted one resolution under Chapter VII of the Charter in connection with the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>477</sup> At the two open videoconferences, Council members heard briefings by the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the participation of the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, as well as the representative of the European Union. At the first open videoconference of the year, Council members heard a briefing by the Executive Director of Youth Initiative for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. More information on the videoconferences is given in the table below.

In his briefings to the Council in 2020, the High Representative provided updates on developments on the basis of his two reports for the year.<sup>478</sup> On 6 May,<sup>479</sup> the High Representative reported that while both the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska had taken early measures to address the COVID-19 pandemic, the country had ultimately

not succeeded in establishing a functional coordination mechanism to address the crisis and its economic consequences. The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina had so far failed to reach a political agreement on the distribution of financial assistance from the International Monetary Fund and the greatest challenge for the country was to minimize the risk of corruption related to the management of international financial and material assistance. The High Representative acknowledged the latest actions taken by the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the country's application for European Union membership as a reaffirmation of its commitment and as a strategic foreign policy goal. He expressed concern that some political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina would return to the pre-pandemic status quo, in which decision-making at the State level had been blocked by parties of the governing coalition in Republika Srpska. In that regard, he reported that while the Republika Srpska Government had been appointed quickly in 2018, the new Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina had not yet been appointed owing to one political party's continued conditioning of the establishment of the Government to changes to the election law. The High Representative reported on the several challenges the Central Election Commission was facing concerning the municipal elections scheduled for October 2020, owing to the lack of funding, pandemic restrictions and the refusal by some political parties to cooperate with the Commission. The ruling of the European Court of

<sup>477</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>478</sup> See [S/2020/345](#) and [S/2020/1052](#).

<sup>479</sup> See [S/2020/379](#).



Human Rights in the case of *Sejdić and Finci v. Bosnia and Herzegovina*, as well as other related human rights judgments, remained unimplemented after more than 10 years. In reference to the several upcoming anniversaries later in the year, including the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, he called for legally regulating the issue of genocide denial and holocaust denial. He also made reference to the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of Council resolution 1325 (2000) and called on the authorities to do more to address gender inequality. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina in November 2020, he called for the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with the international community, to recommit to preserving the structure agreed at Dayton through strengthening the State-level institutions and the competences they had assumed.

At the same videoconference, Council members also heard a briefing by the Executive Director of Youth Initiative for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Executive Director argued that 25 years after the Dayton Peace Agreement the conflict had been transferred onto the political stage and that the lack of investment in the development of the country and its economy, education and culture directly affected Bosnia and Herzegovina's ordinary citizens. With the highest percentage of youth unemployment in Europe and a growing number of young people emigrating, she added that there was an urgent need for reforms and investment, as well as to update the Dayton Peace Agreement.

Council members commended the coordination and cooperation demonstrated by the political and institutional leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and hoped that such cooperation would contribute to reconciliation in the country. Regarding institutional reforms, Council members stressed the need for their implementation on the rule of law, socioeconomic and electoral law fronts. In the context of the municipal elections slated to take place in October 2020, a number of delegations highlighted the issue of the city of Mostar, where elections had not taken place since 2008.<sup>480</sup>

Several speakers also shared the High Representative's concerns with regard to the blocking of decision-making at the State level by some parties of the governing coalition.<sup>481</sup> Looking ahead to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide in

July 2020, a number of speakers expressed concern about the denial of genocide.<sup>482</sup> In that regard, the representative of Belgium added that war criminals must be held accountable and that impunity was not acceptable. The representative of the Russian Federation regretted to observe that the quality of the High Representative's reports had not improved and that owing to the bias against Bosnian Serbs, the report did not give a balanced picture of the situation on the ground. He highlighted disagreement with specific aspects of the report, including the alleged stagnation and rollbacks in the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace, including the five objectives and two conditions for the closure of the Office of the High Representative, and called on the Council and the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council to take the necessary steps for the early closure of the Office.

In his second briefing to the Council, on 5 November,<sup>483</sup> the High Representative reflected on the twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Dayton Peace Agreement, arguing that while it had been a solid framework for the future development of Bosnia and Herzegovina, some politicians had regrettably used the goodwill of the international community to reinvigorate nationalistic and divisive policies. In that sense, he expressed his regret at the continuous divisive rhetoric and lack of implementation of reforms, as well as the blockages of institutions at the State and Federation levels. The High Representative also noted the adoption in September 2020 of the Revised National War Crimes Processing Strategy by the Bosnia and Herzegovina Council of Ministers, by which the most serious war crimes cases should be prioritized for prosecution and completion by 2023. He expressed hope that coordination, cooperation and a disciplined approach by the judicial institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina would result in the success of the new strategy. In the context of the local elections that had been rescheduled to take place in mid-November 2020, the High Representative expressed concern about the continuation of the divisive rhetoric in the election campaigns. Given such rhetoric, he affirmed that the continued presence of the European Union-led military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR Althea) remained necessary. He also expressed gratitude to and support for the Central Election Commission for having organized the elections under extraordinary circumstances, as well as for preparing for the local elections in the City of Mostar on 20 December 2020, the first such elections

<sup>480</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Niger, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, Croatia and European Union.

<sup>481</sup> Estonia, France, Indonesia and United Kingdom.

<sup>482</sup> Belgium, Estonia, France, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and European Union.

<sup>483</sup> See [S/2020/1103](#).

in the city since 2008. Finally, the High Representative expressed his regret that besides the adoption of the Revised National War Crimes Processing Strategy, little progress had been made on the implementation of the five objectives and two conditions to be fulfilled for the closure of his Office. He closed his remarks by urging the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to implement the national action plan for the period 2018–2022 on the implementation of Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and indicated his regret that while women were at the core of ensuring socioeconomic stability in the country, they were marginalized in political decision-making.

During the meeting, Council members welcomed the agreements on electoral law reached in June 2020 between the Bosniak and Croatian representatives, which would allow for local elections to be held in the City of Mostar in December 2020. Most speakers echoed the concerns of the High Representative and called on the political actors to refrain from engaging in the continuing divisive rhetoric.<sup>484</sup> Several Council members also continued to condemn the glorification of war criminals and denial of genocide.<sup>485</sup> In that connection, some delegations welcomed the adoption of the Revised National War Crimes Processing Strategy, stressing the need for its implementation.<sup>486</sup> Marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Dayton Agreement, a number of delegations

reflected on the achievements and remaining challenges for peace and reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>487</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation again expressed regret that the briefing by the High Representative painted a subjective picture of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and asked the High Representative to endeavour in the future to make his reports more balanced and objective. He added that the time was right to consider the conditions and criteria for closing the Office of the High Representative and proposed exchanging opinions on that issue during the meeting of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board, which was scheduled for December 2020.

Also on 5 November, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2549 \(2020\)](#) under Chapter VII of the Charter. By the resolution, the Council renewed the authorization of EUFOR Althea and the continued presence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the country for a period of 12 months, starting from the date of the adoption of the resolution.<sup>488</sup> The Council also urged the parties to proceed with the formation of the governments at the Federation and cantonal levels and to prioritize the implementation of comprehensive reforms in a manner that benefited all citizens and called on the parties to refrain from any polarizing unconstructive policy, action and rhetoric.<sup>489</sup>

<sup>484</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Serbia.

<sup>485</sup> Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>486</sup> Belgium, Estonia, South Africa and European Union.

<sup>487</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and European Union.

<sup>488</sup> Resolution [2549 \(2020\)](#), paras. 3 and 4. For more information, see part VIII, sect. III.

<sup>489</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 8 and 9.

## Videoconferences: the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
6 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/379</a>	Letter dated 8 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
5 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1103</a>	Letter dated 10 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
5 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1087</a>	Letter dated 5 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2549 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/1085</a>

## B. Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

During the period under review, the Council held two open videoconferences in connection with Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999).<sup>490</sup> In a note by the President of the Council dated 7 February 2019,<sup>491</sup> the Council expressed its intent to hold briefings on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) three times in 2019 and, as from 2020, to hold briefings twice a year, in April and October. Consistent with the note, at the two open videoconferences in 2020,<sup>492</sup> Council members heard briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo and Head of UNMIK, in connection with the Secretary-General's reports pursuant to resolution 1244 (1999).<sup>493</sup> In line with established practice, statements were also delivered by the representatives of Serbia and Kosovo during the two videoconferences.<sup>494</sup> No decisions were adopted in connection with the item during the period under review. More information on the videoconferences is given in the table below.

The briefings of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General focused on the latest developments on the ground, in particular on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Kosovo, and on the progress made in terms of the relations between Pristina and Belgrade during the reporting period.

In his briefing on 24 April,<sup>495</sup> the Special Representative stated that the COVID-19 pandemic had been an unprecedented challenge for Kosovo and for the region and it was a reminder that such challenges could be resolved only through regional cooperation. In that regard, he outlined the measures that had been put in place to curtail the spread of the disease and how UNMIK was working closely with the local public health authorities and with international partners in fighting the pandemic.<sup>496</sup> While stating his regret that political divisions had distracted the attention of many leaders away from the health crisis,

he also highlighted examples of positive cross-community and cross-boundary coordination between Pristina and Belgrade across ethnic and political divides, which had improved communication and coordination in dealing with the health crisis.<sup>497</sup> He stressed that the removal of the 100 per cent tariff on imports from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as of 1 April 2020, coupled with the introduction of reciprocity measures vis-à-vis Belgrade, marked a step towards resuming more regular commercial relations and a return towards the principles of the Central European Free Trade Agreement, which he viewed as an important signpost towards a restart of the political dialogue between the two capitals. Finally, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General welcomed the appointment by the European Union of a dedicated special representative charged with advancing the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. A coordinated international approach in support of the European Union-facilitated dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade would be essential and remained the best hope for reaching a comprehensive agreement and for sustaining peace.

During the discussion that ensued, Council members welcomed the positive developments during the reporting period, including the joint efforts by Belgrade and Pristina to contain the COVID-19 outbreak<sup>498</sup> and the lifting of tariffs on goods from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>499</sup> Council members also welcomed the appointment of the European Union Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues<sup>500</sup> and urged Belgrade and Pristina to resume dialogue with help from the European Union.<sup>501</sup>

With regard to the role of UNMIK, a number of Council members expressed their support for the work of the Mission.<sup>502</sup> More specifically, the representative of the Russian Federation maintained that the Council should continue to support the Mission as it played a leading role for creating the conditions conducive to a

<sup>490</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>491</sup> See [S/2019/120](#).

<sup>492</sup> See [S/2020/339](#) and [S/2020/1040](#).

<sup>493</sup> See [S/2020/255](#) and [S/2020/964](#).

<sup>494</sup> Serbia was represented by its First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>495</sup> See [S/2020/339](#).

<sup>496</sup> For more information on the mandate of UNMIK, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>497</sup> See [S/2020/339](#).

<sup>498</sup> Belgium, France, Germany, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>499</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany and United Kingdom.

<sup>500</sup> Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>501</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>502</sup> China, Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia and Viet Nam.

negotiated solution. The representative of the United States reiterated that the Mission had fulfilled its original purpose and that he looked forward to working with other Council members to draw down UNMIK and determine a more relevant role for the United Nations in helping Kosovo and the Western Balkans to realize their full potential. While expressing their recognition for the work of UNMIK, the representatives of Estonia and the United Kingdom also expressed their support for a strategic review of UNMIK. A number of speakers commended the initiatives of UNMIK to promote the participation of women in the peace process.<sup>503</sup>

At the videoconference on 21 October,<sup>504</sup> in his second briefing to the Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General opened his remarks by providing an overview of the different phases Kosovo had moved through during the COVID-19 pandemic, from stringent measures and lockdowns to a more relaxed approach, prioritizing economic recovery. He highlighted the obstacles faced by the government in responding to the rapidly spreading pandemic, including the severe socioeconomic consequences endured by the population, particularly affecting youth, as well as women and vulnerable communities. On the peace process, the Special Representative underscored that the removal of the reciprocity measures on goods from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina had created an impetus for restarting the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. That development had been accompanied by the appointment of the European Union's new dedicated Special Representative and a high-level meeting hosted by the President of France and the Chancellor of Germany on 10 July 2020, which had led to the official resumption of the European Union-facilitated dialogue. Similarly, the Government of the United States had hosted a meeting in Washington, D.C., in September 2020 during which agreements were signed by the parties in economic and other spheres. Commending Belgrade and Pristina for resuming the negotiation process, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General called on both parties to maintain a constructive dialogue process, despite the challenges and differences of views. In the context of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the Special Representative stressed the importance of women's meaningful participation in the peace process at all levels, thus ensuring the broader representation of different sectors

of society. The Special Representative also stated that important steps had been taken to advance the investigative and judicial processes of the Kosovo Specialist Prosecutor's Office and the Kosovo Specialist Chambers concerning the filing of indictments against the President, Hashim Thaçi, and the leader of the Democratic Party of Kosovo in June 2020. He added that the Specialist Chambers and the Specialist Prosecutor's Office were integral parts of the Kosovo justice system and urged the leaders to redouble their efforts to counter misinformation and to ensure that the prosecution and Chambers' proceedings received unambiguous institutional and political support, which was essential for strengthening the rule of law and long-term stability in Kosovo.

During the discussion following the briefing, Council members broadly welcomed the resumption of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina facilitated by the European Union, as well as the agreements on the normalization of economic relations signed under the auspices of the United States in 2020.<sup>505</sup> In that connection, a number of speakers expressed support for the efforts of the European Union's new dedicated Special Representative in advancing the political dialogue between the two capitals,<sup>506</sup> with a few expressing regret that he had not been invited to participate in the meeting.<sup>507</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation hoped that under the leadership of the new dedicated Special Representative, the European mediation would gain momentum and translate into progress towards resolving Kosovo's problems. With regard to the rule of law and accountability, several Council members called for cooperation with the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and with the Specialist Prosecutor's Office in the fight against impunity for perpetrators of serious crimes.<sup>508</sup> The representative of the United Kingdom expressed regret at the continuing slow progress in domestic prosecutions for war crimes and urged Kosovo and Serbian authorities to work together in dealing with those crimes. Echoing the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, many speakers called for greater participation of women and youth in the peace process.<sup>509</sup>

<sup>503</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and United Kingdom.

<sup>504</sup> See [S/2020/1040](#).

<sup>505</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>506</sup> Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, South Africa, Tunisia and United Kingdom.

<sup>507</sup> Belgium, France and Germany.

<sup>508</sup> Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>509</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa.



Council members also commended the work of UNMIK on several fronts, from its role in promoting security, stability and respect for human rights to its efforts to confront the COVID-19 pandemic in Kosovo, with some stressing the need for a review of the Mission, including an option for a drawdown.<sup>510</sup> In that regard, the representative of the United States reiterated that while the United Nations could play an

important role in furthering the development of democratic norms and institutions in the region, it did not require a Chapter VII-mandated mission to advance recognition, integration and normalization. She urged Council members to begin taking the steps needed for a responsible drawdown to ensure a more relevant and effective role for the United Nations in helping Kosovo and the rest of the Western Balkans realize their full potential.

<sup>510</sup> United Kingdom and United States.

**Videoconferences: Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
24 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/339</a>	Letter dated 28 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
21 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1040</a>	Letter dated 23 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## 19. Items relating to Ukraine

### **Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)**

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting in connection with the item entitled “Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)”. The meeting took the form of a briefing.<sup>511</sup> More information on the meeting, including on participants and speakers, is given in the table below.

On 18 February, Council members held a meeting at the request of the Russian Federation.<sup>512</sup> At the meeting, the Council heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Chief Monitor of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and the

Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine.

The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs said at the outset that the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk arrangements, together with the Minsk Protocol and the Minsk Memorandum, remained the only agreed framework for a negotiated, peaceful settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine. In her briefing, she updated the Council on progress in the implementation of the Minsk provisions since her last briefing in July 2019. She said that a number of important developments had since given rise to hope for long-elusive progress in the implementation of the Minsk provisions, including key security and political aspects. She highlighted that on 9 December 2019, after a three-year hiatus, the leaders of France, Germany, the Russian Federation and Ukraine had met in Paris under the so-called Normandy format and called for immediate measures to stabilize the situation in the conflict area, measures to implement the political provisions of the Minsk agreements and follow-up steps. The leaders committed to a full and comprehensive implementation of the ceasefire, strengthened by the implementation of all the necessary ceasefire support measures, as well as to supporting the development and implementation of an updated demining plan and an

<sup>511</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>512</sup> See [S/PV.8726](#).

agreement within the Trilateral Contact Group on three additional disengagement areas, with the aim of disengaging forces and equipment. The Under-Secretary-General also highlighted that she had used the opportunity of her first visit to Ukraine in December 2019 to reiterate the Secretary-General's support for the ongoing peace efforts and critical reforms in Ukraine, noting that her interlocutors were clear in their desire to see tangible progress in the negotiations, with many stressing the need for greater involvement by women in the ongoing peace efforts. She also noted from her visit that the conflict continued to exact an unacceptable humanitarian toll on the Ukrainian population. It destabilized overall peace and security in Ukraine, but also potentially in the region as a whole. She added that the positive momentum and the stated commitment of the four countries working within the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group participants to address the conflict with renewed impetus and a sense of urgency needed encouragement and full support.

The Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office briefed the Council on the recent discussions and efforts by the Trilateral Contact Group to reach a sustainable solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine. She provided updates on the exchange of detainees, opening of additional crossing points and disengagement of forces and hardware in pilot areas that had taken place during the reporting period. She also noted that on 1 October 2019 the parties to the conflict had accepted the so-called Steinmeier formula, which detailed the sequence of steps to be taken with regard to local elections in the non-Government-controlled territories and the entry into force of the special status for those territories. The Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine reported on the general security situation on the ground, noting that while there had been an overall decrease in the average number of ceasefire violations, isolated spikes in violence had continued to occur, including a major ceasefire violation in the Luhansk region, which had occurred on the same day as the Council meeting. He provided additional details on the implementation of the measures agreed upon by the four countries under the Normandy format during the meeting in December 2019.

During the discussion, Council members welcomed the meeting of the quartet in the Normandy format in December 2019 and called on the parties to comply with the Minsk agreements, as endorsed by the Council in resolution [2202 \(2015\)](#). Speakers expressed differing views on the responsibilities for the implementation of the Minsk agreements. Some speakers accused the Russian Federation of violating the Minsk agreements.<sup>513</sup> More specifically, the representative of

<sup>513</sup> United States, Germany, United Kingdom, Estonia and Belgium.

France called on the parties, in particular the separatist armed groups, to refrain from any provocation in order to avoid any military escalation on the ground and for the Russian Federation to use its influence on the separatists for the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. The representative of the Russian Federation cautioned that every time Council members said that the Russian Federation was failing to comply with the Minsk agreements, they were deliberately misleading their own people and the international community. The representative of the Russian Federation recalled that the Normandy format had been created specifically to support the implementation of the Minsk agreements and reiterated that the efforts made under that format would be effective only if they were rooted in unconditional implementation of the package of measures and agreements reached under the Normandy format. He added that its implementation by all parties, primarily Ukraine, would become a decisive factor for the Russian Federation in assessing the viability of a new meeting in the Normandy format.

While recognizing the progress achieved on various fronts, including prisoner exchanges, the establishment of new disengagement areas and the opening of new crossing points along the line of contact, several Council members also noted the continuing violations of the ceasefire, as indicated in the reports of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, and called for the immediate cessation of hostilities in eastern Ukraine. In that connection, several delegations condemned the attacks that had been carried out on that same day near the Zolote disengagement area and had resulted in Ukrainian casualties.<sup>514</sup> Speakers also stressed the need for safe access for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission for ensuring effective monitoring and verification of the Minsk agreements ceasefire regime,<sup>515</sup> and called for full and unconditional access of international human rights and humanitarian mechanisms to all areas of Ukraine.<sup>516</sup>

On the holding of local elections, the representative of the Dominican Republic believed it appropriate to convene a future Normandy format meeting to ensure that local elections were held in the best conditions and guarantee the continuity of the negotiations within the framework of the implementation of the peace agreements. The representative of the United Kingdom agreed with the Russian Federation that local elections would pave the way for special status to be granted in parts of the Donbass region. She noted, however, that the local elections could take place only under proper

<sup>514</sup> United States, Germany, Estonia and France.

<sup>515</sup> Germany, United Kingdom, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Estonia, France, Belgium and Ukraine.

<sup>516</sup> Germany, United Kingdom, Estonia, France, Belgium and Ukraine.



conditions, and those conditions included a comprehensive ceasefire, unfettered access for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and the withdrawal of foreign troops.

Also participating in the meeting, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine said that his Government looked forward to holding local elections

throughout the territory of Ukraine, including its temporarily occupied parts, once the security and political conditions allowed in accordance with Ukrainian legislation and the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of OSCE and under Ukraine's control of its internationally recognized borders.

**Meeting: letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.8726 18 February 2020			Ukraine <sup>a</sup>	Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Special Representative of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Chairperson-in-Office, Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission	All Council members, <sup>b</sup> all invitees <sup>c</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Ukraine was represented by its Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>b</sup> The representatives of Germany and the Russian Federation took the floor more than once in order to make further statements.

<sup>c</sup> The Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission participated in the meeting by videoconference from Kyiv. The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine took the floor more than once in order to make a further statement.

## Middle East

### 20. The situation in the Middle East

During the period under review, the Council held 17 meetings in relation to the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”. Consistent with prior practice, most meetings held under the item took the form of briefings.<sup>517</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in tables 1 and 3 below. In addition, the Council held a total of 31 open videoconferences in connection

with the item.<sup>518</sup> More information on the videoconferences is given in tables 2 and 4 to 6 below. Under the item, both at the meetings and the videoconferences, Council members considered a variety of topics, principally the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic; the conflict in Yemen; the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF); and the mandate of the United Nations

<sup>517</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>518</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). In 2020, the Council also held three closed videoconferences with countries contributing troops and police to UNDOF and UNIFIL.<sup>519</sup> In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, Council members held informal consultations of the whole and an informal interactive dialogue to discuss the item.<sup>520</sup>

In 2020, the Council adopted eight resolutions in connection with the item. The Council twice extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA), on 13 January for six months until 15 July 2020<sup>521</sup> and on 14 July for one year until 15 July 2021.<sup>522</sup> On 25 February, the Council renewed the sanctions measures in relation to the situation in Yemen until 26 February 2021 and extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Yemen for 13 months until 28 March 2021.<sup>523</sup> The Council also twice renewed the mandate of UNDOF for periods of six months each,<sup>524</sup> and extended the mandate of UNIFIL once for a period of 12 months, while also authorizing a reduction in the maximum number of authorized troops from 15,000 to 13,000.<sup>525</sup> The Council failed to adopt four draft resolutions in relation to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.<sup>526</sup> As described below, two draft resolutions were not adopted owing to the negative vote of one or more permanent members of the Council and the remaining two were not adopted owing to the failure to obtain the required number of votes.

During the period under review, the meetings and videoconferences held by the Council in relation to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to focus on three main aspects: the political process to end the conflict; the humanitarian situation in the country; and the proliferation and use of chemical weapons. Following the practice in 2019, briefings concerning the political process and the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic were sometimes addressed

jointly during the same meeting or videoconference, whereas the proliferation and use of chemical weapons was addressed separately in dedicated meetings and open videoconferences.<sup>527</sup>

Regarding the political process, Council members heard regular monthly briefings by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, the Deputy Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria and the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs on the efforts to reach a political solution to the conflict and the implementation of resolution 2254 (2015). In that connection, in 2020 the briefings and discussions focused on the progress on the Constitutional Committee, the Special Envoy's continued engagement with key international stakeholders and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the socioeconomic and political situations in the Syrian Arab Republic.<sup>528</sup> In February, against the backdrop of the military hostilities in the north-west of the Syrian Arab Republic and the escalation of violence in Idlib, the Special Envoy reported that despite the ceasefire, heavy clashes and mutual shelling continued between Turkish forces and Syrian Government forces inside the Syrian Arab Republic. Reiterating the Secretary-General's strong appeal for a cessation of hostilities, he called for an end to the hostilities and called on everyone to engage in a serious international effort to cooperate on Idlib and on all major players and the members of the Council to put their full weight behind that logic.<sup>529</sup> At the meeting held on 28 February, the Secretary-General expressed deep concerns about the changing nature of the conflict in Idlib and reiterated the need for a ceasefire.<sup>530</sup> Following the Secretary-General's call for an immediate global ceasefire, the Special Envoy said that since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic different ceasefire arrangements broadly continued to hold across the Syrian Arab Republic.<sup>531</sup> He also reported on the progress of his engagements with the Co-Chairs of the Constitutional Committee and with the Syrian Women's Advisory Board. On the issue of detainees, abductees and missing persons, he appealed

<sup>519</sup> In connection with the item entitled "Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B", Council members held closed videoconferences on 15 June and 8 December in relation to UNDOF and on 10 August in relation to UNIFIL; see [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 22. See also [S/2020/789](#) and [S/2020/1045](#).

<sup>520</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 2.B. See also [S/2020/258](#), [S/2020/1142](#), [S/2020/344](#), [S/2020/1102](#) and [S/2021/9](#).

<sup>521</sup> Resolution 2505 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>522</sup> Resolution 2534 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>523</sup> Resolution 2511 (2020), paras. 2 and 7.

<sup>524</sup> Resolutions 2530 (2020) and 2555 (2020), para. 15.

<sup>525</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), paras. 1 and 29.

<sup>526</sup> See [S/2020/654](#), [S/2020/658](#), [S/2020/667](#) and [S/2020/683](#).

<sup>527</sup> For more information on the format of the meetings in relation to this item, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2018 and 2019*.

<sup>528</sup> See [S/PV.8708](#), [S/PV.8715](#), [S/PV.8727](#) and [S/PV.8738](#).

<sup>529</sup> See [S/PV.8715](#).

<sup>530</sup> See [S/PV.8738](#). Following the meeting, the representatives of the Russian Federation and Turkey transmitted the Additional Protocol to the Memorandum on the Stabilization of the Situation in the Idlib De-escalation Area, signed by the Russian Federation and Turkey on 5 March 2020, agreeing to cease all military actions in the Idlib De-escalation Area ([S/2020/187](#)).

<sup>531</sup> See [S/2020/353](#).

to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and all other Syrian parties to unilaterally release detainees and abductees.<sup>532</sup> Concerning the progress on the Constitutional Committee and its agenda, the focus was on constitutional reform and gradually developing a wider political process to implement resolution 2254 (2015). Two civil society representatives briefed Council members at two separate videoconferences on the topic of detainees and missing persons, particularly women and children.<sup>533</sup>

In relation to the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, Council members heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator and by the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator on the findings of the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of relevant resolutions, including resolution 2165 (2014) by which the Council authorized cross-border humanitarian operations.<sup>534</sup> The briefers provided regular updates on the humanitarian conditions in various parts of the country, in particular Idlib in north-western Syrian Arab Republic and the Rukban and Hawl refugee camps, on the efforts with regard to cross-border humanitarian assistance and on the COVID-19 preparedness and response measures across the Syrian Arab Republic. In connection with the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, Council members were also briefed by the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund<sup>535</sup> and by two civil society representatives in two separate videoconferences.<sup>536</sup>

With respect to the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, Council members heard regular briefings by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and her Deputy on progress in the implementation of resolution 2118 (2013) on the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. Starting in September, the Council was briefed by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs in open videoconferences and public

meetings,<sup>537</sup> while earlier in the year those briefings took place in informal consultations of the whole, closed videoconferences and, in May, an informal interactive dialogue.<sup>538</sup> In her briefings, the High Representative reported on the activities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), including on the investigations into the alleged use of chemical weapons in Aleppo in 2018 and in Saraqib in 2016, as well as on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work of OPCW. At its meeting on 5 October, prior to the briefing by the High Representative, Council members disagreed on whether to invite the former Director-General of OPCW, José Bustani, to brief the Council in accordance with rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure. Further to those exchanges, the Council held a procedural vote, resulting in the rejection of the proposal to invite Mr. Bustani to brief the Council.<sup>539</sup> In the monthly briefing for December,<sup>540</sup> Council members heard a briefing from the Director-General of OPCW, who reported on the progress of the Syrian chemical weapons dossier following the issuance of the first report of the Investigation and Identification Team in April 2020.

In 2020, in its meetings in relation to the conflict in Yemen the Council continued to focus on three distinct areas, namely, the political process to find a solution to the conflict, the humanitarian situation in the country, and the sanctions measures in place against individuals and entities designated as engaging in or providing support for acts that threatened peace, security and stability in Yemen.

Regarding the political process, the Council heard regular briefings by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen on the progress in the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement. During his briefings, both in the meetings and the videoconferences, he updated the Council on the status of the Agreement on the City of Hudaydah and the

<sup>532</sup> See S/2020/353, S/2020/420, S/2020/551, S/2020/823, S/2020/936 and S/2020/1049.

<sup>533</sup> The Council heard briefings by a human rights lawyer and activist on 16 June (see S/2020/551) and by the representative of Families for Freedom on 23 July (see S/2020/743).

<sup>534</sup> Resolution 2165 (2014), para. 2.

<sup>535</sup> See S/PV.8734.

<sup>536</sup> The Council heard briefings by the Director of Policy and Senior Adviser at Physicians for Human Rights on 29 June (see S/2020/635) and by the Regional Director of Syria Relief and Development on 29 July (S/2020/758).

<sup>537</sup> See S/2020/902, S/PV.8764, S/2020/1088 and S/2020/1202.

<sup>538</sup> See S/2020/258, S/2020/1142, S/2020/344, S/2020/558, S/2020/1102, S/2020/789, S/2021/9 and S/2020/1045. For the practice in 2019, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2019*, part I, sect. 22.

<sup>539</sup> See S/PV.8764. The result of the vote on the procedural motion concerning whether the Council agreed to invite Mr. Bustani to brief the Council was as follows: *for*: China, Russian Federation, South Africa; *against*: Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States; *abstaining*: Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, Viet Nam. For more details, see part II, sect. VIII.

<sup>540</sup> See S/2020/1202.

Ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa, including on the outcomes of consultations between the parties. He also addressed the evolution of the hostilities in the country, as well as the United Nations-brokered negotiations between the Government of Yemen and Ansar Allah to reach agreement on a joint declaration that would include a nationwide ceasefire, economic and humanitarian measures and the resumption of the political process aimed at comprehensively resolving and ending the conflict. The Special Envoy made reference to gender inclusion as a high priority in the context of the joint declaration.<sup>541</sup> In his briefings, the Special Envoy also reported on the progress made in prisoner and detainee exchanges and the operation of a medical air bridge facilitated by the World Health Organization to transport patients from Sana'a for medical assistance abroad. The Special Envoy continued to sound the alarm on the lack of progress in addressing the threat posed by the floating storage and offloading vessel FSO *Safer*, which was threatening to cause an environmental and economic catastrophe for Yemen and the neighbouring countries, and emphasized that the threat had to be dealt with on a purely technical basis, without politicization.<sup>542</sup> At the meeting on 15 October, the Special Envoy reported that over 1,000 prisoners were being released as agreed during the talks held in Switzerland in September 2020, which was the largest such operation in the history of the conflict in Yemen.<sup>543</sup>

Regarding the humanitarian situation in Yemen, the Council heard briefings<sup>544</sup> by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, his Deputy and the Director of the Coordination Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, often in conjunction with the Special Envoy. The briefers reported on the dire humanitarian situation in the country, exacerbated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued economic instability. The briefers also focused on public health concerns, the displacement resulting from the escalation of the conflict in various parts of the country and the disproportionate impact of the war on children and women. In that regard, on 28 July the Council heard briefings from the General Coordinator in Yemen of Médecins du Monde and the Chairwoman of the Arab Human Rights Foundation, who focused on the grave human rights violations against children in Yemen,

including their widespread recruitment and maiming.<sup>545</sup> On 15 July, the Council heard a briefing by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on the serious implications of the oil leakage from the FSO *Safer*. She reported that UNEP had been working to develop a response plan with the International Maritime Organization, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the Office of the Special Envoy, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Mutual Aid Centre for Environmental Emergencies of the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA). She said that it was imperative that access be granted to the FSO *Safer* to assess and inspect the current state of the vessel so as to safely evacuate the oil and prevent environmental and human catastrophe.<sup>546</sup> Against a backdrop of growing concerns over the risk of widespread famine in Yemen, on 11 November the Council also heard briefings from the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Founder and Executive Director of Solutions for Sustainable Society. During the briefing, the Executive Director of WFP called on the major donors to step up with additional funds and urged the Council to seize the opportunity to avoid the looming famine in Yemen.<sup>547</sup>

Regarding the sanctions in Yemen, at a meeting on 18 February the Council heard a briefing by the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in her capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) on the Committee's activities since 16 May 2019.<sup>548</sup> She reported that the Committee had received two implementation reports, from Panama and Portugal, and continued to receive vessel inspection reports from the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen. She also noted that the Committee had agreed to call on all parties to the conflict in Yemen to adhere strictly to international humanitarian law and to investigate and prosecute members who had committed violations of international humanitarian law, pursuant to the recommendation contained in the final report of the Panel of Experts on Yemen under resolution 2456 (2019).<sup>549</sup>

In its decisions in 2020, the Council addressed the matters outlined above concerning the conflicts in

<sup>541</sup> See [S/PV.8753](#).

<sup>542</sup> See [S/PV.8725](#), [S/PV.8753](#) and [S/PV.8757](#).

<sup>543</sup> See [S/PV.8770](#).

<sup>544</sup> See [S/PV.8704](#), [S/PV.8725](#), [S/PV.8745](#), [S/PV.8753](#), [S/PV.8757](#), [S/PV.8770](#), [S/2020/313](#), [S/2020/411](#), [S/2020/721](#) and [S/2020/1109](#).

<sup>545</sup> See [S/PV.8753](#).

<sup>546</sup> See [S/2020/721](#).

<sup>547</sup> See [S/2020/1109](#).

<sup>548</sup> See [S/PV.8725](#).

<sup>549</sup> [S/2020/326](#). See also [S/2020/70](#) and [S/2020/70/Corr.1](#).

the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen and the mandates of UNDOF and UNIFIL.

In connection with the Syrian Arab Republic and against the backdrop of the expiration of the authorization for the mechanism for cross-border operations, which had been last renewed in December 2018 by resolution 2449 (2018),<sup>550</sup> the Council held a meeting on 10 January to consider two competing draft resolutions to extend the mechanism. The two drafts were submitted by Belgium and Germany<sup>551</sup> and by the Russian Federation,<sup>552</sup> respectively.<sup>553</sup> At the outset of the meeting, the representative of the Russian Federation proposed an oral amendment to paragraph 6 of the draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany.<sup>554</sup> Taking the floor before the vote on the oral amendment, the representative of Belgium stated that the amendment proposed by the Russian Federation was not acceptable because it contradicted the very system of the cross-border mechanism that needed to be preserved and asked the Council to approve the draft resolution as presented by the co-penholders and to vote in favour of it. The oral amendment failed to garner the sufficient number of votes and the Council subsequently voted and adopted the draft resolution as originally proposed, as resolution 2504 (2020).<sup>555</sup> By resolution 2504 (2020), the Council extended the authorization for humanitarian agencies to use two out of the four border crossings authorized in resolution 2165 (2014) to deliver humanitarian assistance for a period of six months, until 10 July 2020, excluding the border crossings of Al-Ramtha and of Al Yarubiyah.<sup>556</sup> The representative of China, noting his active engagement in the negotiations process, said that given the current situation extending the mandate for two crossing points for six months was realistic and feasible as they were the most important and served the humanitarian needs of the Syrian Arab Republic.<sup>557</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation explained that it had abstained for the sole purpose of not blocking cross-border

assistance to the Syrian province of Idlib, which was the only one that still really needed that method of delivering supplies. The representative of the United Kingdom stated that the Council should be prepared to take action, including restoring cross-border access in the north-east, if the Secretary-General's review concluded that alternative humanitarian access routes were inadequate to meet the humanitarian needs of the population. The representative of the United States explained its abstention by saying that the text of resolution 2504 (2020) was the only path forward that would reasonably allow for the delivery of any aid at all to the Syrian people. She also emphasized that the resolution was "watered down" and inadequate to the needs of the Syrian people owing to the unwillingness of the Russian Federation to maintain the then current levels of aid flows. At the end of the meeting, the representative of the Russian Federation announced that in the light of the adoption of resolution 2504 (2020), the Russian Federation would withdraw the draft resolution contained in document S/2020/24.

With the authorization for the mechanism for cross-border operations again expiring in July, the Council voted on five competing draft resolutions between 7 and 11 July. In the first round of consideration of the competing drafts,<sup>558</sup> on 7 July the Council failed to adopt a draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany owing to the negative votes of two permanent members, China and the Russian Federation.<sup>559</sup> In addition, the Council failed to adopt a draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation because it did not receive the required number of votes.<sup>560</sup> On 10 July, in two separate votes following the written procedure, the Council again failed to adopt either of the two draft resolutions before it. The draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany was not adopted owing to the negative vote of two permanent members, China and the Russian Federation.<sup>561</sup> The draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation was not adopted owing to an insufficient number of votes.<sup>562</sup> On 11 July, following a vote on three possible amendments, two submitted by the Russian Federation

<sup>550</sup> Resolution 2449 (2018), para. 3.

<sup>551</sup> S/2020/24.

<sup>552</sup> Since the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation was withdrawn, there is no record available.

<sup>553</sup> See S/PV.8700.

<sup>554</sup> Ibid.

<sup>555</sup> The result on the vote on the oral amendment to the draft resolution (S/2020/24) was as follows: *for*: China, Russian Federation, Viet Nam; *against*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom and United States; *abstaining*: Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia.

<sup>556</sup> Resolution 2504 (2020), para. 3.

<sup>557</sup> See S/PV.8700.

<sup>558</sup> The vote followed the procedure provided for in the letter dated 27 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/253). For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>559</sup> See S/2020/654. See also S/2020/657 and S/2020/661.

<sup>560</sup> See S/2020/658. See also S/2020/664 and S/2020/671.

<sup>561</sup> See S/2020/667. See also S/2020/681 and S/2020/693.

<sup>562</sup> See S/2020/683. See also S/2020/688 and S/2020/694.



and one by China,<sup>563</sup> the Council voted on a fifth draft resolution, submitted by Belgium and Germany,<sup>564</sup> which was adopted as resolution 2533 (2020).<sup>565</sup> By resolution 2533 (2020), the Council decided to renew the cross-border humanitarian mechanism established in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Council resolution 2165 (2014) for a period of 12 months, until 10 July 2021, excluding the border crossings of Al-Ramtha, Al Yarubiyah and Bab al-Salam, three of the four border crossings authorized in resolution 2165 (2014).<sup>566</sup> In the explanation of votes submitted to the Council,<sup>567</sup> the representative of Belgium indicated that, after many rounds of discussion and votes and given the divergent positions among the members of the Council, the Council had no choice but to make yet another decision that did not reflect the humanitarian needs on the ground, in order to find a compromise. He added that in the interest of the almost three million civilians who depended on the Bab al-Hawa border crossing, the Council had to make the decision to compromise, allowing for Bab al-Hawa to stay open for 12 months, which would allow for better planning and greater predictability for the many non-governmental organizations that guaranteed the survival of the people suffering in and around Idlib. Addressing his country's abstention, the representative of China said that the cross-border mechanism should be adjusted in the light of the developments on the ground and noted that resolution 2533 (2020), presented by Belgium and Germany, reaffirmed the commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic and included further adjustment to the cross-border mechanism. Explaining his country's abstention, the representative of the Dominican Republic stated that although the Council had renewed the mechanism, the failure to reopen the border crossing of Al Yarubiyah and the decision to close the Bab al-Salam crossing would have terrible consequences and that the flagrant

politicization of the decision was not something for which the Council should be proud. He expressed hope that the Council would be able to overcome the many differences, divisions and fears that prevented it from taking principled, people-centred humanitarian decisions. Explaining the abstention by the Russian Federation, the Permanent Mission indicated that the vote reflected the Russian Federation's principled position on the cross-border mechanism and that the cross-border mechanism in the Syrian Arab Republic did not reflect the minimal requirements of international humanitarian law as it was impossible to monitor how humanitarian assistance was delivered and who were its final beneficiaries on the ground. The co-penholders of the resolution had ignored the Russian Federation's principled concerns, which had forced it to block the draft resolution sponsored by Germany and Belgium twice and present alternative texts. The Russian Federation reminded the authors of the resolution, as well as the penholders of other dossiers in the Council, that the "so-called penholdership" was not a privilege but rather a special responsibility vis-a-vis other members of the Council, as well as the whole international community.

With regard to the conflict in Yemen, the Council adopted resolutions 2505 (2020) of 13 January and 2534 (2020) of 14 July concerning UNMHA. The Council extended the mandate of the Mission twice, for a period of six months by resolution 2505 (2020) until 15 July 2020,<sup>568</sup> and for one year by resolution 2534 (2020) until 15 July 2021.<sup>569</sup> By both resolutions, the Council reiterated the existing mandate of the Mission, which included leading and supporting the functioning of the Redeployment Coordination Committee to oversee the governorate-wide ceasefire, redeployment of forces and mine action operations; monitoring the compliance of the parties to the ceasefire and the mutual redeployment of forces from the city of Hudaydah and the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa; working with the parties so that the security of the city of Hudaydah and the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa was assured by local security forces in accordance with Yemeni law; and facilitating and coordinating United Nations support to assist the parties to fully implement the Hudaydah Agreement.<sup>570</sup> Taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council also requested the Secretary-General to fully deploy UNMHA expeditiously and called on the parties to the Hudaydah Agreement to

<sup>563</sup> The three amendments were submitted by the Russian Federation (S/2020/690 and S/2020/691) and China (S/2020/692), respectively. Having failed to obtain the required number of votes, the amendments were not adopted (see S/2020/695, S/2020/696 and S/2020/697).

<sup>564</sup> S/2020/684.

<sup>565</sup> The result of the vote on the draft resolution (S/2020/684) was as follows (see S/2020/698):  
*for*: Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam;  
*against*: none; *abstaining*: China, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation).

<sup>566</sup> Resolution 2533 (2020), para. 2.

<sup>567</sup> See S/2020/702. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>568</sup> Resolution 2505 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>569</sup> Resolution 2534 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>570</sup> Resolutions 2505 (2020) and 2534 (2020), para. 2 (a)–(d). For more information on the mandate of UNMHA, see part X, sect. II.



support the United Nations by ensuring the safety, security and health of UNMHA personnel and the unhindered and expeditious movement into and within Yemen of UNMHA personnel and equipment, provisions and essential supplies.<sup>571</sup> In addition, by both resolution 2505 (2020) and resolution 2534 (2020) the Council reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to report on a monthly basis on progress regarding the implementation of the resolutions and requested the Secretary-General to present to the Council a further review of UNMHA at least one month before the expiration of the Mission's mandate.<sup>572</sup>

Regarding the sanctions measures imposed in connection with the conflict in Yemen, on 25 February the Council adopted resolution 2511 (2020) under Chapter VII of the Charter, with the abstentions of China and the Russian Federation. By resolution 2511 (2020), the Council renewed the sanctions measures in place until 26 February 2021 and extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts for 13 months, until 28 March 2021.<sup>573</sup> At the same meeting,<sup>574</sup> explaining his abstention the representative of the Russian Federation said that he was not in a position to support resolution 2511 (2020), penned by the United Kingdom, as not all of the concerns expressed during the consultations had been taken into account. Emphasizing that there was no unity during the discussions on the report of the Panel of Experts, the representative of the Russian Federation noted that many delegations did not have an opportunity to participate on an equal footing in efforts to achieve a balanced text and that what transpired during the voting attested to the non-constructive working methods of the sponsors of the draft. The representative of China explained his delegation's decision to abstain in the voting, stating that the resolution failed to address his country's concerns, including the broad mandates of the Panel of Experts and the unnecessary amendments to the designation criteria. He added that the recruitment of child soldiers and sexual violence in conflict were already included in the existing resolution under the criteria of violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and the separate listing of those two acts had not been fully discussed by the Committee and was not in accordance with its practice.

<sup>571</sup> Resolution 2534 (2020), para. 5.

<sup>572</sup> Resolutions 2505 (2020) and 2534 (2020), paras. 7–8.

<sup>573</sup> Resolution 2511 (2020), paras. 2 and 7. For more information on the sanctions measures, see part VII, sect. III. For more information on the Committee and the Panel of Experts, see part IX, sect. I.

<sup>574</sup> See S/PV.8732.

In 2020, the mandate of UNDOF was renewed twice, by resolutions 2530 (2020) of 29 June and 2555 (2020) of 18 December, for periods of six months each, until 31 December 2020 and 30 June 2021, respectively.<sup>575</sup> By resolution 2530 (2020), the Council requested UNDOF to take all appropriate steps to protect the safety, security and health of all UNDOF personnel, in line with resolution 2518 (2020), taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>576</sup> By resolution 2555 (2020), the Council requested the Secretary-General and countries contributing troops and police to seek to increase the number of women in UNDOF and to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of uniformed and civilian women at all levels and in all positions, including senior leadership positions, and to implement other relevant provisions of resolution 2538 (2020).<sup>577</sup>

In connection with Lebanon, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2539 (2020) extending the mandate of UNIFIL for one year until 31 August 2021.<sup>578</sup> Against the backdrop of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Council commended UNIFIL for the preventive measures taken to fight the pandemic and recalled resolution 2532 (2020) and its request to the Secretary-General to instruct peacekeeping operations to provide support to host country authorities in their efforts to contain the pandemic and take all appropriate steps to protect the safety, security and health of all United Nations personnel in its peace operations.<sup>579</sup> Furthermore, in the aftermath of the Beirut explosions on 4 August 2020, the Council expressed its solidarity with Lebanon and its people and welcomed the International Conference on Assistance and Support to Lebanon and Beirut organized on 9 August 2020 by France and the United Nations, further calling on the international community to reinforce its support.<sup>580</sup> Recognizing that UNIFIL had successfully implemented its mandate since 2006 and allowed for maintaining peace and security, the Council decided to authorize the reduction of the troop-ceiling set out in

<sup>575</sup> Resolutions 2530 (2020) and 2555 (2020), para. 15. For more information on the mandate of UNDOF, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>576</sup> Resolution 2530 (2020), para. 8.

<sup>577</sup> Resolution 2555 (2020), para. 13.

<sup>578</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), para. 1. See also part I, sect. 23. For more information on the mandate of UNIFIL, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>579</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph. See also resolution 2532 (2020).

<sup>580</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), second preambular paragraph. See also S/2020/1045.

paragraph 11 of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) from 15,000 to 13,000 authorized troops.<sup>581</sup>

<sup>581</sup> Resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#), para. 29.

For the purposes of facilitating the coverage of the item on the situation in the Middle East, information on meetings and videoconferences is set out below under six separate tables and under four separate headings, namely, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, UNDOF and UNIFIL.

Table 1  
Meetings: the situation in the Middle East – Syrian Arab Republic

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8700</a> 10 January 2020		Draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany <a href="#">S/2020/24</a>	Syrian Arab Republic		13 Council members, <sup>a</sup> invitee	Resolution <a href="#">2504 (2020)</a> 11-0-4 <sup>b</sup>
<a href="#">S/PV.8707</a> 29 January 2020			Syrian Arab Republic	Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator	14 Council members, <sup>c</sup> all invitees	
<a href="#">S/PV.8708</a> 29 January 2020			Syrian Arab Republic	Deputy Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria	All Council members, all invitees	
<a href="#">S/PV.8715</a> 6 February 2020			Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator	14 Council members, <sup>d</sup> all invitees <sup>e</sup>	
<a href="#">S/PV.8727</a> 19 February 2020			Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator	All Council members, all invitees <sup>f</sup>	

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<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8734</a> 27 February 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the review of alternative modalities for the border crossing of Ya'rubiyah ( <a href="#">S/2020/139</a> )  Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions <a href="#">2139 (2014)</a> , <a href="#">2165 (2014)</a> , <a href="#">2191 (2014)</a> , <a href="#">2258 (2015)</a> , <a href="#">2332 (2016)</a> , <a href="#">2393 (2017)</a> , <a href="#">2401 (2018)</a> , <a href="#">2449 (2018)</a> and <a href="#">2504 (2020)</a> ( <a href="#">S/2020/141</a> )		Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Executive Director of United Nations Children's Fund	All Council members, <sup>g</sup> all invitees	
<a href="#">S/PV.8738</a> 28 February 2020			Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs	Secretary-General, 14 Council members, <sup>h</sup> all invitees	
<a href="#">S/PV.8764</a> 5 October 2020	Letter dated 29 September 2020 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council		Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, former Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons	All Council members, 4 invitees (Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs)	Procedural vote (rule 39) 3-6-3 <sup>i</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The representatives of the Niger and South Africa did not make statements.

<sup>b</sup> *For*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: China, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States.

<sup>c</sup> The representative of Germany did not make a statement. The representative of Belgium spoke on behalf of the co-penholders on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic (Belgium and Germany).

<sup>d</sup> The representative of the Niger did not make a statement.

<sup>e</sup> The Special Envoy and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator participated in the meeting by videoconference from Geneva.

<sup>f</sup> The Special Envoy participated in the meeting by videoconference from Geneva.

<sup>g</sup> Belgium was represented by its Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Development and Germany was represented by its Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>h</sup> The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines did not make a statement.

<sup>i</sup> *For*: China, Russian Federation, South Africa; *against*: Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States; *abstaining*: Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, Viet Nam.

Table 2

**Videoconferences: the situation in the Middle East – Syrian Arab Republic**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
30 March 2020 <sup>a</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/254</a>	Letter dated 31 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/353</a>	Letter dated 1 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/354</a>	Letter dated 1 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
18 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/420</a>	Letter dated 20 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
19 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/427</a>	Letter dated 21 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
16 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/551</a>	Letter dated 18 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/635</a>	Letter dated 1 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
7 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/657</a>	Letter dated 7 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/654</a> (not adopted) 13-2-0 <sup>b</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/661</a>
8 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/664</a>	Letter dated 8 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/658</a> (not adopted) 4-7-4 <sup>c</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/671</a>

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<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
10 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/681</a>	Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/667</a> (not adopted) 13-2-0 <sup>d</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/693</a>
10 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/688</a>	Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/683</a> (not adopted) 4-7-4 <sup>e</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/694</a>
11 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/702</a>	Letter dated 12 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2533 (2020)</a> 13-0-2 <sup>f</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/698</a>
23 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/743</a>	Letter dated 27 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/758</a>	Letter dated 4 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
19 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/823</a>	Letter dated 21 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
27 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/866</a>	Letter dated 31 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
10 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/902</a>	Letter dated 14 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
16 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/915</a>	Letter dated 18 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
18 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/936</a>	Letter dated 22 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
27 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1049</a>	Letter dated 29 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
5 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1088</a>	Letter dated 9 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

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<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
25 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1147</a>	Letter dated 27 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
11 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1202</a>	Letter dated 16 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
16 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1257</a>	Letter dated 23 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<sup>a</sup> Owing to technical difficulties, the videoconference was closed instead of open. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>b</sup> *For*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: China, Russian Federation; *abstaining*: none.

<sup>c</sup> *For*: China, Russian Federation, South Africa, Viet Nam; *against*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States; *abstaining*: Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia.

<sup>d</sup> *For*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: China, Russian Federation; *abstaining*: none.

<sup>e</sup> *For*: China, Russian Federation, South Africa, Viet Nam; *against*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States; *abstaining*: Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia.

<sup>f</sup> *For*: Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: China, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation.

Table 3  
Meetings: the situation in the Middle East – Yemen

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8701</a> 13 January 2020	Letter dated 14 October 2019 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2019/823</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by United Kingdom ( <a href="#">S/2020/27</a> )				Resolution <a href="#">2505 (2020)</a> 15-0-0



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<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8704</a> 16 January 2020			Yemen	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Director of the Coordination Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	All Council members, all invitees <sup>a</sup>	
<a href="#">S/PV.8725</a> 18 February 2020			Yemen	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator	All Council members, <sup>b</sup> all invitees <sup>c</sup>	
<a href="#">S/PV.8732</a> 25 February 2020	Letter dated 27 January 2020 from the Panel of Experts on Yemen addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2020/70</a> ) <sup>f</sup>	Draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom ( <a href="#">S/2020/146</a> )	Yemen		Eight Council members, <sup>d</sup> invitee	Resolution <a href="#">2511 (2020)</a> 15-0-2 <sup>e</sup> (adopted under Chapter VII)
<a href="#">S/PV.8745</a> 12 March 2020			Yemen	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator	All Council members, all invitees <sup>g</sup>	
<a href="#">S/PV.8747</a> 14 July 2020	Letter dated 15 June 2020 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the	Draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom ( <a href="#">S/2020/679</a> )				Resolution <a href="#">2534 (2020)</a> 15-0-0

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<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
	Security Council (S/2020/524)					
<a href="#">S/PV.8753</a> 28 July 2020			Yemen	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, General Coordinator in Yemen of Médecins du Monde, Chairwoman of the Arab Human Rights Foundation	All Council members, all invitees <sup>b</sup>	
<a href="#">S/PV.8757</a> 15 September 2020			Yemen	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator	All Council members, all invitees	
<a href="#">S/PV.8770</a> 15 October 2020			Yemen	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator	All Council members, all invitees	

<sup>a</sup> The Director of the Coordination Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs participated in the meeting by videoconference from Geneva.

<sup>b</sup> The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines spoke in her national capacity and in her capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014).

<sup>c</sup> The Special Envoy participated in the meeting by videoconference from Geneva.

<sup>d</sup> Belgium, China, France, Indonesia, Niger, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>e</sup> *For*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: China, Russian Federation.

<sup>f</sup> The final report of the Panel of Experts was subsequently issued as document S/2020/326 (see S/2020/70/Corr.1).

<sup>g</sup> The Special Envoy participated in the meeting by videoconference from Amman.

<sup>h</sup> The Special Envoy participated in the meeting by videoconference from Geneva and the Under-Secretary-General participated in the meeting by videoconference from New York. The General Coordinator in Yemen of Médecins du Monde and the Chairwoman of the Arab Human Rights Foundation participated in the meeting by videoconference from Sana'a.

**Table 4**  
**Videoconferences: the situation in the Middle East – Yemen**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
16 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/313</a>	Letter dated 21 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
14 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/411</a>	Letter dated 18 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
15 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/721</a>	Letter dated 17 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
11 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1109</a>	Letter dated 13 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

**Table 5**  
**Videoconferences: the situation in the Middle East – United Nations Disengagement Observer Force**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
29 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/612</a>	Letter dated 29 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2530 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/624</a>
18 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1252</a>	Letter dated 18 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2555 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/1263</a>

Table 6

**Videoconference: the situation in the Middle East – United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
28 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/853</a>	Letter dated 28 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2539 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/857</a>

## 21. The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

During the period under review, the Council held four meetings in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”. No decisions were adopted during the period under review. In 2020, during the meetings under the item, the Council continued its practice of holding monthly briefings and quarterly open debates.<sup>582</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held a total of nine open videoconferences in connection with the item.<sup>583</sup> More information on the open videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, in 2020 Council members held informal consultations of the whole.<sup>584</sup> Under the item, whether in the context of meetings or videoconferences, Council members also considered developments in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and the Middle East region, including the implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) and the agreements between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.<sup>585</sup>

In 2020, in most meetings and videoconferences in connection with the item Council members heard briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority. Council members also heard one briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and one briefing by the Assistant Secretary-

General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator,<sup>586</sup> and twice heard remarks by the Secretary-General, in February and June.<sup>587</sup> In January, Council members also heard a briefing by the Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and one by the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations.<sup>588</sup> In addition, in a videoconference held on 21 July, Council members heard briefings by a Professor of Political Science and Director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research and the President of the US/Middle East Project.<sup>589</sup>

On 11 February, in an extraordinary meeting<sup>590</sup> following the release by the United States of its “Peace to Prosperity” vision for Israelis and Palestinians, the Secretary-General affirmed the full commitment of the United Nations to a just and comprehensive peace between Palestinians and Israelis. At that meeting, the Special Coordinator briefed the Council and reported that in the days since the United States’ proposal was unveiled, sporadic violent incidents in the Palestinian territory had been witnessed, including in East Jerusalem. He also mentioned that the United States had announced that it would establish a joint committee with Israel to produce a more detailed version of the conceptual maps included in the proposal, which would allow it to recognize an Israeli decision to apply its laws in specified areas in the West Bank. The Special Coordinator cautioned that the possible annexation of territory in the West Bank would have a devastating impact on the prospects for a

<sup>582</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>583</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>584</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 2. See also [S/2020/1142](#).

<sup>585</sup> See also part I, sect. 20.

<sup>586</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#).

<sup>587</sup> See [S/PV.8717](#) and [S/2020/596](#).

<sup>588</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#).

<sup>589</sup> See [S/2020/736](#).

<sup>590</sup> See [S/PV.8717](#).

two-State solution and would severely undermine opportunities for normalization and regional peace.

During the period under review, the Special Coordinator provided regular briefings to the Council, either in person or by videoconference. In the context of his monthly briefings held in February, May, August and November, the Special Coordinator reported to Council members on the political situation, including the process of intra-Palestinian reconciliation, coordination between the two parties, the violence in the occupied West Bank including East Jerusalem, and on the status of the negotiations, including the meetings of the Middle East Quartet. The Special Coordinator also reported on the deteriorating security and humanitarian conditions in Gaza, further exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, and on the threat of annexation by Israel of areas of the West Bank. He urged Member States to provide additional resources for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which was facing a historical funding shortage. In his monthly briefings, the Special Coordinator also covered developments in Lebanon and the Golan. During the discussions, Council members condemned the continued occupation of the Palestinian territory and called for the resumption of negotiations based on a two-State solution. While cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians in fighting COVID-19 was welcomed, several Council members called for that effort, as well as the international community's support for Palestine, to be intensified.<sup>591</sup> On 25 August,<sup>592</sup> the Special Coordinator reported on the agreement reached between Israel and the United Arab Emirates stopping Israeli annexation plans over parts of the occupied West Bank and including the normalization of relations between the two countries. He said that the agreement had the potential to change dynamics across the region and created new opportunities for cooperation. The Special Coordinator also focused on the situation in Lebanon, and in particular on the 4 August 2020 explosion in the Port of Beirut, which had left over 180 people dead, with 30 persons still missing and several thousand injured, as well as on the situation in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon area of operation and in the Golan. At the videoconference, most Council members welcomed the agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates to normalize their relations, which also included the suspension of

Israel's plan to annex part of the West Bank.<sup>593</sup> Some Council members called on Israel to abandon the annexation plan indefinitely<sup>594</sup> and others urged the Palestinian Authority and Israel to take the opportunity provided by the suspension of the annexation plan to resume peace negotiations.<sup>595</sup> Council members also addressed the response of the Council to the 20 August 2020 notification by the United States concerning paragraph 11 of resolution 2231 (2015) concerning the lifting of the arms embargo on the Islamic Republic of Iran.<sup>596</sup> At the videoconference,<sup>597</sup> most Council members agreed that the notification by the United States to invoke the "snapback mechanism" provided for in the resolution was ineffective, given that the United States had ceased to participate in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.<sup>598</sup> The representative of Indonesia, who was the President of the Council for the month, responded to the question from the representatives of various Council members concerning the position of the Presidency on the letter of the United States.<sup>599</sup> He said that after having consulted with members and receiving letters from many Member States, it was clear that one member had a particular position on the issue, while a significant number of members had differing views. He added that, in his view, there was no consensus in the Council and the President was therefore not in a position to take further action.<sup>600</sup> At a videoconference held on 18 November,<sup>601</sup> the Special Coordinator reported on the signing of bilateral agreements between Bahrain and Israel, and urged the Middle East Quartet, Arab partners and Israeli and Palestinian leaders to use the progress to resume peace negotiations. Council members also welcomed the normalization agreements between Israel and several Arab states and urged that the agreements be used as a springboard for the resumption of peace negotiations.

<sup>593</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>594</sup> Belgium, France, Germany, Indonesia and Russian Federation.

<sup>595</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, France and United Kingdom.

<sup>596</sup> See [S/2020/815](#).

<sup>597</sup> See [S/2020/837](#).

<sup>598</sup> Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Germany, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and United Kingdom. For further details on the discussion, see part V, sect. II.B.

<sup>599</sup> Russian Federation, China and South Africa.

<sup>600</sup> For further details on the role of the presidency, see part II, sect. IV.

<sup>601</sup> [S/2020/1128](#).

<sup>591</sup> See [S/2020/430](#) (China, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/596](#) (Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia).

<sup>592</sup> See [S/2020/837](#).

Every three months, the monthly briefings, whether in the form of a meeting or a videoconference, were also used to report on the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016). During the briefings that took place in March, June, September and December, the Special Coordinator continued to report on the lack of progress in the implementation of the main provisions of the resolution, namely, with regard to Israeli settlement activities, violence against civilians including acts of terror, incitement, provocation and inflammatory rhetoric, steps and efforts to advance the peace process and actions by all States to distinguish in their relevant dealings between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967. At a videoconference held on 30 March,<sup>602</sup> the Special Coordinator praised the far-reaching measures that both Israel and the Palestinian Authority had taken to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus. He noted that the coordination put in place and the joint commitment to tackle the threat to both populations was exemplary. At those briefings, most Council members expressed concern at the lack of progress with respect to the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016) and reaffirmed their commitment to a two-State solution. Council members viewed the coordination concerning COVID-19 among Israelis and Palestinians as an opportunity for relaunching peace negotiations. Some Council members reminded Israel of its obligations as the occupying power under international law to protect the lives and safety of the Palestinian population, including by providing them with vaccines for COVID-19.<sup>603</sup> Other Council members expressed concern at the violence against children and emphasized the need for accountability through thorough and transparent investigations.<sup>604</sup> In 2020, as also happened in 2019, the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016) were twice submitted in writing, namely, the fourteenth report in June and the sixteenth report in December.<sup>605</sup> During a videoconference held on 24 June,<sup>606</sup> with six Council members participating at the ministerial level, the Secretary-General delivered remarks in which he expressed concern about the continuing threat of annexation by Israel of parts of the occupied Palestinian territory. The Secretary-General affirmed that, if implemented, annexation would constitute a most serious violation of international law, grievously harm the prospect of a two-State solution and undercut the

possibilities of a renewal of negotiations. He called on the Government of Israel to abandon its annexation plans and encouraged regional and international supporters of the two-State solution to help bring the parties back to a path towards a negotiated, peaceful settlement. He called on the Middle East Quartet to take up its mandated mediation role and find a mutually agreeable framework for the parties to re-engage with the Quartet and other key States, without preconditions. The Special Coordinator also focused on the threat posed by annexation to a future viable Palestinian state and provided a briefing on the fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016). He highlighted the widespread opposition to the annexation plan among the international and regional communities, as well as among civil society in both Israel and Palestine. He also shared his concerns over the impact on the welfare of the Palestinian people of the recent decision by the Palestinian Authority to stop accepting the clearance revenue collected by Israel. Council members shared the Secretary-General's concerns and opposition to Israel's annexation plan and called for a restart of the peace negotiations.<sup>607</sup> On 29 September, the Council held a meeting<sup>608</sup> in the Economic and Social Council Chamber, which was the first meeting under the item since February 2020. The Council heard a briefing by the Special Coordinator, who presented the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016), covering the period from 5 June to 20 September. The Special Coordinator noted the recent agreements between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. The Secretary-General welcomed those agreements, which suspended Israeli annexation plans over parts of the occupied West Bank, and reiterated that only a two-State solution that realized the legitimate national aspirations of Palestinians and Israelis could lead to sustainable peace between the two peoples and contribute to broader peace in the region. The Secretary-General's report covered the various provisions of resolution 2334 (2016), including settlement activity and demolition of Palestinian structures in the West Bank; acts of violence against civilians, including acts of terror; acts of provocation, incitement or inflammatory rhetoric; and affirmative steps taken to reverse the negative trends imperilling the two-State solution. The Special Coordinator addressed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ground, which was having a devastating effect. In closing, he

<sup>602</sup> S/2020/263.

<sup>603</sup> See S/2020/1275 (Indonesia, South Africa and United Kingdom).

<sup>604</sup> Ibid. (Belgium, South Africa and United Kingdom).

<sup>605</sup> S/2020/555 and S/2020/1234.

<sup>606</sup> See S/2020/596.

<sup>607</sup> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Indonesia, Tunisia, United Kingdom, South Africa, Viet Nam, Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger and Russian Federation.

<sup>608</sup> See S/PV.8762.



reiterated the Secretary-General's call for the members of the Middle East Quartet, key Arab partners and the Israeli and Palestinian leadership to urgently re-engage and strengthen efforts to advance the goal of a negotiated two-State solution. During the discussion, Council members called for the resumption of negotiations between the parties, a halt to the expansion of Israeli settlements and the demolition of Palestinian houses in the West Bank and progress in intra-Palestinian reconciliation and elections. Some Council members welcomed President Abbas's call for an international conference with all concerned parties to engage in a peace process based on international law, United Nations resolutions and other internationally agreed parameters.<sup>609</sup>

In 2020, the practice of holding quarterly open debates was heavily affected by the pandemic and the inability to hold them in either the Security Council Chamber or the Economic and Social Council Chamber. As a result, following the first open debate, which took place on 21 and 22 January 2020, the members of the Council held videoconferences in connection with the item on 23 April, 21 July and 26 October.<sup>610</sup> In the context of those videoconferences, Council members delivered statements, as did the representatives of Israel and the State of Palestine. In addition, in accordance with the written understanding reached among Council members for the conduct of videoconferences, written statements were submitted by Member States and other entities and later compiled in letters from the President of the Council. In his briefings delivered during the quarterly videoconferences, the Special Coordinator focused on the prospect of annexation by Israel of parts of the occupied Palestinian territory as a result of the political agreement that had opened the way to the formation of the national emergency government in Israel, the continued violence between Israelis and Palestinians, the humanitarian situation in Gaza and the dynamics created on the ground by the COVID-19 pandemic. He also touched on the situations in Lebanon and the Golan and on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force. In January, during the first open debate of the year under the item, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and by the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.<sup>611</sup> At that meeting,<sup>612</sup> the

Council also heard briefings by the Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations. The Under-Secretary-General recalled the Secretary-General's call to all leaders to exercise maximum restraint and emphasized that the world could not afford another conflict. She stated that with the political process deadlocked, negative developments continued to undermine the prospects for a two-State solution, namely, the continued expansion of settlement activity and threat of annexation of parts of the West Bank, and the ongoing clashes and arrests in East Jerusalem. Regarding Gaza, while still extremely fragile, there had been a notable and welcome reduction in violence in and around Gaza. Despite the progress in some areas, humanitarian and economic steps would not resolve Gaza's immense challenges, since at their core these were political and required political solutions. She reported on the statement of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court announcing that the preliminary examination by the Court had concluded with the determination that all the statutory criteria under the Rome Statute for the opening of an investigation had been met. In doing so, the Under-Secretary-General expressed the view that, among other things, war crimes had been or were being committed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. In closing, she emphasized the continued urgency of resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements. The Assistant Secretary-General briefed the Council on her six-day visit to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, where she had met representatives of Palestinians and Israelis, as well as representatives of the international community. She stated that the meetings conveyed hardships, challenges and opportunities for positive change. On 21 July, the members of the Council held a videoconference<sup>613</sup> in connection with the item at which Council members heard briefings by the Special Coordinator, by the Director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research and by the President of the US/Middle East Project. In his briefing, the Special Coordinator warned the Council of the complex and destabilizing three-pronged crisis facing Palestinians and Israelis: an escalating health crisis as both struggled to contain the rapid spike of COVID-19 cases; a spiralling economic crisis as businesses closed, unemployment soared, protests increased and the economy suffered the financial impact of months of lockdowns and restrictions; and, finally, a mounting political confrontation, driven by the threat of Israeli annexation

<sup>609</sup> South Africa, China, Indonesia, Tunisia and Germany.

<sup>610</sup> See [S/2020/341](#), [S/2020/736](#) and [S/2020/1055](#).

<sup>611</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#). The first open debate of the year under this item took place over two days, on 21 and 22 January 2020, owing to the financial difficulties faced by the United Nations, which resulted in meetings of the Council being restricted to take place only from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

<sup>612</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#).

<sup>613</sup> See [S/2020/736](#).

of parts of the occupied West Bank and the steps taken in response by the Palestinian leadership. The Special Coordinator also informed the Council of the challenge in confronting the rapid increase in COVID-19 cases in Gaza due to the ending of coordination between the Palestinian Authority and Israel. The President of the US/Middle East Project suggested that the Council, along with the Secretary-General, explore a mechanism to assess and evaluate its record and effectiveness on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and that they examine convening a commission to appraise new approaches to resolve the long-standing conflict. The Director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research urged Council members to protect the legitimacy of the international system and reject the United States' "Peace to Prosperity" proposal, which would jeopardize a two-State solution.

During the open debate and videoconferences, Council members reiterated their opposition to the annexation, citing violation of international law and hindrance to the peace process. Council members also called on Israel to cease the building of new settlements and the demolition of Palestinian houses and property. A number of Council members urged the

international community to provide more support for Palestine, including through UNRWA, to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance, noting the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>614</sup> A majority of Council members also expressed support for an international peace conference as proposed by the President of the Palestinian Authority in an effort to restart negotiations.<sup>615</sup> Some Council members reminded the Council of its responsibility and mandate to ensure implementation of its resolutions.<sup>616</sup>

<sup>614</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#) (Belgium, Germany, Niger, Tunisia, Estonia, France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, China, Russian Federation, Viet Nam and Peru); [S/2020/341](#) (Belgium and Germany); [S/2020/736](#) (China, France, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia); and [S/2020/1055](#) (Russian Federation, Viet Nam, China, Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia, Niger and Tunisia).

<sup>615</sup> See [S/2020/736](#) (China, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/1055](#) (Viet Nam, China, France, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa).

<sup>616</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#) (South Africa); [S/2020/736](#) (Tunisia); and [S/2020/1055](#) (Indonesia and South Africa). For more details on the discussion, see part V, sect. II.B.

Table 1

**Meetings: the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8706</a> 21 January 2020 and <a href="#">S/PV.8706 (Resumption 1)</a> 22 January 2020			32 Member States <sup>a</sup>	Six invitees <sup>b</sup>	All Council members, all invitees	
<a href="#">S/PV.8717</a> 11 February 2020			Israel	United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority, President of the State of Palestine,	Secretary-General, 14 Council members, <sup>c</sup> all invitees	

**Part I. Consideration of questions under the responsibility of  
the Security Council for the maintenance of  
international peace and security**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
				Secretary-General of the League of Arab States		
<a href="#">S/PV.8730</a> 24 February 2020				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process <sup>d</sup>	Invitee	
<a href="#">S/PV.8762</a> 29 September 2020				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process <sup>d</sup>	All Council members, invitee	

<sup>a</sup> Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Bahrain, Bangladesh (on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation), Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal (also on behalf of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and United Kingdom), Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Sudan (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>b</sup> Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations

<sup>c</sup> The meeting was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Belgium. The representative of the Niger did not make a statement.

<sup>d</sup> The Special Coordinator joined the meeting by videoconference from Jerusalem.

**Table 2**  
**Videoconferences: the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
30 March 2020 <sup>a</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/263</a>	Letter dated 31 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
23 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/341</a>	Letter dated 27 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General	
20 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/430</a>	Letter dated 22 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
24 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/596</a>	Letter dated 26 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
21 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/736</a>	Letter dated 23 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
25 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/837</a>	Letter dated 27 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
26 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1055</a>	Letter dated 28 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
18 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1128</a>	Letter dated 20 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
21 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1275</a>	Letter dated 23 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<sup>a</sup> Owing to technical difficulties, the videoconference was closed instead of open. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

## 22. The situation concerning Iraq

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting in relation to the item entitled “The situation concerning Iraq”, which took the form of a briefing.<sup>617</sup> More information on that meeting, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held a total of four open videoconferences in connection with the item. The Council unanimously adopted resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), extending the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) until 31 May 2021.<sup>618</sup> More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, in 2020 Council members held informal consultations of the whole to discuss the item.<sup>619</sup>

In 2020, the Council heard regular briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI on the situation concerning

Iraq. In her four briefings in connection with the quarterly reports of the Secretary-General,<sup>620</sup> she informed Council members about the progress with regard to the formation of a new Government and the preparations for elections in June 2021. She also spoke about the progress made regarding the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives. The Special Representative also informed Council members about the vulnerable economic and security situation in Iraq, exacerbated by corruption, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued threat of terrorism by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da’esh). The Special Representative reported on the ongoing mass protests, emphasizing the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. She also spoke about the serious human rights violations and abuses and the pressing need for accountability and justice. The Special Representative continued to inform the Council regarding the relations between Baghdad and Erbil and the status of

<sup>617</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>618</sup> For more information on the mandate of UNAMI, part X, sect. II.

<sup>619</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 29. See also [S/2020/344](#).

<sup>620</sup> [S/2020/140](#), [S/2020/363](#), [S/2020/792](#) and [S/2020/1099](#).

negotiations between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the federal Government.

At the beginning of 2020, at the meeting of the Council on 3 March,<sup>621</sup> the Special Representative of the Secretary-General reported on the Prime Minister's announced resignation in late November 2019 and the failure to designate a new Prime Minister, as well as the subsequent challenges in forming a new Government. She noted that the political uncertainty was eroding public trust. The Special Representative also highlighted that delivering on the demands of the people required a collective effort and that every single political actor and leader was fully responsible for restoring the critical confidence of the public in their Government and its institutions. On the need for free, fair and credible elections, the Special Representative emphasized the importance of broad, fundamental systemic reform and a strong Independent High Electoral Commission and that the newly appointed Electoral Commission needed to demonstrate greater resolve in adhering to the principles of transparency, accountability, independence and professionalism. She stated that the volatile domestic and regional climate had taken an extraordinary toll on Iraq and that the state-to-state violence that had played out across Iraq earlier in the year was perceived as a clear and substantial threat to the country. The Special Representative affirmed that regional security developments should not eclipse domestic priorities and rightful demands for reform. The question was whether Iraq would flourish as a venue for peace and understanding or suffer as the arena of external battles.

At the videoconference held on 12 May,<sup>622</sup> against the backdrop of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Special Representative said that as the Iraqi health system was already near breaking point before the COVID-19 outbreak, the first priority remained to prevent a rapid spread of the virus. She also echoed the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire. The Special Representative reported to Council members on the recent formation of a new Government, with the confirmation by the Council of Representatives of Mustafa Al-Kadhimi as the new Prime Minister and approval of his government programme and ministers. Welcoming the long overdue development, she called for the swift completion of filling the remaining vacant positions, including the appointment of more women and minority representatives. She also noted that the economic situation had laid bare Iraq's vulnerability owing to the grave lack of economic diversification and reiterated the need to broaden Iraq's revenue base by

reducing its oil dependence, among other things. She also addressed the impact of COVID-19 on humanitarian access, noting that many access requests remained unapproved and that a practical, long-term solution was urgently required. She also said that the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, and some of the activities had to be postponed.

On 26 August and 24 November,<sup>623</sup> the Council heard briefings by the Special Representative in which she reported on the continued humanitarian challenges on the ground and noted the increasing gender-based violence amid dwindling options for victims to seek assistance and find shelter. She called for a simplified system that enabled immobilized humanitarian actors and supplies to rapidly reach people in need, while noting the hazardous conditions faced by humanitarian actors. The Special Representative also expressed concern with regard to the escalation in the Iraqi-Turkish border areas and urged both countries to resolve their differences through dialogue and cooperation with full respect for national sovereignty. She underlined the importance for Iraq to be given further room to focus on its domestic resilience instead of being used as a venue for different power struggles. The Special Representative reported that the Parliament had recently finalized the necessary electoral legislation and that UNAMI was ramping up its technical assistance in line with its mandate. In that connection, she further emphasized that Iraq's electoral institutional capacity needed to be strengthened and asked the relevant authorities to step up and think in terms of solutions instead of obstacles. She also reaffirmed that electoral preparations needed to remain free from political interference at all stages and made reference to the letter from the Government to the Security Council with a request for "more advice, support, technical assistance and electoral observation" within the framework of UNAMI support to Iraq.<sup>624</sup>

During the period under review, Council members reaffirmed their support for the work and mandate of UNAMI, in particular its technical electoral assistance and efforts to promote political dialogue and reconciliation, as well as its engagement with the Women's Advisory Group.<sup>625</sup> Some Council members called on the Iraqi authorities to continue implementing the recommendations of UNAMI to

<sup>621</sup> See [S/PV.8739](#).

<sup>622</sup> See [S/2020/397](#).

<sup>623</sup> See [S/2020/845](#) and [S/2020/1144](#).

<sup>624</sup> See [S/2020/1130](#).

<sup>625</sup> See [S/PV.8739](#) (United States, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation, France, South Africa and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines); and [S/2020/397](#) (Dominican Republic, Niger, South Africa and United Kingdom).



build on the progress made and encouraged the new Government to work closely with the Mission.<sup>626</sup> Council members also emphasized the importance of making progress on the political process and holding free, fair and inclusive elections in June 2021, and welcomed support, advice and technical assistance provided to Iraq by UNAMI in electoral preparations.<sup>627</sup> Some Council members also expressed concerns over the use of force against demonstrators and human rights violations in the context of public demonstrations and stressed the importance of ensuring the right to peaceful protest and freedom of expression and holding accountable those responsible.<sup>628</sup> On the new Government of Iraq, several Council members called for swift and effective action to implement reforms, including the participation of women and youth in Iraq's decision-making processes.<sup>629</sup> In that connection, some Council members spoke about the steady increase of cases of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, and called on UNAMI to actively engage with civil society organizations to better address the issue and encouraged the Government to take concrete steps to ensure the protection of victims.<sup>630</sup> Rejecting the attacks on the United States Embassy in Iraq and the Consulate of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Najaf, the representative of Iraq called on the Council to emphasize the need to respect Iraq's sovereignty, not to undermine its security and to assist in its efforts to ensure stability.<sup>631</sup> In his interventions, the representative of Iraq also emphasized the importance of non-interference and respect for the sovereignty, independence and

territorial integrity of Iraq and establishing friendly relations and cooperation with its neighbours and the international community.<sup>632</sup>

On 29 May, the Council extended the mandate of UNAMI until 31 May 2021, through the unanimous adoption of resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#).<sup>633</sup> In the resolution, the Council commended the Government of Iraq for its efforts to plan and execute free and fair Iraqi-led, Iraq-owned elections and welcomed the Government's request for further United Nations electoral advice, support and assistance in that regard.<sup>634</sup> The Council decided that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and UNAMI would further advise, support and assist the Government of Iraq and the Independent High Electoral Commission with efforts to plan and execute free and fair Iraqi-led, Iraqi-owned elections and referendums, including through regular technical reviews and detailed reporting on electoral preparations and processes, as part of the Secretary-General's regular reporting cycle.<sup>635</sup> The Council also decided that the Special Representative, at the request of the Government of Iraq and taking into account the letter from the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq to the Secretary-General,<sup>636</sup> should prioritize the provision of advice, support and assistance to the Government and people of Iraq on advancing inclusive political dialogue and national and community-level reconciliation.<sup>637</sup>

In addition, developments in 2020 relating to the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, established pursuant to resolution [2379 \(2017\)](#), were dealt with under the agenda item entitled "Threats to international peace and security".<sup>638</sup>

<sup>626</sup> See [S/PV.8739](#) (United Kingdom, France and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines); and [S/2020/397](#) (United Kingdom).

<sup>627</sup> See [S/2020/1144](#) (Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia and Viet Nam).

<sup>628</sup> See [S/PV.8739](#) (Germany, United Kingdom, France, Estonia, Belgium, Niger and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines).

<sup>629</sup> See [S/2020/397](#) (Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, South Africa and United Kingdom).

<sup>630</sup> *Ibid.* (Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa).

<sup>631</sup> See [S/PV.8739](#).

<sup>632</sup> See [S/PV.8739](#), [S/2020/397](#), [S/2020/845](#) and [S/2020/1144](#).

<sup>633</sup> Resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), para. 1. See also [S/2020/448](#).

<sup>634</sup> Resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), fifth preambular paragraph.

<sup>635</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2 (b). See also [S/2020/1130](#).

<sup>636</sup> See [S/2020/448](#).

<sup>637</sup> Resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), para. 2 (a).

<sup>638</sup> For further details, see part I, sect. 34.



**Table 1**  
**Meeting: the situation concerning Iraq**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for- against- abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8739</a> 3 March 2020	Twenty-fifth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution <a href="#">2107 (2013)</a> ( <a href="#">S/2020/133</a> )  Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution <a href="#">2470 (2019)</a> ( <a href="#">S/2020/140</a> )		Iraq	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq	All Council members, all invitees	

**Table 2**  
**Videoconferences: the situation concerning Iraq**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against- abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
12 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/397</a>	Letter dated 14 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/467</a>	Letter dated 29 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2522 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/460</a>
26 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/845</a>	Letter dated 28 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
24 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1144</a>	Letter dated 27 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## Thematic issues

### 23. United Nations peacekeeping operations

During the period under review, the Council did not hold any meetings in connection with the item entitled “United Nations peacekeeping operations”, but did, however, hold six open videoconferences in connection with the item. More information on the videoconferences is given in the table below. In addition, the Council adopted resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#) on the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers and resolution [2538 \(2020\)](#) on the role of women in peacekeeping. The resolutions were announced in open videoconferences in accordance with the procedures established following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>639</sup>

In 2020, Council members discussed the role of human rights in United Nations peacekeeping operations and held their annual briefing on peacekeeping reform and meetings with selected force commanders and police commissioners. Council members were briefed twice by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations and once each by the Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, the force commanders of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the Deputy Force Commander of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and the police commissioners of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and MINUSMA, as well as by the representative of a non-governmental organization from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

On 30 March, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#), by which it underscored the importance of ensuring that missions evolve their capacities and systems to remain agile and effective in implementing their mandates in specific operating contexts to enhance safety and security and mission protection, including through the provision of adequate medical facilities and critical capabilities.<sup>640</sup> In that regard, the Council requested the Secretary-General to continue to take all appropriate measures to strengthen,

where necessary, the situational awareness of missions through measures to improve their information acquisition and analysis capacities.<sup>641</sup> The Council called for measures to enhance operational health support and ensure adequate medical facilities and the deployment of qualified personnel.<sup>642</sup> The Council requested the Secretary-General to review and ensure uniformity of United Nations standards on training and performance and called on the United Nations to further operationalize the light coordination mechanism to facilitate and further coordinate improved training and capacity-building activities between Member States.<sup>643</sup> Moreover, countries contributing troops and police and field missions were encouraged to support field-focused, reliable and cost-effective new technologies.<sup>644</sup> The resolution also called on Member States and the United Nations to ensure safe, enabling and gender-sensitive work environments for women in peacekeeping operations and to address threats and violence against them.<sup>645</sup>

On 4 June, in the context of an open videoconference,<sup>646</sup> Council members held the annual briefing with selected force commanders of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Opening the videoconference, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations stated that peacekeeping operations, including their military components, had shown their capacity to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic by protecting their personnel and capacity to conduct critical operations, containing and mitigating the spread of the virus, supporting national authorities in their responses and protecting vulnerable communities. In the light of the pandemic, the Secretariat had reprioritized activities on strengthening peacekeeping as part of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative to ensure a focus on specific objectives that could be delivered within the following few months.

In addition to addressing the main challenges in their respective theatres of operation, the Force Commanders of MINUSMA and UNMISS and the Deputy Force Commander of UNDOF focused their remarks on the steps their missions had taken to

<sup>639</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>640</sup> Resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#), para. 4.

<sup>641</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 5.

<sup>642</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 9.

<sup>643</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 10 and 12.

<sup>644</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 13.

<sup>645</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 6.

<sup>646</sup> See [S/2020/514](#).

prevent the spread of the pandemic and ensure the continuity of mandate operations. The Force Commander of MINUSMA noted that the Mission's military component had implemented a strict quarantine policy, strict prioritizations of air operations and specific instructions for patrols to limit interactions with the population. Notwithstanding these measures, he said he had made it clear that it was not the time for the force to take a step back. Instead, he said that the Mission would continue to focus on the core priorities of the mandate and, at the same time, set conditions for adaptation, focusing on finding a proper balance among ends, ways and means. He also noted that the Mission had made a great deal of improvement in providing its peacekeepers with safety and security, and that there had been far fewer fatalities compared with the previous year. The Force Commander of UNMISS briefed Council members on the readjustment of the Mission's military component with a reduction in the number of troops conducting static protection duties at camps for the protection of civilians and their redeployment in conflict zones. The Deputy Force Commander of UNDOF informed Council members of plans and efforts to resume military inspections of the Alpha and Bravo sides of the ceasefire line. As key operational challenges, she noted ongoing violations of the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian Forces and a deteriorating security situation in the Dar'a Governorate in the Syrian Arab Republic with a shift of security incidents closer to the Force's area of operations.

On 7 July, at the initiative of Germany,<sup>647</sup> Council members held an open videoconference<sup>648</sup> on peace operations and human rights chaired by the Federal Minister of Defence of Germany. Briefing Council members, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights shared the view that human rights were central to the mandate of the Council to maintain international peace and security. Six peacekeeping operations and six special political missions had human rights components that contributed to the overall mission objectives to support political and peace processes. In that regard, the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights was an important element in ensuring that human rights served as a shared, effective basis of the United Nations system and in reinforcing collective engagement, contribution and the responsibility of all components of peace operations in advancing human rights.

<sup>647</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 26 June 2020 (S/2020/604).

<sup>648</sup> See S/2020/674.

The High Commissioner highlighted examples of the work and achievements of human rights components in peace operations, including on monitoring and reporting, conflict prevention and the protection of civilians, supporting accountability mechanisms, capacity-building and the implementation of the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces. Moreover, she stated that grounding regional operations in respect for human rights was crucial to their success and noted that her Office was supporting the development of a compliance framework for the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. The High Commissioner concluded by underlining that human rights components required resources and the strong political support of Council members to bind all peace operations around a common effective approach to crisis, from prevention to recovery.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of UNMISS stated that human rights was a core business of the Mission, as it was central both to peace and security and to the protection of civilians. UNMISS had structured its approach to human rights work into three broad streams, namely, documentation and holding abusers to account through definitive reporting and rapid investigation, ending impunity and ensuring accountability by capacity-building through mobile courts and strengthening the police and the judicial system, and engagement with the Government through action plans with national military and police forces and the forces of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition to create the conditions within those forces for the respect of human rights. Describing the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the President of Groupe LOTUS and Honorary Vice-President of the International Federation for Human Rights noted the cooperation between the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office within the United Nations Stabilization Operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and civil society organizations on information gathering and training, the provision of technical, logistical and security support and advocacy and awareness-raising during the COVID-19 pandemic. He emphasized the importance of strengthening political dialogue with the authorities at the national and local levels, of protecting civilians and of providing resources for the activities of the Joint Human Rights Office. He also called for strengthening the presence of MONUSCO throughout the country and for more engagement between civil society and the Mission in future assessments and exit strategy planning efforts.

Council members and other Member States emphasized the important role of human rights in the achievement of the overall objectives of United Nations peacekeeping operations. As key elements for the effective implementation of human rights mandates, Council members and other Member States cited the need for peacekeeping mandates to be clear and achievable, for adequate resources, expertise and training and for the increased deployment of women and their meaningful participation at all levels of decision-making. Several of the statements also underlined the importance of preventing and ensuring the accountability of peacekeepers for human rights violations, including sexual exploitation and abuse.<sup>649</sup> Some speakers expressed regret that the topic of human rights had been politicized.<sup>650</sup> The representatives of China and the Russian Federation stressed that human rights were auxiliary to the main objectives of peace operations, namely to support the political settlement of hotspot issues and to promote reconciliation and peacebuilding.<sup>651</sup> Some Council members also maintained that human rights mandates should be undertaken in a context-specific manner, taking into account the specific situation of the country and the mandate, as well as local customs and values.<sup>652</sup> Several speakers called for respect for the basic principles of peacekeeping in the context of human rights, including sovereignty and national ownership of human rights processes.<sup>653</sup> Some also highlighted the need for closer cooperation with host States, particularly on human rights capacity-building efforts.<sup>654</sup>

On 28 August, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2538 \(2020\)](#), by which it called upon Member States, the Secretariat and regional organizations to strengthen their collective efforts to promote the full, effective and meaningful participation of uniformed and civilian women in peacekeeping operations at all levels and in all positions, including in senior leadership.<sup>655</sup> The resolution requested Member States to implement a number of strategies and measures for this purpose, including: (a) disseminating

information and providing access to deployment opportunities; (b) providing access to training; (c) developing a national database of trained women personnel; (d) identifying and addressing barriers in the recruitment, deployment and promotion of women peacekeepers; (e) considering ways, as appropriate, to increase the participation of women in national militaries and police; (f) supporting the capacities of regional organizations in training; and (g) taking measures to provide support and incentives, including childcare and other relevant needs.<sup>656</sup> Furthermore, the Council called upon Member States and the Secretariat to ensure safe, enabling and gender-sensitive working environments for women in peacekeeping operations and urged them, where appropriate, to provide adequate and appropriate infrastructure and facilities for women in the missions.<sup>657</sup> The Council also urged peacekeeping operations to promote full, effective and meaningful participation of women in all components and functions and at all levels at headquarters and in the field, including through the establishment of mixed engagement teams.<sup>658</sup>

On 14 September, at an open videoconference,<sup>659</sup> the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations provided his annual briefing to Council members, pursuant to resolution [2378 \(2017\)](#), on efforts to strengthen peacekeeping as part of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative. He stated that the challenging circumstances related to COVID-19 had not impeded peacekeeping missions from providing effective support to political processes and the implementation of peace agreements. He also expressed encouragement over the progress made on the women and peace and security agenda, which had been enabled by a greater focus on data-driven tracking, and noted the expansion of political space for women's participation and leadership in peace and political processes across peacekeeping contexts. He observed that although the pandemic had affected the footprint of missions and restricted some patrolling, missions had taken creative steps to continue their protection work. More broadly, across the four large multidimensional missions, major force transformation processes had been conducted to shift mission postures and presence so as to strengthen strategic flexibility and operational adaptation. Progress had also been made in improving mission performance with the roll-out of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment System and the finalization of the integrated peacekeeping performance and accountability framework. Measures had been taken to

<sup>649</sup> China, Estonia, France, Viet Nam, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Ecuador, India, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Nepal and Peru.

<sup>650</sup> Russian Federation, South Africa and Sri Lanka.

<sup>651</sup> China and Russian Federation.

<sup>652</sup> China, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and India.

<sup>653</sup> China, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Viet Nam.

<sup>654</sup> Indonesia, United Kingdom, France, Tunisia and Morocco.

<sup>655</sup> Resolution [2538 \(2020\)](#), para. 1. The resolution was sponsored by all Council members. For more information on sponsorship of resolutions, see part II, sect. IX.B.

<sup>656</sup> Resolution [2538 \(2020\)](#), para. 2.

<sup>657</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 6.

<sup>658</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 12.

<sup>659</sup> See [S/2020/911](#).

ensure the operational readiness, including in terms of COVID-19 preparedness, of military and police units, increase representation of women both at Headquarters and in missions, strengthen the safety and security of personnel and strengthen partnerships with regional organizations and countries contributing troops and police.

Looking ahead, the Under-Secretary-General stated that, two years after the launch of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, the Secretariat had developed strategic priorities for the next phase of its implementation. In that regard, it was necessary, *inter alia*, to link all peacekeeping actions to overarching political strategies that furthered positive peace, ensured more substantive and strategic integration with development and peacebuilding actors, further enhanced performance and accountability and implemented the United Nations action plan for improving the security of United Nations peacekeeping. He also addressed the need to apply a gender perspective across all areas of work. In their remarks, Council members welcomed the progress made on peacekeeping reform and recognized the challenges and versatility of peacekeeping operations in adapting their work to the pandemic. Council members stressed the importance of continuing to strengthen performance and accountability frameworks. Discussions also addressed the need for sufficient resources and capacities, including training and equipment, further improvements on safety and security, strengthening cooperation with countries contributing troops and police and regional organizations and to increase the number of women personnel.

On 4 November, Council members held the annual meeting with police commissioners in an open videoconference.<sup>660</sup> In his opening remarks, the Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions provided an overview and examples of the work of police components in peace operations concerning partnerships with regional organizations, the protection of civilians, the implementation of performance evaluation standards and training, gender-responsive policing and enhancing women's participation and reinforcing the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse.

The Police Commissioner of BINUH highlighted the capacity-building work of the Mission's police component in support of the Haitian National Police to improve labour relations, achieve gender equality and prevent sexual and gender-based violence. The Police Commissioner of UNMISS stated that, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mission's police component had reduced its footprint inside protection of civilians sites, but had continued to respond to security situations and provide technical support to the South Sudan National Police Service and had also conducted sensitization activities on COVID-19. The police component was also playing a key role in the redesignation of protection of civilians sites to internally displaced persons camps.

The Police Commissioner of MINUSCA underlined that, to further improve the performance of the United Nations police, it was necessary to provide them with "attention, space and breathing room". In that regard, he noted the accomplishments of the Mission's police component, *inter alia*, in the use of community policing to improve the security situation in the PK5 district of Bangui, support elections and maintain resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Police Commissioner of MINUSMA underscored the important contribution of police components in the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding and to the success of exit strategies, as well as their supporting role in political processes and conflict resolution. In their remarks, Council members addressed various aspects of the function of police components, including their role in protecting civilians, the need to allocate sufficient and sustainable financial, operational and human resources and the need to further improve their performance and accountability. Several Council members called for gender-responsive policing and for the equal participation of women in police components. The representative of Tunisia, speaking on behalf of the African members of the Council and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Council a report on developments regarding United Nations policing in 2021, as the last report on United Nations policing had been issued in 2018.

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<sup>660</sup> See [S/2020/1092](#).



**Videoconferences: United Nations peacekeeping operations**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
30 March 2020 <sup>a</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/268</a>	Letter dated 31 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2518 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/249</a>
4 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/514</a>	Letter dated 8 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
7 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/674</a>	Letter dated 9 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
28 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/856</a>	Letter dated 28 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2538 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/851</a>
14 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/911</a>	Letter dated 16 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
4 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1092</a>	Letter dated 6 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<sup>a</sup> Owing to technical difficulties, instead of an open videoconference to announce the vote on resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#) the videoconference was closed. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

## 24. International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

In 2020, the Council held one meeting for the issuance of a presidential statement related to the work of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals.<sup>661</sup> More information on the meeting, including on the participants and outcome, is provided in table 1 below. Council members also held a total of three open videoconferences and adopted one resolution under Chapter VII of the Charter in connection with the item. The resolution was announced in an open videoconference in accordance with the procedures developed during the

COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>662</sup> More information on the videoconferences is given in table 2 below.

On 28 February, the Council issued a presidential statement by which it recalled that the Mechanism should be a small, temporary and efficient structure, whose functions and size would diminish over time.<sup>663</sup> It also recalled its decision that the Mechanism should operate for an initial period of four years starting from 1 July 2012 and its further decision that the Mechanism should continue to operate for subsequent periods of two

<sup>661</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II; on the International Residual Mechanism for International Tribunals, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2018*; and on the matters considered under the item, see *Repertoire, Supplement 1996–1999 to 2004–2007*.

<sup>662</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>663</sup> [S/PRST/2020/4](#), second paragraph.



years, further to its review by the Council.<sup>664</sup> The Council requested the Mechanism to present by 15 April 2020 its report on the progress of its work since the last review of the Mechanism in June 2018, including in completing its functions, with detailed schedules for the proceedings currently under consideration and factors relevant to projected completion dates.<sup>665</sup> By the presidential statement, the Council requested the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals to carry out a thorough examination of the Mechanism's report and of the report on the evaluation of the methods and work of the Mechanism by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), and to present its views and any findings or recommendations for the Council's consideration in its review of the work of the Mechanism.<sup>666</sup>

On 8 June, Council members held a videoconference<sup>667</sup> in which they heard the semi-annual briefings by the President of the Mechanism and by its Prosecutor. At the meeting, the President presented the latest report on the work of the Mechanism, submitted pursuant to paragraph 16 of Security Council resolution 1966 (2010).<sup>668</sup> In their statements, the President and the Prosecutor affirmed that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mechanism had remained operational and ensured full business continuity in an effective manner.<sup>669</sup> While the pandemic had affected in-court proceedings, cases had progressed with relatively few disruptions. Nonetheless, cases that were on track to conclude by the end of 2020 were then expected to conclude in the first part of 2021. In addition to providing a detailed account of the trials and proceedings during the reporting period, the President and the Prosecutor highlighted the arrest of Félicien Kabuga and the confirmation of the death of Augustin Bizimana, two of the three main fugitives indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and thanked the contribution of France and the other Member States and actors in the achievements. The Prosecutor affirmed that the role of the Council had been decisive in that regard, by repeatedly calling upon all Member States to provide cooperation in the search for the fugitives and assisting the Mechanism to obtain the intelligence and information needed to move the investigations forward. In that context, the President and the Prosecutor encouraged cooperation and trust in bringing more fugitives to justice. With regard to the

situation of the nine acquitted and released persons in Arusha, the President reiterated that the Mechanism could not resolve the matter on its own and urged the Council's support to help end that "untenable situation". Concerning early release, the President reported on a revised Practice Direction on applications for pardon, commutation of sentence or early release to clarify the procedures involved and ensure a streamlined process. Marking the twenty-fifth anniversaries of the genocides in Rwanda and Srebrenica, the President reminded delegations of the perils of endemic hatred, division and denial. The Prosecutor expressed regret that he had repeatedly reported to the Council that the denial of crimes and glorification of convicted war criminals remained immense challenges and called upon all officials and public figures to publicly condemn such acts. The Prosecutor concluded by welcoming the recognition in the report of OIOS<sup>670</sup> of his Office's commitment to the Council's vision of the Mechanism as "a small, temporary and efficient structure" and to have also favourably assessed the Mechanism's work and innovative methods.<sup>671</sup>

During the discussion, Council members welcomed the Mechanism's efforts aimed at limiting as much as possible the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its activities. Council members also commended the international cooperation with the Office of the Prosecutor, which had successfully resulted in the arrest of Félicien Kabuga. In that connection, several speakers reiterated their calls on relevant Member States to provide the necessary assistance to the Office of the Prosecutor with the search and arrest of the remaining six fugitives indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.<sup>672</sup> The representative of South Africa acknowledged the country's lack of cooperation concerning a fugitive located on its territory in mid-2018. He expressed regret that challenges presented by South Africa's domestic law had unfortunately constrained the country's cooperation until December 2019 and noted, however, that this had since been addressed. Several delegations applauded the Mechanism's efforts to integrate a gender perspective into its work and activities.<sup>673</sup> Speakers welcomed the fact that the Mechanism had implemented most of the recommendations made by

<sup>664</sup> *Ibid.*, third paragraph.

<sup>665</sup> *Ibid.*, fifth paragraph.

<sup>666</sup> *Ibid.*, sixth paragraph.

<sup>667</sup> See [S/2020/527](#).

<sup>668</sup> See [S/2020/309](#).

<sup>669</sup> See [S/2020/527](#).

<sup>670</sup> [S/2020/236](#).

<sup>671</sup> See [S/2020/527](#).

<sup>672</sup> Belgium, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>673</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia.

OIOS in 2018 and 2019.<sup>674</sup> In that connection and owing to the impact of COVID-19 on the anticipated timelines, some Council members encouraged the management of the Mechanism to make the necessary adjustments to implement the recommendations of OIOS so as to adhere to clear and focused projections of completion timelines.<sup>675</sup>

On 25 June, the Council adopted, not unanimously, resolution [2529 \(2020\)](#) under Chapter VII of the Charter, by which it appointed the Prosecutor of the Mechanism with effect from 1 July 2020 until 30 June 2022.<sup>676</sup> In the resolution, the Council continued to urge all States to intensify their cooperation with and render all necessary assistance to the Mechanism, in particular to achieve the arrest and surrender of all remaining fugitives indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda as soon as possible.<sup>677</sup> In that regard, the Council welcomed the arrest of Félicien Kabuga, indicted for genocide and crimes against humanity allegedly committed in Rwanda in 1994, commended the cooperation between the Office of the Prosecutor, law enforcement and judicial authorities in France and the other actors that had contributed to the arrest of the fugitive, and recognized that it was an important step in terms of cooperation with the Mechanism.<sup>678</sup> The Council welcomed the report submitted by the Mechanism to the Council and the report of OIOS on the evaluation of the methods and work of the Mechanism.<sup>679</sup> In that regard, the Council requested the Mechanism to implement the recommendations made by the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals and to continue to take steps to further enhance its efficiency and effective and transparent management, including the production of clear and focused projections of completion timelines at the earliest stage possible and disciplined adherence thereto.<sup>680</sup> The Council also requested the Mechanism to include in its six-monthly reports to the Council information on progress achieved in implementing resolution [2529 \(2020\)](#).<sup>681</sup> With a view to strengthening independent oversight of the Mechanism, the Council recalled that, as set out in its presidential statement of 28 February 2020, future reviews carried out pursuant to paragraph 16 of resolution [1966 \(2010\)](#) should include evaluation

reports sought from OIOS with respect to the methods and work of the Mechanism.<sup>682</sup> In the explanation of the vote submitted by the delegation of the Russian Federation,<sup>683</sup> that delegation noted that it had consistently abstained in the voting on draft resolutions on the extension of the work of the Mechanism because of its unsatisfactory work, which continued not to allow the Council to proceed with its legal closure. One of the major problems raised by the delegation was the absence of a judicial planning system. Additionally, the delegation expressed concern about the protection of the rights of persons detained under the authority of the Mechanism, in particular the quality and timeliness of the medical care provided to them.

On 14 December, in an open videoconference,<sup>684</sup> Council members heard the second of the semi-annual briefings by the President of the Mechanism and its Prosecutor, in which they presented the latest progress report on the work of the Mechanism.<sup>685</sup> During the videoconference,<sup>686</sup> the President of the Mechanism reflected on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution [1966 \(2010\)](#) and on how the flexible approach adopted by the Mechanism during the COVID-19 global pandemic had enabled the Mechanism to remain operational. In view of the latest developments, the President stated that the Mechanism was poised to conclude a significant proportion of its pending judicial caseload by the end of May 2021. The President and the Prosecutor provided details about their activities and results during the reporting period. They also laid out the priorities for the Mechanism to fulfil its mandate, including the search for the remaining fugitives at large indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the relocation of the nine persons acquitted and released by the Tribunal, and assistance to national jurisdictions prosecuting international crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. In that respect, the President noted that the Mechanism was gratified to note the terms of resolution [2529 \(2020\)](#), in which the Council urged all States to intensify their cooperation with, and render all the necessary assistance to, the Mechanism regarding the remaining Rwanda Tribunal fugitives, as well as regarding the protracted situation of the nine acquitted and released individuals in Arusha. The Prosecutor added that for that work to be successfully completed, it was critical for the Council to send an unmistakable message that Member States

<sup>674</sup> Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and United Kingdom.

<sup>675</sup> Indonesia and Russian Federation.

<sup>676</sup> Resolution [2529 \(2020\)](#), para. 1.

<sup>677</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 3.

<sup>678</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 5.

<sup>679</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 7. See also [S/2020/309](#) and [S/2020/236](#).

<sup>680</sup> Resolution [2529 \(2020\)](#), para. 9.

<sup>681</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 10.

<sup>682</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 14.

<sup>683</sup> See [S/2020/602](#).

<sup>684</sup> See [S/2020/1236](#).

<sup>685</sup> See [S/2020/763](#).

<sup>686</sup> See [S/2020/1236](#).

should treat the matter as an urgent priority and offer his Office their full cooperation.

Council members commended the Mechanism for the measures taken to efficiently continue its operations despite the constraints associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, welcoming, in particular, the fact that in-court proceedings, previously postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions, had resumed in August 2020. Delegations welcomed the progress made in important rulings, including *Prosecutor v. Ratko Mladić* and *Prosecutor v. Stanišić and Simatović*, as well as the transfer of Félicien Kabuga to the Mechanism's custody and the subsequent commencement of the new pretrial proceedings in his case. Several delegations acknowledged the issue of relocating individuals who had been acquitted and released by the Rwanda Tribunal and expressed hope that the matter would be resolved.<sup>687</sup> In connection with the remaining six fugitives indicted by the Tribunal, a majority of Council members urged States, especially States where fugitives were suspected of being at large, to intensify their cooperation with the Mechanism and to arrest and surrender all of the remaining fugitives.<sup>688</sup> In that regard, the delegation of South Africa assured Council members that the recommendations made by the Prosecutor would

receive the necessary attention by the Government and reaffirmed South Africa's determination to continue all efforts to trace and surrender the fugitives from justice. Additionally, the delegation of the Russian Federation stated that although in resolution [2529 \(2020\)](#) the Council had indicated the need to uphold the rights of persons held in custody, including the right to medical attention, the report failed to inform the Council on how those rights were being implemented. The delegation expressed particular concern regarding the health of General Ratko Mladić. Marking the commemorations of the events that had taken place in Rwanda and in the Western Balkans in the 1990s, a number of Council members condemned the continued denial of genocide and war crimes and the glorification of war criminals and urged those responsible to refrain from statements denying the crimes that had been committed.<sup>689</sup>

During the period under review, the Council also took note of the intention of the Secretary-General to renew the mandate of the President of the Mechanism for a new term of office, as well as to reappoint 25 nominated judges, all with effect from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2022.<sup>690</sup>

<sup>687</sup> China, Dominican Republic, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Viet Nam.

<sup>688</sup> Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>689</sup> Belgium, France, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>690</sup> See [S/2020/580](#) and [S/2020/581](#). See also [S/2020/616](#). For more information on actions of the Council concerning the judges of the Mechanism, see part IV, sect. I.D, and part IX, sect. IV.

**Table 1**  
**Meeting: International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8737</a> 28 February 2020						<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/4</a>

**Table 2**  
**Videoconferences: International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
8 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/527</a>	Letter dated 10 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
25 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/602</a>	Letter dated 26 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2529 (2020)</a> 14-0-1 <sup>a</sup> (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/590</a>
14 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1236</a>	Letter dated 18 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<sup>a</sup> *For*: Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: Russian Federation.

## 25. Children and armed conflict

During the period under review, the Council held two meetings, including one high-level meeting, and issued two presidential statements in connection with the item entitled “Children and armed conflict”. The meetings took the form of a briefing and a debate.<sup>691</sup> More information on the meetings, including on the participants, speakers and outcomes, is provided in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held one open videoconference under the item.<sup>692</sup> More information on the videoconference is provided in table 2 below.<sup>693</sup>

In 2020, discussions in the Council focused on the integration of child protection issues into peace processes and peace agreements, attacks against schools and the impact of armed conflict on children’s education, and the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict for 2019.<sup>694</sup> Council members were briefed twice by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and by the Executive Director of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). The Council also received briefings by the Secretary-General, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union and four representatives of civil society.

On 12 February, at the initiative of Belgium, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>695</sup> the Council held a high-level meeting under the sub-item entitled

“Integrating child protection into peace processes”.<sup>696</sup> At the outset of the meeting, the Council issued a presidential statement renewing its call to Member States, United Nations entities, the Peacebuilding Commission and other parties concerned to integrate child protection provisions at the early stages of all peace processes.<sup>697</sup> The Council commended the work by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, together with relevant child protection actors, to develop a United Nations practical guidance document on the integration of child protection into peace processes and encouraged the Secretary-General to disseminate the practical guidance broadly.<sup>698</sup> In the statement, the Council encouraged mediators, facilitators and other negotiators, including Member States and regional and subregional organizations, to use the practical guidance note as a tool in peace and mediation processes.<sup>699</sup>

In his remarks at the meeting,<sup>700</sup> the Secretary-General stated that children under the age of 18 made up more than half of the population in countries affected by war and they were among the most vulnerable. Notwithstanding the progress made in raising awareness on the issue of children in armed conflict in the past 21 years, including through the engagement of the Council, the figures on grave violations against children continued to rise. According

<sup>691</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>692</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 14.

<sup>693</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>694</sup> [S/2020/525](#).

<sup>695</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 5 February 2020 ([S/2020/97](#)).

<sup>696</sup> See [S/PV.8721](#).

<sup>697</sup> [S/PRST/2020/3](#), seventh paragraph.

<sup>698</sup> *Ibid.*, ninth and tenth paragraphs. See the letter dated 11 February 2020 from the Chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2020/114](#)), drawing attention to the guidance note entitled “Practical guidance for mediators to protect children in situations of armed conflict”.

<sup>699</sup> [S/PRST/2020/3](#), thirteenth paragraph.

<sup>700</sup> See [S/PV.8721](#).

to the Secretary-General, the practical guidance for mediators being launched by the Secretariat was the next step in the overall strategy to put children at the heart of protection, peacebuilding and prevention efforts. The guidance recognized that children's needs and rights had to be considered in all phases of conflict, from prevention to mediation and recovery, through sustainable inclusive development. The Secretary-General added that, as important as the guidance was, it was not enough, and he urged all Member States to take concrete action to prioritize the protection of children at the national, regional and global levels.

The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union stated that it was critical that all actors who were engaged in mediation and peace processes incorporated child protection language and provisions in peace agreements and cited the peace agreements in Burundi, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Sudan as examples of the efforts of the African Union and regional economic communities and mechanisms in that regard. He described the practical guidance document as an invaluable tool for African Union mediators, envoys and member States engaged in peace processes. In her statement, the Chair of the Advisory Board of Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, a global network of human rights and humanitarian organizations, observed that peace agreements that addressed child protection remained the exception, not the norm. In that regard, she explained that Watchlist had prepared a checklist of provisions related to children and armed conflict in ceasefire and peace agreements, which had been used as inspiration for the guidance that was being launched by the United Nations and Member States. Some of the key components included prioritizing child protection in the agendas of peace talks from the very beginning, ensuring that all parties explicitly agreed to end the six grave violations against children, and including provisions in peace agreements to address disarmament, demobilization and reintegration for children associated with armed forces, education, post-conflict programming, transitional justice, accountability and reparations mechanisms, and monitoring of child protection provisions. She urged the Council to take a series of steps, including to request that all conflict analyses include an assessment of the impact of armed conflict on children to ensure that such issues were dealt with at the beginning of any peace effort; to ensure that country-specific resolutions on peace processes emphasized the need for explicit and comprehensive provisions for child protection; to urge mediators, the United Nations, parties to conflict and other stakeholders to ensure the meaningful

participation of affected children and that their views were taken into account; and to insist that the Secretary-General's annual list of perpetrators of violations against children be accurate and evidence based, utilizing the data collected by the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict reflected in resolution 1612 (2005).

The King of the Belgians spoke immediately after the briefers and stated that saving children affected by conflict required an ongoing policy, joint prevention and remediation efforts and the tireless marshalling of financial and human resources. He also affirmed it would be possible to make lasting peace by listening to them, acknowledging their suffering and reintegrating them into society through unrelenting support. In their deliberations, Council members welcomed the launching of the practical guidance, which some considered a "living document".<sup>701</sup> Council members also called for its implementation by all concerned and underlined the importance for peace processes and agreements to address child protection concerns as a requirement for achieving durable peace. In that regard, some Council members highlighted the potential for collaboration with regional organizations in the protection of children such as the African Union,<sup>702</sup> the Intergovernmental Authority on Development,<sup>703</sup> and the European Union.<sup>704</sup> Several Council members expressed the view that child protection issues must be taken into account at all phases of armed conflict,<sup>705</sup> from prevention to peacebuilding, as did the views of children on issues affecting them.<sup>706</sup> A number of Council members emphasized the importance of inclusive and comprehensive reintegration programmes for children.<sup>707</sup>

At the videoconference held on 23 June,<sup>708</sup> the Special Representative cited three positive developments on the children and armed conflict agenda in 2019. First, the adoption by parties to conflict of over 30 action plans, road maps, command orders and other measures to better protect children. Secondly, the search for peace in 2019 had yielded seven different peace dialogues and processes in children and armed conflict situations. Thirdly, the release of some 13,200 children by parties to conflict

<sup>701</sup> Viet Nam and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

<sup>702</sup> France.

<sup>703</sup> Viet Nam.

<sup>704</sup> Germany.

<sup>705</sup> Indonesia, South Africa and Russian Federation.

<sup>706</sup> United Kingdom, Dominican Republic and South Africa.

<sup>707</sup> Indonesia, South Africa, Viet Nam, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Russian Federation, China and Germany.

<sup>708</sup> See [S/2020/594](#).



as a result of advocacy by the United Nations. Presenting the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict for 2019, she noted that the number of grave violations against children, despite having decreased from 2018, remained very high with more than 25,000 being verified by the United Nations. Noting that the monitoring and reporting mechanism was only as strong as the resources and capacities available for its functioning, the Special Representative said that the Council and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly must ensure that when a new peacekeeping or political mission was set up or the budget of an existing mission was negotiated, enough child-protection capacity was mandated and retained.

The Executive Director of UNICEF noted the progress achieved since the adoption by the Council of resolution 1612 (2005) and the establishment of the monitoring and reporting mechanism, including on the release of children from armed forces and groups, engagement with parties to conflict and the definition of normative frameworks. She stressed the need for the Council to call for action in five key areas, namely, the signing of action plans by parties to conflict, the immediate release of children in detention, the repatriation of nationals and their children, investment in education and vocational training for reintegrated children, and urgent action to respect and protect water and sanitation infrastructure. At the videoconference, Council members also heard a statement by Mariam, a member of the National Children's Parliament of Mali. She elaborated on the consequences of wars and conflicts for children, including killings, abduction or forcible recruitment by armed groups, deprivation of education, family separation and rape. She asked Member States to take action to protect children, including in times of conflict and war, expressed the wish of children to participate in decision-making that concerned them and called on Council members to help to improve the living conditions of children and to prevent them from being victims of conflict.

In their statements, Council members and other speakers condemned the scale of violations against children committed in the past 15 years, a situation that had been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Speakers noted the progress made on the children and armed conflict agenda since the adoption of resolution 1612 (2005), in particular through the work of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, the monitoring and reporting mechanism and the annual report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict and the corresponding listing procedure. Speakers widely underscored the crucial importance of safe access to

education for children, with some also stressing the importance of comprehensive reintegration programmes.<sup>709</sup> A number of speakers condemned the disproportionate impact of conflict on girls, including acts of sexual violence and the denial of access to education.<sup>710</sup> Many speakers also drew attention to violations against children committed by terrorist and extremist armed groups.<sup>711</sup>

On 10 September, at the initiative of the Niger, which held the Presidency for the month, the Council held an open debate<sup>712</sup> under the sub-item entitled "Attacks against schools as a grave violation of children's rights".<sup>713</sup> At the outset of the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement, in which it reaffirmed the right of children to education and the contribution of education to the achievement of peace and security.<sup>714</sup> In the statement, the Council reiterated its strong condemnation of attacks as well as threats of attacks in contravention of applicable international humanitarian law against schools, children, teachers and other persons entitled to protection who were connected to schools and urged all parties to armed conflict to immediately cease such attacks and threats and to refrain from actions that impeded children's access to education.<sup>715</sup> The Council also expressed deep concern at the military use of schools in contravention of applicable international humanitarian law and urged all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian character of schools in accordance with international humanitarian law.<sup>716</sup> Condemning the lack of accountability for violations committed against children, teachers and other persons entitled to protection who were connected to schools in armed conflict, the Council urged Member States to ensure that attacks on persons entitled to protection connected to schools and against schools in contravention of international humanitarian law were investigated and those responsible were duly

<sup>709</sup> Belgium, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Viet Nam, Argentina, Austria, Chile, El Salvador, European Union, Greece, Malta, Mexico, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay.

<sup>710</sup> France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom, Afghanistan, Argentina, Canada, El Salvador, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia.

<sup>711</sup> Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United States, Afghanistan, Angola, Egypt, India, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

<sup>712</sup> See [S/PV.8756](#).

<sup>713</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 1 September 2020 ([S/2020/881](#)).

<sup>714</sup> [S/PRST/2020/8](#), sixth paragraph.

<sup>715</sup> *Ibid.*, seventh paragraph.

<sup>716</sup> *Ibid.*, eighth paragraph.



prosecuted.<sup>717</sup> The Council also urged Member States to develop effective measures to prevent and address attacks and threats of attacks against schools, including, as appropriate, through the development of domestic legal frameworks to ensure respect for their relevant international legal obligations.<sup>718</sup>

At the meeting,<sup>719</sup> the Special Representative made a statement in which she expressed concern about the negative trend of attacks against schools and what appeared to be an emerging tactic of war, particularly in the Sahel, which the pandemic had made even worse. She urged all parties to conflict to better protect students and educational personnel and to respect the civilian nature of school infrastructure. The Executive Director of UNICEF noted that one fifth of the 494 verified attacks on schools in 2019 had taken place in West and Central Africa, including in the Sahel region. She explained that denial of education was just part of the challenge faced by children and that out-of-school children were at higher risk of recruitment by armed forces or groups, gender-based violence, child marriage and early pregnancy, abuse and trafficking. She called on donor Governments to commit to multi-year, flexible funding to help communities to rebuild education systems over the longer term. The Executive Director further called on Council members to lend their voices and influence to condemn all attacks on schools and children, to take concrete measures to fulfil obligations and commitments to protect education from attack and to end impunity for those who violated international law. She also encouraged future Presidents of the Council to make education under attack a regular thematic topic for the Council's deliberations on a sustained basis during the year.

The representative of the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, a civil society organization, described the Sahel region as an area of critical concern. She called on the Council to continue to lead the agenda on ending attacks on education and holding the perpetrators of such violations accountable. Among other steps, she urged the Council to ensure that United Nations peace operations and special political missions had a child-protection mandate and the backing necessary to effectively monitor and report on attacks on education and the military use of schools, including through more consistent disaggregation of data related to attacks on education. Two civil society representatives from the Niger, Hadiza and Rimana Youssef Assane Mayaki, the latter a representative of the Youth Parliament of the Niger, further described

the impact of armed conflict on the education of children in the Niger and the Sahel region. Hadiza called on the Council to ensure the protection of children from attacks and safeguard the rights and duties of children, and on United Nations entities to mobilize international cooperation to fight the increased threat of attacks against schools by parties to armed conflict and step up international efforts towards the prevention of violence against children.

In their statements, Council members and other participants at the meeting underscored the importance of respecting the civilian character of schools and ensuring access to quality education for all children, especially for girls and other children in vulnerable situations. Council members and non-members alike called on Member States to strengthen the protection of children and education in armed conflict and to join the Safe Schools Declaration.<sup>720</sup>

In 2020, the Council addressed the children and armed conflict agenda in a number of its country- and region-specific decisions, as well as in decisions relating to thematic items. Selected provisions of decisions in which the Council explicitly referenced actions or measures concerning the children and armed conflict agenda in 2020 are listed in table 3. In 2020, the Council, *inter alia*: (a) condemned and demanded the cessation of violations and abuses against children, including attacks on schools and deprivation of access to education, and called for accountability and compliance with international instruments; (b) called for the implementation of action plans and programmes on children and armed conflict, with a new emphasis on preventing and responding to sexual violence against children; (c) underscored the importance of taking into account child protection concerns in the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration processes and security sector reform, with a particular focus on practical measures to ensure the protection of schools; (d) requested monitoring, analysis and reporting on violations and abuses against children; (e) mandated United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions with child protection tasks; (f) imposed or called for the imposition of measures against perpetrators of violations and abuses against children; and (g) strengthened its calls for the integration of child protection considerations into peace processes and peace agreements.

<sup>717</sup> *Ibid.*, eleventh paragraph.

<sup>718</sup> *Ibid.*, fourteenth paragraph.

<sup>719</sup> See [S/PV.8756](#).

<sup>720</sup> See [S/PV.8756](#) (Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Belgium, Dominican Republic, France, Germany and United Kingdom); and [S/2020/906](#) (Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, Peru, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and Uruguay).

Table 1  
Meetings: children and armed conflict

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8721</a> 12 February 2020	Integrating child protection into peace processes  Letter dated 5 February 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General ( <a href="#">S/2020/97</a> )			Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Chair of the Advisory Board of Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict	Secretary-General, 13 Council members, <sup>a,b</sup> all invitees <sup>c</sup>	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/3</a>
<a href="#">S/PV.8756</a> 10 September 2020	Attacks against schools as a grave violation of children's rights  Letter dated 1 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General ( <a href="#">S/2020/881</a> )			Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Executive Director of UNICEF, representative of the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attacks, Hadiza, representative of the Youth Parliament of the Niger	12 Council members, <sup>d</sup> all invitees <sup>e,f</sup>	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>

<sup>a</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger and Tunisia), United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>b</sup> Belgium was represented by its King and by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence. Indonesia was represented by its Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs. Estonia was represented by its Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>c</sup> The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union participated in the meeting by videoconference from Addis Ababa.

<sup>d</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>e</sup> The Special Representative, the Executive Director of UNICEF, Hadiza and the representative of the Youth Parliament of the Niger participated in the meeting by videoconference.

<sup>f</sup> In accordance with the procedures agreed upon by Council members during the COVID-19 pandemic, including those related to the conduct of in-person meetings, statements by Member States not members of the Council and other entities were submitted in writing and circulated as a document of the Council ([S/2020/906](#)). For more information on the working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

Table 2  
**Videoconferences: children and armed conflict**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
23 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/594</a>	Letter dated 26 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

Table 3  
**Provisions relevant to children and armed conflict, by theme and agenda item**

	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
<b>Condemnation of and demands for cessation of violations and abuses against children and calls for accountability and compliance with international instruments</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution <a href="#">2513 (2020)</a>	5
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	23
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	6, 11, 12, 13, 54 (c)
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	6
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a>	33
		Resolution <a href="#">2540 (2020)</a>	9, 12
		Resolution <a href="#">2554 (2020)</a>	20
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	29
		Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	25
<b>Thematic</b>	Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/3</a>	second, third, seventeenth
		<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>	sixth, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, fourteenth, twenty-sixth
<b>Action plans and programmes on children and armed conflict</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution <a href="#">2543 (2020)</a>	6 (g)
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	23
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	11, 29 (ii) (k)
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	55
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a>	33
			Resolution <a href="#">2540 (2020)</a>

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	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	29, 30
		Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a>	2 (iii) (d)
<b>Thematic</b>	Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>	eighth, fourteenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth
<b>Child protection in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	11, 32 (c) (i), 43
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	17, 19, 29 (ii) (g), 29 (ii) (i), 31
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	28 (a) (iii), 55
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	8 (a) (vi), 29
		Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a>	2 (ii) (b)
<b>Thematic</b>	Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/3</a>	fifteenth, sixteenth
		<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>	fifteenth
	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a>	8
<b>Monitoring, analysis and reporting on violations and abuses against children</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution <a href="#">2543 (2020)</a>	6 (g)
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	32 (d) (ii)
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	31
	The situation in Libya	Resolution <a href="#">2542 (2020)</a>	1 (ix), 8
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	28 (e) (ii)
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	8 (d) (ii)
		Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	26
<b>Thematic</b>	Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>	twelfth, thirteenth
<b>Child protection mandates in United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution <a href="#">2543 (2020)</a>	6 (f), 6 (g)
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	31 (a) (iii), 32 (c) (i), 43
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	29 (i) (c), 29 (ii) (g), 29 (ii) (i), 29 (ii) (k), 31
	The situation concerning Iraq	Resolution <a href="#">2522 (2020)</a>	2 (f)
	The situation in Libya	Resolution <a href="#">2542 (2020)</a>	8
	The situation Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	28 (a) (iii), 28 (c) (iii), 28 (e) (ii), 53, 55

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2540 (2020)</a>	5 (h)
Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	8 (a) (i), 8 (a) (vi), 8 (a) (vii), 19, 30
	Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a>	2 (ii) (b), 2 (iii) (d)
<b>Thematic</b>	Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	27
Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>	twenty-first
<b>Measures against the perpetrators of violations and abuses against children</b>		
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a> 13
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution <a href="#">2511 (2020)</a> 6
		Resolution <a href="#">2551 (2020)</a> 21
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2521 (2020)</a> 15 (d), 15 (f), 21
<b>Integration of child protection into peace processes and peace agreements</b>		
<b>Country and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a> 23
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a> 54
<b>Thematic</b>	Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/3</a> seventh, eighth, twelfth, thirteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth

## 26. Protection of civilians in armed conflict

During the period under review, the Council held no meetings in connection with the item entitled “Protection of civilians in armed conflict”. Council members did, however, hold four open videoconferences in connection with the item.<sup>721</sup> More information on the videoconferences is given in table 1 below.<sup>722</sup>

On 21 April, at the initiative of the Dominican Republic,<sup>723</sup> which held the Presidency for the month, the Council held an open videoconference on the topic of “Protection of civilians from conflict-induced hunger”. At the videoconference,<sup>724</sup> the Council heard briefings by the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) and the

Secretary-General of the Norwegian Refugee Council. At the outset, the Director-General of FAO welcomed the Council’s engagement on the subject and its continued recognition of the relationship between conflict and hunger. He focused his remarks on how the *2020 Global Report on Food Crises: Joint Analysis for Better Decisions* by the Food Security Information Network clearly showed the link between conflict and rising levels of acute food insecurity, especially in contexts of instability, such as in South Sudan, Yemen and the Sahel. In that connection, he stated that the experience of FAO showed that interventions supporting livelihoods and food security contributed to local peace and broader peace processes, as they addressed not only the symptoms but also the root causes of conflict. He stressed that conflict prevention and acting early to reduce the impact of conflict were highly effective steps that could be taken to avert and reduce acute food insecurity. In that sense, prevention was needed as conflicts, extreme weather, desert locusts, economic shocks and COVID-19 were likely to push additional millions of people into acute food

<sup>721</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>722</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 16.

<sup>723</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 14 April 2020 ([S/2020/299](#)).

<sup>724</sup> See [S/2020/340](#).

insecurity in 2020. By closely monitoring the evolution of those shocks, FAO could rapidly intervene to mitigate their impact. In that regard, he expressed the commitment of FAO to rising to that challenge and concluded by stating that it would continue supporting the Council by providing professional consultation with up-to-date information and analysis on food security in conflict contexts, which would facilitate the Council's timely action to avert food crises. The Executive Director of WFP said that the world was not only facing a global health pandemic but also a global humanitarian catastrophe. With millions of civilians living in conflict-scarred nations and being pushed to the brink of starvation, the spectre of famine was "a very real and dangerous possibility". While commending the Council for its historic decision to adopt resolution 2417 (2018), he emphasized the need to live up to the pledge to protect the most vulnerable and act immediately to save lives. In that regard, it was critical for the global community to come together to defeat COVID-19 and protect the most vulnerable nations and communities from its potentially devastating effects. WFP was the logistical backbone for the humanitarian world, even more so for the global effort to beat the pandemic, and he urged the Council to lead the way, underscoring the importance of a global ceasefire, as called for by the Secretary-General, swift and unimpeded humanitarian access to all vulnerable communities and coordinated action to support life-saving humanitarian assistance. The Secretary-General of the Norwegian Refugee Council focused his remarks on the need for help from the Council concerning field-based obstacles to reach civilians in need of assistance in conflict situations. In that regard, he highlighted five areas requiring particular action from the Council, namely, safe and unimpeded humanitarian access to all populations in need; stronger humanitarian diplomacy to promote humanitarian access; strengthening the instrument of deconfliction with parties to armed conflicts; standard exemptions for humanitarian aid, including food and agricultural products, in counter-terrorism laws and sanctions regimes; and strengthening of monitoring, reporting and accountability mechanisms.

During the discussion, Council members expressed their appreciation to the Dominican Republic<sup>725</sup> for its leadership on the issue of conflict-induced hunger.<sup>726</sup> Delegations recalled that resolution 2417 (2018), which had been adopted unanimously, had acknowledged the link between food insecurity and armed conflict, with most Council members

<sup>725</sup> The Dominican Republic was represented by its Minister of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>726</sup> See S/2020/340.

underscoring that such linkage had been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>727</sup> A number of delegations also emphasized the connection between famine and climate change.<sup>728</sup> In that context, the French delegation expressed regret that climate change could not be explicitly mentioned in the draft presidential statement that was being negotiated.

Several speakers stressed the need for comprehensive implementation of resolution 2417 (2018).<sup>729</sup> In that regard, a number of delegations underscored the importance of early action and, in particular, the role of the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Council with timely information about conflict-related famine and food insecurity in countries with armed conflict.<sup>730</sup> The representative of Viet Nam stated in that sense that approximately two thirds of the worst food-security crises were in countries that were experiencing armed conflict and were on the agenda of the Council. In addition, a number of delegations condemned the use of starvation as a method of warfare.<sup>731</sup> In that regard, the representative of Belgium welcomed the amendment of the Rome Statute to include as a war crime the intentional starvation of civilians as a method of warfare. Many delegations expressed support for the Secretary-General's call for an immediate global ceasefire to facilitate humanitarian aid to affected populations during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>732</sup> The representative of Germany underlined the importance attached in resolution 2417 (2018) to adherence to international humanitarian law and to sustaining humanitarian access and called on all relevant actors to provide safe, rapid and unimpeded access to all people in need.

On 29 April, the Council issued a presidential statement recalling the link between armed conflict, violence and conflict-induced food insecurity and the threat of famine. In the statement, the Council called on all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law regarding respecting and protecting civilians and

<sup>727</sup> Dominican Republic, Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, South Africa, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

<sup>728</sup> Dominican Republic, Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia.

<sup>729</sup> Dominican Republic, Belgium, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Tunisia and Viet Nam.

<sup>730</sup> Dominican Republic, Belgium, France, Germany, South Africa, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

<sup>731</sup> Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Tunisia, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>732</sup> Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Indonesia and Viet Nam.



humanitarian personnel and underlined the importance of safe and unimpeded access of humanitarian personnel to civilians in armed conflicts.<sup>733</sup> The Council noted with deep concern that over the past two years, armed conflicts continued to be one of the major factors causing or aggravating food insecurity and undernutrition in different areas all over the globe, with an increased number of people requiring urgent food aid, nutrition and livelihood assistance.<sup>734</sup> The Council strongly condemned the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare and the unlawful denial of access to humanitarian assistance and humanitarian personnel to the civilian population in armed conflict and called upon all parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and to take all feasible steps to protect civilians and civilian objects.<sup>735</sup> In addition, the Council encouraged Member States to support relevant early warning systems to provide governments and humanitarian actors with timely, reliable, accurate and verifiable information regarding food security and allowing for anticipation and early action to prevent and mitigate the effects of a food crisis in the context of armed conflicts.<sup>736</sup> Lastly, the Council encouraged the Secretary-General to include in his reporting on country-specific situations, analysis concerning the risk of occurrence of conflict-induced famine and widespread food insecurity in armed conflict and expressed its intention to continue to give such information its due attention, including relevant recommendations to avert such risks.<sup>737</sup>

On 27 May, at the initiative of Estonia, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>738</sup> Council members held a high-level open videoconference<sup>739</sup> to consider the annual report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict in the context of new challenges and developments, among them the COVID-19 pandemic. At the outset of the videoconference, the Secretary-General stated that those already weakened by years of armed conflict were particularly vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic. With access to services and safety curtailed, and as some leaders exploited the pandemic to adopt repressive measures, it had become even more difficult to protect the most vulnerable. This was particularly true in conflict zones, where civilians were already exposed to

significant risks, posing a major threat to refugees and internally displaced people. The Secretary-General added that his call for a global ceasefire would create conditions for a stronger response to the pandemic and the delivery of humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable people. He expressed regret, however, that the expressions of support had not been translated into concrete action and he cautioned that the pandemic might create incentives for warring parties to press their advantage, or to strike hard while international attention was focused elsewhere. United Nations peacekeeping operations were one of the most effective means of protecting civilians in conflict zones and United Nations peacekeepers were supporting national authorities in their response to the pandemic by protecting health-care and humanitarian workers and facilitating access to aid and protection. Affirming that it was only through respect for human rights and international humanitarian law and refugee law that it was possible to protect civilians, the Secretary-General averred, however, that prospects were bleak and his latest report had showed little progress on the protection of civilians and on compliance with international law in 2019. After highlighting the main issues faced by civilians in armed conflict, including the indiscriminate use of explosive weapons in populated areas, the appalling levels of sexual and gender-based violence to which women and girls were subjected and the violence against humanitarian and health-care workers, he urged all to move beyond rhetoric and close the accountability gap through national legislation and coordinated international action. Lastly, the Secretary-General outlined four actions that required global attention, namely, an urgent review of States' approach to urban warfare; the use of armed drones to conduct attacks; the implications posed by the development of lethal autonomous weapons systems; and the malicious use of digital technology to conduct cyberattacks on critical civilian infrastructure, as reports from several countries indicated a rise in cyberattacks on health-care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the videoconference, Council members also heard briefings by the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and by the Nobel Laureate and former President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. The President of the ICRC underscored that the Secretary-General's report had highlighted the enormous violations and the failures to protect men, women and children around the globe. He expressed concern in relation to the rising number of displaced people and for the survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and people with a disability and about the rapid spread of hate speech, the shrinking space for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian work and the persistent

<sup>733</sup> S/PRST/2020/6, fourth paragraph.

<sup>734</sup> Ibid., fifth paragraph.

<sup>735</sup> Ibid., tenth paragraph.

<sup>736</sup> Ibid., fifteenth paragraph.

<sup>737</sup> Ibid., sixteenth paragraph.

<sup>738</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 14 May 2020 (S/2020/402).

<sup>739</sup> See S/2020/465.

disregard for international humanitarian law and other international legal frameworks. More specifically, he underscored the devastating impact on civilians when explosive weapons were used in populated areas, which raised serious questions about compliance with international humanitarian law, and signalled the urgent need for a change in behaviour to protect civilians. In that context, he asserted that the divisions within the Council on critical concepts of humanitarian law and work were increasing suffering on the front lines. While the ICRC took responsibility for delivering neutral and impartial humanitarian services independently and within the legal framework of the Geneva Conventions, it was the Council's responsibility to facilitate access to populations in need. He urged Council members to base their protection policies on international humanitarian laws, principles and concepts, which was the only reasonable basis for consensus, and to leave political controversies outside of humanitarian concerns. He added that the COVID-19 crisis was fast threatening to become a protection crisis and he feared that some groups might be excluded from life-saving measures. He also recognized that States had stepped up in response to the pandemic, by implementing more humane policies, including the safe release from detention of many people deprived of liberty, decisions to regularize non-documented migrants to ensure they could access health care and the adoption of unilateral ceasefires. At the outset, the former President of Liberia recalled the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action and the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) as milestones that could pave the way for increased women's leadership and strengthening efforts to protect traditionally marginalized and vulnerable groups trapped by conflict. She expressed regret that, owing to the protracted nature of some conflicts, the lives of many people had often been defined, shortened and narrowed by conflicts they had no part in creating. In that connection, she called for bold action to end that cycle of immeasurable loss and human tragedy, echoing the Secretary-General's report that the most effective way to protect civilians was "to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of armed conflict."

During the discussion following the briefings, Council members<sup>740</sup> acknowledged the bleak situation

<sup>740</sup> Estonia was represented by its President. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was represented by its Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Regional Integration; Indonesia and Tunisia were represented by their Ministers for Foreign Affairs; and the United Kingdom was represented by the Special Representative of the Prime Minister on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia.

regarding the protection of civilians in conflict zones around the world, as described in the report of the Secretary-General, despite the existing legal framework and efforts by the Council throughout the years.<sup>741</sup> Members also recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated the vulnerability of the civilian populations in conflict zones and reiterated their support for the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire to allow an adequate response to the pandemic. In that regard, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia stated that the Council had a moral obligation to support that call and looked forward to the unanimous adoption of the draft resolution presented by France and Tunisia in that regard. In their statements, Council members focused on the need for compliance with international humanitarian law and for accountability for violations against civilians as the most pressing challenges to strengthening the protection of civilians in conflict zones. In that regard, the President of Estonia noted that the Council had a number of tools at its disposal to enhance compliance with international law and ensure accountability, including investigative and judicial mechanisms, mandates of peacekeeping missions and targeted sanctions. She added that those tools needed to be applied consistently across all conflict situations.

Representatives of non-Council Member States also expressed support for the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, agreeing that the COVID-19 pandemic had further aggravated the suffering of already vulnerable populations in areas of armed conflict. Various non-Council members also acknowledged the existing implementation gap between the normative framework and compliance and accountability with regard to the protection of civilians in armed conflict.<sup>742</sup> In that connection, most delegations condemned the indiscriminate use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas, the persistent conflict-related sexual violence endured in particular by women and girls and attacks on humanitarian and medical personnel and facilities. Numerous delegations underlined, in that context, the importance of ensuring that United Nations peacekeepers had the capabilities and resources to fulfil their mandates for the protection of civilians.<sup>743</sup>

<sup>741</sup> See S/2020/465.

<sup>742</sup> Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Republic of Korea, Romania and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>743</sup> Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Switzerland (on behalf of the Group of Friends on the protection of civilians in armed conflict), Thailand and Uruguay.

Several delegations further emphasized the need to increase the participation of women in peacekeeping.<sup>744</sup>

On 17 September, the Council held an open videoconference<sup>745</sup> on the issue of conflict-induced hunger, in which it heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, in response to its request, contained in paragraph 12 of resolution 2417 (2018), to be swiftly informed of “the risk of conflict-induced famine and widespread food insecurity”. Stressing the importance of resolution 2417 (2018) and the clear links between armed conflict, food insecurity and the threat of famine, the Under-Secretary-General focused his briefing on the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, north-east Nigeria and the Sahel as some of the main areas of concern, where millions were experiencing growing situations of food-insecurity and famine. In that regard, he stated that international humanitarian law was an important line of defence against food insecurity in conflict, urging parties to allow and facilitate humanitarian access and protect aid workers and assets. He outlined four concrete measures that the Council and Member States could take, namely, pressing for peaceful and negotiated political solutions to bring armed conflicts to an end; ensuring that the parties to conflict respect international humanitarian law; mitigating the economic impact of armed conflict and related violence; and scaling up support for humanitarian operations and taking bigger and more ambitious steps to support the economies of countries facing severe, large-scale hunger. The Council was also briefed by the Director-General of FAO and by the Executive Director of WFP. The Director-General of FAO focused his remarks on the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic was having on the aggravation of conflict-induced food insecurity and the risk of famine in several conflict areas in the world, including Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, northern Nigeria, Somalia and the Sudan. In that regard, he expressed his firm belief that the Council could play a pivotal role in addressing the threat of conflict-induced acute food insecurity at crisis or worse levels by advancing dialogue between parties to find political solutions and innovative approaches to end conflict and violence, thus allowing FAO to scale up urgent life- and livelihood-saving operations and to deliver better integrated humanitarian and development responses that addressed the multiple drivers of acute food insecurity. Recalling that resolution 2417 (2018) called

for effective early-warning systems, the Executive Director of WFP warned that the global hunger crisis caused by conflict, and compounded by COVID-19, was moving into a new and dangerous phase, especially in nations already scarred by violence. He also highlighted situations in several conflict zones of the world, including Yemen and South Sudan, and stated that the world needed political leadership to build peace and avert that hunger crisis.

During the subsequent discussion, Council members continued to underscore the link between food insecurity and conflict in many situations on the agenda of the Council, sharing strong concerns in particular about the rising risk of famine and acute food insecurity in Yemen, north-eastern Nigeria, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The representative of the Russian Federation argued, however, that armed conflicts were not the only reason for the increase in the number of food-insecure people in the world and suggested that instead of focusing in the Council on the exclusive link between conflict and hunger, other factors of food insecurity had to be considered. Those included economic stagnation and investment deficits, environmental degradation and, most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. In that sense, he argued, unilateral economic measures, which undermined countries’ rights and capacities for development, also had a place in the list. That view that was echoed by the delegation of South African. The representative of the Russian Federation further added that food-security issues should be taken up in the Council only in the context of examining the situations of specific countries that posed a threat to international peace and security.

Council members continued to emphasize the need for international humanitarian law to be respected by all parties to conflict, with several delegations stressing that hunger should never serve as a weapon of war.<sup>746</sup> Several speakers called once again for a global ceasefire and unhindered humanitarian access to all those in need.<sup>747</sup>

In 2020, the Council continued the practice of hearing briefings by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs concerning the protection of civilians in armed conflict under country- and

<sup>744</sup> Canada, El Salvador, Ethiopia, India, Ireland, Philippines, Rwanda, Switzerland (on behalf of the Group of Friends on the protection of civilians in armed conflict) and Uruguay.

<sup>745</sup> See [S/2020/930](#).

<sup>746</sup> France, Indonesia, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>747</sup> China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Indonesia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

region-specific items.<sup>748</sup> The Council also included protection-related provisions in most of its decisions in relation to both country- and region-specific situations and thematic items in 2020. The Council focused on multiple aspects and used a variety of language formulations to address the protection of civilians in its decisions; selected provisions of those decisions are listed in table 2. In particular, the Council: (a) condemned all forms of attacks against civilians and civilian objects, especially against women and children, including attacks against schools, hospitals and medical facilities; (b) demanded that all parties to armed conflict ensure unhindered access for delivery of humanitarian assistance to populations in need and ensure the safety of humanitarian and medical personnel; (c) called upon all relevant parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law

and called for accountability measures against perpetrators of crimes committed in contravention of those laws; (d) emphasized the primary responsibility of States to comply with their relevant obligations to protect civilians; (e) requested additional monitoring mechanisms and reporting arrangements to improve the protection of civilians in armed conflict; and (f) adopted or expressed its intention to adopt targeted sanctions measures against perpetrators. In addition, the Council practice of strengthening the mandates of United Nations peace operations with a view to protecting civilians continued to evolve. During the reporting period, the Council continued to request several missions to take the protection of civilians under threat of physical violence as specific priorities and benchmarks of their mandates, with particular attention on but not limited to women, children and internally displaced persons, including by creating a secure environment for the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance, in particular in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as strengthening local community engagement and empowerment, early warning and information-sharing mechanisms.

<sup>748</sup> In 2020, the Council heard briefings by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 26 times at either public meetings or open videoconferences and 21 times in either closed meetings or informal consultations, for a total of 47 briefings. For more information on briefings on those items prior to 2020, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2019*, part I, sect. 29.

Table 1  
**Videoconferences: protection of civilians in armed conflict**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
21 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/340</a>	Letter dated 23 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 April 2020	No record <sup>a</sup>		<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/6</a>
27 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/465</a>	Letter dated 29 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
17 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/930</a>	Letter dated 21 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<sup>a</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part I, chap. IV.B. The Council adopted the presidential statement following its debate on 21 April (see [S/2020/340](#)).

Table 2

**Selection of provisions relevant to the protection of civilians in armed conflict, by theme and agenda item**

	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
<b>Condemnation of and demands for the cessation of attacks and acts of violence against civilians and civilian objects and abuses and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	3, 23
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	9, 12
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a>	35
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a> Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	27, 28 25
<b>Thematic</b>	Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>	fifth, seventh
<b>Calls for humanitarian access and safety of humanitarian and medical personnel and facilities</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	49, 50
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	35
	The situation Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	52
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution <a href="#">2504 (2020)</a>	1, 4
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2521 (2020)</a> Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	2 8, 22
	Peace consolidation in West Africa	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/7</a>	eighth
<b>Thematic</b>	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution <a href="#">2532 (2020)</a>	2, 6
<b>Calls for compliance with and accountability under applicable international humanitarian law and human rights law and relevant Security Council resolutions by all parties</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	20
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	6
	The situation Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	51
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution <a href="#">2504 (2020)</a>	2
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	35, 38
<b>Thematic</b>	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/6</a>	tenth
<b>Affirmation of primary responsibility of States and parties to the conflict to protect civilians</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	53



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	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
<b>Thematic</b>	Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>	third
	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/6</a>	seventh
<b>Requests for specific monitoring and analysis of and reporting on protection of civilians</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	32 (d) (i), 54
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	29 (ii) (e)
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution <a href="#">2504 (2020)</a>	6, 7, 8
		Resolution <a href="#">2533 (2020)</a>	3
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	26, 33
<b>Thematic</b>	Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>	twelfth
<b>Imposition of targeted measures against perpetrators of violations against civilians in armed conflict</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	5, 20
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	5, 13
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution <a href="#">2511 (2020)</a>	2
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2521 (2020)</a>	15 (c), (d), (g) and (h), 24
<b>Inclusion of mission-specific protection mandates and benchmarks<sup>a</sup></b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	31 (a) (i)–(ii), 32 (d) (iii), 32 (e) (vii) 40
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	29 (i) (c), (d) and (f), 29 (ii) (g)
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	28 (b) (iii), 28 (c) (i), 28 (e) (i)–(ii)
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution <a href="#">2539 (2020)</a>	21
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	8 (a) (i), (iv), (vii) and (viii), 8 (b) (i), 8 (d) (i) and (iv), 10 (iii), 14
		Resolution <a href="#">2521 (2020)</a>	22
		Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a>	2 (iii) (d)
	Resolution <a href="#">2525 (2020)</a>	4, 8	
<b>Thematic</b>	Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>	sixteenth

<sup>a</sup> For additional information on mandates and decisions relevant to peacekeeping and political missions, see part X.



## 27. Small arms

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting in connection with the item entitled “Small arms” which took the form of a briefing.<sup>749</sup> The last time that the Council had considered the item had been on 18 December 2017.<sup>750</sup> More information on the meeting, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in the table below.<sup>751</sup>

At a meeting on 5 February<sup>752</sup> pursuant to the biennial report of the Secretary-General,<sup>753</sup> the Council heard a briefing by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the Deputy Director of Operations of Conflict Armament Research.<sup>754</sup> In her briefing, the High Representative addressed “two themes of high relevance to the work of the Security Council”: the role of illicit small arms, light weapons and their ammunition in conflict and pervasive crime; and the deeply crosscutting and wide-ranging impact of illicit small arms and light weapons flows. Those two fundamental themes had been consistently raised in the biennial reports of the Secretary-General, as well as in the context of the two thematic resolutions adopted by the Council on small arms and light weapons, namely, resolutions 2117 (2013) and 2220 (2015). With an estimated one billion small arms in circulation worldwide, the use of those weapons in lethal violence, whether in conflict or non-conflict settings, was prevalent across regions and subregions from the Americas to Africa to southern Europe, and no State was immune from the challenges posed by illicit arms flows. In addition, the High Representative provided an overview of significant trends and developments over the previous two years and expressed her concerns regarding the continued rise in global military expenditure and the role that small arms and light weapons continued to play in hindering peace, security and sustainable development. She further emphasized that the gender dimension had not been sufficiently integrated into policies regulating small arms and light weapons, while stressing the need to mainstream the consideration of small arms and light weapons across the work of the Council.

The Deputy Director of Operations of Conflict Armament Research recounted that since the early 1990s the international community had sought to control the conventional arms trade so as to minimize weapons diversion and explained that the lack of detailed reporting had consistently hampered those efforts. He highlighted the work of his organization in that regard. He also described the work of his organization in support of United Nations sanctions monitoring groups and panels of experts, as well as in embargo and sanctions enforcement, and expressed the hope that his briefing had demonstrated the importance of an evidence-based approach to tackle the illicit proliferation of weapons.

Following the briefings, Council members welcomed the report of the Secretary-General and its recommendations. However, the representative of the Russian Federation questioned references to the Arms Trade Treaty, citing that the instrument was far from universal and did not fully allow for the implementation of its own provisions. In addition, the representative of the United States raised concerns with regard to civilian ownership of firearms as reflected in the report. The representatives of the Dominican Republic and Estonia called for the promotion of gender equality and the meaningful participation of women in combating the illicit arms trade.

Many Council members emphasized that the proliferation of and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons posed a serious threat to international peace and security. In that regard, they pointed out that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons had contributed to terrorism and transnational organized crime and called for a comprehensive approach in addressing the fight against illicit trafficking. Many speakers drew attention to the implementation of several crucial international mechanisms intended to combat the illicit trade, such as the Arms Trade Treaty, the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and, in 2020, the Group of Governmental Experts on problems arising from the

<sup>749</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>750</sup> See [S/PV.8140](#). For more information, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2016–2017*, part I, sect. 31.

<sup>751</sup> See also [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 17.

<sup>752</sup> See [S/PV.8713](#).

<sup>753</sup> [S/2019/1011](#). For more information on the biennial report of the Secretary-General, which was requested by the Council in its presidential statement contained in document [S/PRST/2007/24](#), see *Repertoire, Supplement 2004–2007*, chap. VIII, sect. 40.

<sup>754</sup> See [S/PV.8713](#).

accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus.

Most Council members commended the efforts of regional organizations, such as the African Union's Silencing the Guns by 2020 initiative, in dealing with the challenges of illicit small arms and light weapons and called for strengthening the partnership between

the United Nations and regional organizations. In that connection, the representative of Indonesia emphasized the important role of other regional organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in the implementation of the programme of action to address arms smuggling and related issues.

### Meeting: small arms

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8713</a> 5 February 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons ( <a href="#">S/2019/1011</a> )			High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Deputy Director of Operations, Conflict Armament Research	All Council members, all invitees	

## 28. Women and peace and security

In 2020, the Council held no public meeting in relation to the item entitled “Women and peace and security”. However, Council members held two open videoconferences in connection with the item.<sup>755</sup> More information on the videoconferences is given in table 1 below.

On 17 July, at the initiative of Germany, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>756</sup> the Council held a high-level open videoconference on the theme “Conflict-related sexual violence: turning commitments into compliance”.<sup>757</sup> At the videoconference,<sup>758</sup> the Council heard briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Special Envoy of the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees, the Founder and Chair of Progressive Voice, on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, and the Executive President of the Association des femmes juristes de Centrafrique. In her briefing to the Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General noted that the report of the Secretary-General featured, for the first time, an assessment of compliance gaps, which found prevailing disregard for international norms and obligations by parties to armed conflict as well as a lack of meaningful commitment to curbing violations by the majority of persistent perpetrators. In that connection, she expressed the urgent need for greater coherence between the practice of listing and the practice of imposing targeted and graduated measures to leverage behavioural change. She stated that 2020 had begun with the anticipation of a “jubilee year” for the women and peace and security agenda, but had become a fight to prevent the rollback of women’s rights, which was evident in reprisals against women’s human rights defenders, physical and financial risks to women’s civil society organizations and shrinking civic space. The Special Representative mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic had dramatically affected the work of the United Nations, including her mandate, but that the virus had not changed the needs of survivors or the right to physical integrity and bodily autonomy. In that regard,

<sup>755</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>756</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 8 July 2020 ([S/2020/665](#)). See also [S/2020/487](#).

<sup>757</sup> Belgium was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence, Germany was represented by its Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, South Africa was represented by its Minister for International Relations and Cooperation and the Niger was represented by its Minister for the Advancement of Women and Child Protection.

<sup>758</sup> See [S/2020/727](#).

she said that it was time to silence the guns and to amplify and unmute the voices of women and clarified that the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire meant that all parties had to cease the use of sexual and other violence. The Special Envoy of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees urged the Council to move beyond rhetoric and implement decisions and called on the Council to hold perpetrators to account, address the root, structural causes of gender-based violence and discrimination and urgently provide funding for programmes that addressed the needs of all survivors. The Founder and Chair of Progressive Voice, on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, focused her briefing on the situation in Myanmar, while the Executive President of the Association des femmes juristes de Centrafrique focused on the Central African Republic. They both called on the Council to support local civil society organizations and actions to bring perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence to justice.

Council members and other Member States addressed a variety of issues, including the importance of a survivor-centred approach, the need for converting commitments into compliance by strengthening the full and effective implementation of all Council decisions and the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence. Many Member States also stressed the importance of the meaningful participation of women at all levels of the decision-making process, including with regard to peacekeeping missions and peacebuilding, to address the issue of sexual violence. Participants expressed concern over the impact of COVID-19 on violence against women and girls in conflict and humanitarian settings and reiterated the Secretary-General's call to address gender-based violence as an integral part of COVID-19 responses.<sup>759</sup> In their statements, some participants explicitly referred to conflict-related sexual violence as a threat to international peace and security.<sup>760</sup>

<sup>759</sup> Germany, South Africa, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada (in its national capacity and on behalf of 62 Member States and the European Union), Denmark, European External Action Service of the European Union, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Mexico, Myanmar, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay.

<sup>760</sup> South Africa, Georgia, Iraq, Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security of the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Peru and Slovenia. For information on threats to international peace and security considered by the Council in 2020, see part VII, sect. I.

On 29 October, at the initiative of the Russian Federation, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>761</sup> and on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the Council held a high-level open videoconference under the item, with a focus on better implementation of the resolution.<sup>762</sup> At the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the UN-Women Goodwill Ambassador, the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Adviser for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and a representative of the Women and Children Legal Research Foundation. The Secretary-General stated that 20 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), despite some progress, power structures remained dominated by men, with women leading only 7 per cent of countries, men making up three quarters of the members of COVID-19 task forces and men still overwhelmingly making decisions about international peace and security. He emphasized that ensuring women's full participation in peace processes required stronger partnerships among the United Nations, regional organizations, Member States and civil society and the full use of tools and innovative solutions to have a rapid and decisive impact on women's representation. He reported that at the beginning of 2020, gender parity had been achieved among the United Nations leadership, including among resident coordinators in countries affected by conflict, and reaffirmed his determination to push for parity at all levels, including in field and special political missions. The Executive Director of UN-Women addressed women's meaningful participation in peacemaking, peacebuilding and peacekeeping and the use of violence against women in conflict. The UN-Women Goodwill Ambassador highlighted the importance of providing more support to women's organizations. The Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Adviser for UNISFA focused on the participation of women in peacekeeping. The representative of the Women and Children Legal Research Foundation spoke on the importance of ensuring women's progress in Afghanistan and protecting the safety of women's rights defenders.

<sup>761</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 14 October 2020 (S/2020/1014). See also S/2020/946.

<sup>762</sup> See S/2020/1084. The United Kingdom was represented by its Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa, and Germany was represented by its Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office. See also the statement to the press dated 29 October 2020 (SC/14341).

Participants at the videoconference celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) as an important framework for the women and peace and security agenda, along with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and echoed the pledge to amplify the voices of women. In their statements, participants also underlined the gaps in implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and pointed out the widespread underrepresentation of women in peace and security decision-making and processes and the need for the global community to live up to its commitment by supporting the work of women peacebuilders and decision-makers.<sup>763</sup> Speakers echoed the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, recognizing the added challenges and impact of the pandemic on the implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). Some participants acknowledged the need to bridge the commitments with resources and called for more sustainable and robust funding for women's organizations aimed at supporting civil society and women peacebuilders and protecting female human rights' defenders.<sup>764</sup> Participants also emphasized the importance of following the recommendations of the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security to better monitor and coordinate implementation.<sup>765</sup>

Following the open videoconference of 29 October, the Council voted on a draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation.<sup>766</sup> The draft resolution failed to obtain the required number of votes, with 5 votes in favour, none against and 10 abstentions.<sup>767</sup> In explaining their abstentions,<sup>768</sup> several Council members stated that the text did not address key aspects of the normative framework of the women and peace and security agenda concerning the meaningful participation of women in peace processes, the involvement of civil society or the implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).<sup>769</sup> Specifically, the representative of Belgium noted that the draft resolution inadequately reflected the normative

framework and was nearly devoid of meaningful language on the implementation of or accountability for the women and peace and security agenda. The representative of the Dominican Republic considered that the adoption of the draft resolution would have compromised progress made over the past 20 years. The representative of Estonia highlighted that given the serious threats and reprisals against women human rights defenders, the exclusion of key aspects with respect to civil society involvement was a stark omission of the role of the key partners in the implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). The representative of Germany pointed out that had the draft resolution been adopted, it would have eroded the hard-won gains with regard to the women and peace and security agenda and watered down previous achievements on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). The representative of the United States noted that the draft resolution had diluted the long-standing United Nations commitments to women and weakened the consensus about the role of women in conflict situations. By contrast, those who voted in favour of the draft resolution considered that the text reaffirmed the commitment of the Council with regard to the women and peace and security agenda and supported it to mark the anniversary of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). The representative of China emphasized that the Council members should remain open-minded and be inclusive of new perspectives and elements and avoid "clinging only to existing language and refusing improvement". The representative of Indonesia stated that the draft resolution had a distinct potential to advance the women and peace and security agenda constructively. The representative of South Africa clarified that while the draft resolution did not adequately address emerging issues that affected the women and peace and security agenda, the draft reaffirmed, and did not negate, all previous resolutions, in particular resolution [2493 \(2019\)](#), adopted unanimously by the Council a year ago.

During the period under review, the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security continued to convene in accordance with resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#),<sup>770</sup> including to address the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>771</sup>

The Council referred to issues related to women and peace and security under multiple items on its agenda in 2020. As summarized in table 2 below, the Council addressed in its decisions a wide variety of measures in

<sup>763</sup> United Kingdom, Belgium, Niger, South Africa, Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Iraq, Ireland, Netherlands and Thailand.

<sup>764</sup> Germany, Belgium, Estonia, France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, Bangladesh, Canada (on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security), El Salvador, European Union, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Sierra Leone and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>765</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, Ireland and Mexico.

<sup>766</sup> See [S/2020/1054](#).

<sup>767</sup> See [S/2020/1066](#).

<sup>768</sup> See [S/2020/1076](#).

<sup>769</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>770</sup> See resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#), para. 5 (a).

<sup>771</sup> See [S/2020/282](#), [S/2020/283](#), [S/2020/439](#), [S/2020/899](#), [S/2020/1297](#) and [S/2020/1319](#).

connection with the women and peace and security agenda in particular relating to: (a) the representation and participation of women in public affairs and governance and in peacebuilding and conflict prevention and resolution; (b) the participation of women in peacekeeping operations,<sup>772</sup> including through the appointment of women's protection and gender advisers; (c) the development and inclusion of gender mainstreaming and gender sensitivity by Member States and United Nations entities; and (d) combating sexual violence, including through the monitoring of, analysis of

and reporting on conflict-related sexual violence and gender-based violence, as well as the prosecution of perpetrators of sexual violence. The Council continued to call on Member States to adopt a survivor-centred approach in preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. In addition, during the period under review, the Council placed an emphasis on the socioeconomic environment for the meaningful participation and empowerment of women in the context of very diverse conflict-specific items. Consistent with previous years, the Council included provisions in a few of its decisions focusing on the role of women in countering terrorism and violent extremism.

<sup>772</sup> In 2020, the Council adopted resolution [2538 \(2020\)](#), which specifically focused on the participation of women in peacekeeping operations. For more information, see part I, sect. 23.

**Table 1**  
**Videoconferences: women and peace and security**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
17 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/727</a>	Letter dated 21 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1084</a>	Letter dated 31 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
30 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1066</a>	Letter dated 30 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/1054</a> (not adopted) 5-0-10 <sup>a</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/1076</a>

<sup>a</sup> *For:* China, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa, Viet Nam; *against:* none; *abstaining:* Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States.

**Table 2**  
**Selection of provisions relevant to women and peace and security, by theme and agenda item**

	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
<b>Representation and participation of women in political processes at all levels, including decision-making</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	Peace and security in Africa	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/5</a>	twelfth
	Peace consolidation in West Africa	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/7</a>	fourteenth, Seventeenth
	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution <a href="#">2513 (2020)</a>	3
		Resolution <a href="#">2543 (2020)</a>	6 (f)
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	7, 9, 44



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	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	32
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution <a href="#">2512 (2020)</a>	5 (d), 10
	The situation concerning Iraq	Resolution <a href="#">2522 (2020)</a>	2 (e)
	The situation in Libya	Resolution <a href="#">2542 (2020)</a>	8
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	4, 28 (a) (v)
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution <a href="#">2539 (2020)</a>	26
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a>	31
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	31
		Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a>	8
		Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	27
<b>Participation of women in peacebuilding and in conflict prevention and resolution</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	Peace consolidation in West Africa	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/7</a>	twelfth
	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution <a href="#">2513 (2020)</a>	4
		Resolution <a href="#">2543 (2020)</a>	6 (f)
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	7, 31 (b) (iii)–(iv), 44
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	20, 29 (ii) (c), 32
	The situation in Cyprus	Resolution <a href="#">2506 (2020)</a>	5 (f)
		Resolution <a href="#">2537 (2020)</a>	5 (g)
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution <a href="#">2512 (2020)</a>	5 (d), 18
	The situation in Libya	Resolution <a href="#">2542 (2020)</a>	8
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	3, 54
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a>	31
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	5
		Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a>	2 (ii) (a), 8
		Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	17, 18
<b>Thematic</b>	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/11</a>	sixteenth
	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a>	14, 24



<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>	
<b>Socioeconomic environment for the meaningful participation and empowerment of women and funding of national programmes</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution <a href="#">2543 (2020)</a>	6 (f)
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	32
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution <a href="#">2512 (2020)</a>	18
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a>	8
<b>Conflict-related sexual violence and gender-based violence</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	Peace and security in Africa	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/5</a>	thirteenth
	Peace consolidation in West Africa	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/7</a>	eighth
	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution <a href="#">2543 (2020)</a>	6 (f)
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	23, 24, 31 (a) (iii), 31 (b) (iii)–(v), 32 (d) (ii), 32 (e) (vii), 44
	The situation in Cyprus	Resolution <a href="#">2537 (2020)</a>	17
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 29 (i) (c) and (h), 29 (ii) (g) and (k), 32, 33, 34, 54 (c)
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution <a href="#">2512 (2020)</a>	22
	The situation in Libya	Resolution <a href="#">2542 (2020)</a>	1 (ix), 8
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	8, 28 (c) (iii), 28 (e) (ii), 51, 55, 56, 57
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution <a href="#">2511 (2020)</a>	6
		Resolution <a href="#">2530 (2020)</a>	14
		Resolution <a href="#">2539 (2020)</a>	24, 26
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a>	19, 32, 33
		Resolution <a href="#">2551 (2020)</a>	4, 20, 21
		Resolution <a href="#">2554 (2020)</a>	20
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	5, 8 (a) (v)–(vii), 8 (d) (ii), 18, 19, 22, 28, 32, 35
		Resolution <a href="#">2521 (2020)</a>	15 (e), 21
		Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a>	2 (ii) (b), 2 (iii) (d), 10
		Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	26
<b>Thematic</b>	Children and armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a>	fifth, ninth, tenth
	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/11</a>	thirteenth, eighteenth

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	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a>	24
	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Resolution <a href="#">2538 (2020)</a>	7
<b>Gender mainstreaming, gender expertise and gender-sensitive responses</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	32 (c) (ii), 44
	The situation in Cyprus	Resolution <a href="#">2537 (2020)</a>	15
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	17, 29 (ii) (c), 55
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution <a href="#">2512 (2020)</a>	5 (d), 18
	The situation concerning Iraq	Resolution <a href="#">2522 (2020)</a>	2 (e)
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a>	19, 20
		Resolution <a href="#">2551 (2020)</a>	30
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	18
		Resolution <a href="#">2521 (2020)</a>	19
		Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a>	8
		Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	27
<b>Thematic</b>	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution <a href="#">2532 (2020)</a>	7
		Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a>	5, 20 (b)
	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Resolution <a href="#">2518 (2020)</a>	6
<b>Women's protection and gender advisers</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	31 (a) (iii)
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	32, 33
	The situation in Libya	Resolution <a href="#">2542 (2020)</a>	1 (ix)
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	28 (c) (iii), 54
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a>	17
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	8 (a) (i) and (vi)
		Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a>	2 (iii) (c) and (d), 8
		Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a>	27
<b>Thematic</b>	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/6</a>	eighth
	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a>	24

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>	
<b>Participation of women in peacekeeping operations</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	39
	The situation in Cyprus	Resolution <a href="#">2506 (2020)</a>	14
		Resolution <a href="#">2537 (2020)</a>	15
		Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	43
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	43
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	45
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution <a href="#">2530 (2020)</a>	13
		Resolution <a href="#">2539 (2020)</a>	25
		Resolution <a href="#">2555 (2020)</a>	13
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a>	20
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a>	21
		Resolution <a href="#">2525 (2020)</a>	9
	The situation concerning Western Sahara	Resolution <a href="#">2548 (2020)</a>	11
<b>Thematic</b>	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/11</a>	thirteenth, fourteenth
	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Resolution <a href="#">2518 (2020)</a> Resolution <a href="#">2538 (2020)</a>	6 1, 2, 3–6, 9–13
<b>Role of women in countering terrorism and violent extremism</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	Peace and security in Africa	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/5</a>	twelfth
	Peace consolidation in West Africa	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/7</a>	twelfth
<b>Participation of women in the security sector and in security sector reform</b>			
<b>Country- and region-specific</b>	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a>	44
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a>	20, 32
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution <a href="#">2512 (2020)</a>	10
	The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a>	28 (a) (iii), 54
<b>Thematic</b>	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a>	5, 14, 20 (b), 23, 24

## 29. Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting under the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts”, which took the form of a briefing.<sup>773</sup> More information on the meeting, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. Council members also held five open videoconferences in connection with the item and the Council adopted two resolutions, including one under Chapter VII of the Charter.<sup>774</sup> More information on the videoconferences is given in table 2 below. In addition, the Council failed to adopt a draft resolution in connection with the item because of the negative vote of a permanent member.

Whether in the context of the meeting or the videoconferences, Council members continued to focus on several issues under the item, including the threat posed by returning and relocating fighters, the countering of terrorism financing and the introduction of a gender perspective in counter-terrorism efforts, as well as the linkages between terrorism and organized crime and the threat posed by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da’esh). In 2020, Council members also addressed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on various aspects of terrorism. Council members heard three briefings by the Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Counter-Terrorism. In addition, Council members were briefed twice by the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, once by a civil society representative and once by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

The Under-Secretary-General briefed Council members on 7 February and 6 and 24 August. Two of those briefings concerned the tenth and eleventh reports of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da’esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat.<sup>775</sup> On 7 February,<sup>776</sup> the Under-Secretary-General reported that ISIL (Da’esh) had lost its last stronghold in the Syrian Arab Republic in March 2019 and had seen a

change in leadership after the death of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in October 2019, although the Secretary-General’s report showed that the group remained at the centre of the transnational terrorism threat. He noted that ISIL (Da’esh) had continued to seek resurgence and global relevance online and offline and its regional affiliates had continued to pursue a strategy of entrenchment in conflict zones by exploiting local grievances. The Under-Secretary-General further stated that owing to their high number, foreign terrorist fighters who had travelled to Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic were expected to continue to pose a threat, with estimates of those alive ranging from 20,000 to almost 27,000. He noted that the situation of ISIL (Da’esh) fighters and associated family members in detention and displacement facilities in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic had worsened since his last presentation to the Council, adding that their fate remained a major challenge for the international community. In closing, he urged the Council and Member States to maintain and reaffirm their unity in the face of the persisting threat posed by ISIL (Da’esh) and Al-Qaida and their affiliates, as well as terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

At the same meeting, the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate highlighted that thousands of women and children associated with ISIL (Da’esh) remained in makeshift camps in appalling conditions. She noted that leaving them to fight for survival, and the threat of further radicalization, would not only be contrary to principles of humanity but also detrimental to counter-terrorism efforts. Women associated with ISIL (Da’esh) had often simultaneously had roles as victims and perpetrators and required gender-responsive, tailored prosecution and rehabilitation strategies that were consistent with international human rights standards, while children were primarily victims and had to be dealt with as such. The Executive Director called upon Member States to develop and implement comprehensive repatriation strategies in line with international law. Furthermore, she stated that bringing ISIL (Da’esh) perpetrators to justice continued to be of critical importance and stressed that its institutionalization of sexual violence and slavery required special attention. The international community had an opportunity to prosecute the perpetrators, rehabilitate the victims and facilitate reconstruction and community development in places destroyed by ISIL (Da’esh) violence. Ms. Freij, a civil society representative from the north-east of the Syrian

<sup>773</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>774</sup> Resolutions [2557 \(2020\)](#) and [2560 \(2020\)](#). For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>775</sup> [S/2020/95](#) and [S/2020/774](#).

<sup>776</sup> See [S/PV.8716](#).

Arab Republic, recounted her experience as a survivor of ISIL (Da'esh) rule and her work as an activist for women's rights in civil society institutions. She requested the Council to assist civilians in preventing another humanitarian disaster in Idlib, northern Syrian Arab Republic and the rest of the country and to make every effort to launch a process of transitional justice in the Syrian Arab Republic and end impunity so that all those responsible for perpetrating serious human rights violations would be held accountable. Following the briefings, speakers at the meeting emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to counter-terrorism efforts and for the perpetrators of terrorist acts to be held accountable. Council members also reaffirmed the need for international cooperation in countering terrorism, with several speakers stressing the importance of a coordinating role by the United Nations system.<sup>777</sup>

On 6 August, at the initiative of Indonesia, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>778</sup> Council members held a high-level open videoconference<sup>779</sup> in connection with the item on the theme "Addressing the issue of linkages between terrorism and organized crime". The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia presided over the videoconference, during which Council members heard briefings by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and by the Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Counter-Terrorism. The Executive Director of UNODC presented a report of the Secretary-General,<sup>780</sup> prepared jointly by UNODC and the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which provided an overview of measures taken by Member States and United Nations entities to address linkages between terrorism and organized crime.<sup>781</sup> Many States had reported that terrorists benefited from organized crime, while some States had observed that criminal organizations were increasingly disinterested in cooperating with terrorist groups, potentially to avoid additional scrutiny from national authorities. Many Governments had taken steps to counter those threats, through adopting legislative, policy and operational responses identified by the Council in resolution 2482 (2019). The COVID-19 pandemic posed several new challenges to national authorities as organized criminal groups and terrorists could seek to exploit new vulnerabilities, and transit patterns were shifting in view of travel restrictions and lockdown measures.

At the same videoconference, the Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Counter-Terrorism stated that the report of the Secretary-General set out how the ability of terrorists to draw on organized crime, whether domestic or transnational, online or offline, could exacerbate the threat posed by terrorism to international peace and security. He reported on the first Virtual Counter-Terrorism Week held at the United Nations on the strategic and practical challenges of countering terrorism in a global pandemic environment, which had drawn over 1,000 participants from Member States, civil society and private sector organizations, international and regional organizations and United Nations entities. He warned that the COVID-19 pandemic had the potential to act as a catalyst in the spread of terrorism and violent extremism by exacerbating inequalities, undermining social cohesion and fuelling local conflicts. Council members discussed the evolving linkages between organized crime and terrorism and the threat that they could pose to international peace and security.<sup>782</sup> Several Council members also discussed how to address both phenomena, with some noting the changed context and challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>783</sup>

At an open videoconference on 24 August,<sup>784</sup> Council members heard a briefing from the Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Counter-Terrorism. He noted that States needed to stay attuned to how the ISIL (Da'esh) threat had evolved during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and that in conflict zones the terrorist threat had increased as evidenced by the regrouping of ISIL (Da'esh) and its increasing activity in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic and among some of its regional affiliates. In non-conflict zones, the threat appeared to have decreased in the short term because of measures related to COVID-19, such as lockdowns and restrictions on movement. Nevertheless, there was a continued trend of attacks by individuals inspired online and acting alone or in small groups. The pandemic's socioeconomic fallout could exacerbate conditions conducive to terrorism and increase the medium to long-term threat, both within and outside conflict zones. More than 10,000 ISIL (Da'esh) fighters were estimated to remain active in

<sup>777</sup> South Africa, China and Viet Nam.

<sup>778</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 30 July 2020 (S/2020/764).

<sup>779</sup> See S/2020/791.

<sup>780</sup> See S/2020/754.

<sup>781</sup> See S/2020/791.

<sup>782</sup> Indonesia, Tunisia, Viet Nam, Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Niger and South Africa. In addition to Council members, other Member States submitted statements in connection with the videoconference. For more information on the discussion and the statements submitted, see part VII, sect. I.

<sup>783</sup> See S/2020/791 (Indonesia, Viet Nam, Belgium, Dominican Republic, Niger and South Africa).

<sup>784</sup> See S/2020/836.

Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic and there had been a significant increase in ISIL (Da'esh) attacks in both countries in 2020 as compared with 2019. Noting that the global threat from ISIL (Da'esh) was likely to increase if the international community failed to meet the challenge of repatriation, he reiterated the Secretary-General's call on Member States to meet their obligations under international law and repatriate their nationals.

At the same videoconference, the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate stressed that the dire situation faced by thousands of women and children associated with ISIL (Da'esh) in the detention camps of north-eastern Syrian Arab Republic remained a major challenge for the international community. The COVID-19 pandemic risked exacerbating an already untenable humanitarian, human rights and security situation. Pandemic-related restrictions, including social isolation measures, curtailed religious and cultural activities and the lack of employment opportunities could exacerbate existing grievances. She noted that ISIL (Da'esh) and its affiliates had taken the opportunity of the increased presence of people on the Internet to spread their propaganda. Member States had to ensure that policies adopted to curtail the spread of terrorist propaganda were human rights-compliant and gender-sensitive. Many Council members agreed that the issue of foreign terrorist fighters remained a challenge.<sup>785</sup> Noting that the issues of relocation and returning foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying family members presented significant challenges for Member States, the representative of Indonesia stressed the importance of an effective comprehensive prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategy, and called upon Council members to set their differences aside. In that regard, the United States expressed disappointment that Indonesia's efforts to draft a meaningful resolution on prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of terrorists had been stymied by the refusal of Council members to include repatriation.

The issues outlined above were also addressed by the Council in the draft resolutions proposed and adopted during the period under review. On 31 August, Indonesia submitted a draft resolution, which was not adopted owing to the negative vote of a permanent member, namely, the United States. Among other aspects contained in the draft resolution, the Council would have called upon Member States to assess and

investigate suspected individuals whom they had reasonable grounds to believe were terrorists, including suspected foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying family members. It would have also called upon all Member States to develop and implement comprehensive and tailored prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration measures for persons who were engaged in terrorism-related activity, including foreign terrorist fighters, and to develop and implement risk assessment tools to identify individuals who demonstrated signs of radicalization to terrorism. In addition, the Council would have encouraged all Member States to cooperate in efforts to address the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, including by bringing them to justice and preventing radicalization to terrorism and recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters and accompanying family members, particularly accompanying children, including by facilitating the return of the children to their countries of origin, as appropriate and on a case-by-case basis.<sup>786</sup> In the explanation of its vote submitted to the Council, the Permanent Mission of the United States indicated that while the draft resolution was meant to address the prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of terrorists, including foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying family members, it failed to "even include reference to the crucial first step – repatriation to countries of origin or nationality". The Permanent Mission further submitted that failing to address head-on the importance of repatriation would inevitably perpetuate the problem of terrorism.<sup>787</sup>

On 18 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2557 \(2020\)](#) under Chapter VII of the Charter, extending for a period of 12 months, until December 2021, the mandate of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team in support of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1988 \(2011\)](#).<sup>788</sup> In the resolution, the Council welcomed efforts by Afghanistan and the Taliban in facilitating intra-Afghan negotiations and encouraged the parties to make rapid progress on a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire and a political settlement that would end the conflict in Afghanistan and ensure that Afghanistan would never again be a safe haven for international terrorism.<sup>789</sup>

On 29 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2560 \(2020\)](#) in which it stressed the important role of the Committee pursuant to

<sup>785</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Tunisia, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>786</sup> See [S/2020/852](#), paras. 3, 8, 12 and 18.

<sup>787</sup> See [S/2020/870](#).

<sup>788</sup> Resolution [2557 \(2020\)](#), para. 2.

<sup>789</sup> *Ibid.*, eighth preambular paragraph. On the situation in Afghanistan, see part I, sect. 16.



resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities in identifying possible cases of non-compliance with the measures pursuant to resolution [2368 \(2017\)](#).<sup>790</sup> The Council also encouraged Member States to more actively submit to the Committee listing requests of individuals, groups, undertakings and entities that met the listing criteria in paragraph 2 of resolution [2368 \(2017\)](#) and to submit to the Committee “additional identifying and other information set out in paragraph 85 of resolution [2368](#)

(2017)” in order to keep the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions list reliable and up-to-date.<sup>791</sup> Moreover, the Council requested the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team<sup>792</sup> to study the basic and extraordinary exemptions procedures set out in paragraphs 81 (a) and (b) of resolution [2368 \(2017\)](#), and to provide recommendations to the Committee to determine whether or not updating those exemptions was required.<sup>793</sup>

<sup>790</sup> Resolution [2560 \(2020\)](#), fifth preambular paragraph.

<sup>791</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 1.

<sup>792</sup> For more information on the mandate of the Monitoring Team, see part IX, sect. I.B.

<sup>793</sup> Resolution [2560 \(2020\)](#), para. 2.

Table 1

**Meeting: threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8716</a> 7 February 2020	Tenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat ( <a href="#">S/2020/95</a> )			Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, civil society representative	All Council members, all invitees <sup>a</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Ms. Freij participated in the meeting by videoconference from Istanbul.

Table 2

**Videoconferences: threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
6 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/791</a>	Letter dated 11 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
24 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/836</a>	Letter dated 26 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
31 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/870</a>	Letter dated 31 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/852</a> (not adopted) 14-1-0 <sup>a</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/865</a>
18 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1266</a>	Letter dated 19 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2557 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/1254</a>
29 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1311</a>	Letter dated 29 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2560 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/1305</a>

<sup>a</sup> *For*: Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, Viet Nam; *against*: United States; *abstaining*: none.

### 30. Briefings

As with previous supplements, briefings by various speakers not explicitly connected to a specific item under the Council's agenda are featured in the present section. In 2020, the Council held one such meeting in the form of a briefing. More information on the meeting, including on participants and speakers, is provided in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held three open videoconferences to hear briefings that were not explicitly connected to any specific item on the agenda of the Council. More information on the videoconferences is provided in tables 2 and 3 below.

Consistent with prior practice, the Council held one meeting under the item "Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe". At the meeting, held on 6 February, <sup>794</sup> the Council heard a briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on contemporary security challenges. He explained that Albania's strategic goal at the helm of OSCE would be to defend multilateralism at a time when it was felt to be under attack. He elaborated on the three main priorities of OSCE under the chairmanship of Albania. With regard to the first priority, namely, making a difference on the ground, Albania would be promoting the work of OSCE where it was closest to the people and, in that connection, conflict resolution efforts would be at the top of the agenda. He specifically addressed the situation

in Ukraine, <sup>795</sup> the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the situation in Georgia and the Transnistrian settlement process in the Republic of Moldova. <sup>796</sup> Women continued to be disproportionately affected by conflicts in the OSCE area and were being unjustly excluded from peace efforts. Inspired by the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), Albania would inject a new momentum into promoting the role of women in peace processes. Albania's second priority was to implement its commitments. In that regard, he mentioned immediate and urgent priorities such as promoting freedom of expression and freedom of the media, safeguarding the rights of national minorities and combating violence against women. The third priority of Albania's chairmanship was dialogue. In that connection, the Chairperson-in-Office announced that he would make it his personal commitment to advance dialogue among OSCE States and among and within OSCE States' societies, also noting that risk reduction, incident prevention and environmental protection would feature in debates among OSCE States, international organizations and civil society. He signalled, however, that a major obstacle to dialogue was the rise of intolerance, hate crimes and hate speech and expressed the intention to redouble efforts to promote tolerance and non-discrimination.

Following the briefing, members of the Council noted the importance of cooperation with regional

<sup>794</sup> See [S/PV.8714](#).

<sup>795</sup> For more information on discussions relating to Ukraine, see part I, sect. 19.

<sup>796</sup> See [S/PV.8714](#).

arrangements, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and welcomed the continued cooperation between the Council and OSCE in the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>797</sup> Several Council members also expressed support for the efforts of the Chairperson-in-Office to feature women and peace and security as one of the top priorities during Albania's chairmanship of OSCE.<sup>798</sup>

On 18 June, Council members held a videoconference<sup>799</sup> to hear a briefing by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In his intervention, the High Commissioner highlighted three areas of concern. First, he addressed the rising number of displaced persons, focusing on the Sahel region of West Africa and Libya. His second point concerned protection. He agreed with how others had referred to COVID-19 as a protection crisis and mentioned that despite the call of the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire, conflicts had continued to grow.<sup>800</sup> He made reference to the situation of refugees and displaced persons, focusing on Yemen, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Syrian Arab Republic and the broader region around it. Finally, he referred to the need not to give up on solutions. In that regard, he focused specifically on the countries of origin of two thirds of the refugees and people crossing borders, namely, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar. On those specific countries, he offered his views with a focus on solutions with respect to the situations in South Sudan and Myanmar. In closing, he called on Council members to echo and follow up on the ceasefire call of the Secretary-General and to use their leadership and influence to seek out and expand space for solutions. He expressed concern regarding the Council's divisions and his expectation that the Council would send decisive, clear and unanimous messages to end conflicts and pursue avenues for peace.

In line with previously established practice, the Council heard a briefing by the President of the

International Court of Justice, held in the format of a closed videoconference.<sup>801</sup>

In 2020, Council members held two videoconferences in connection with the item "Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council". On 23 November, Council members held a videoconference<sup>802</sup> to hear a joint briefing by the Chairs of the three committees related to counter-terrorism and non-proliferation, namely, the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). During their briefing, the Chairs provided an overview of the work of the three committees, including their ongoing cooperation and that of their groups of experts in assisting Member States to counter the financing of terrorism and proliferation. In their deliberations, Council members discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on exacerbating conditions conducive to terrorism and expressed concern that terrorist groups, such as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) and Al-Qaida, might take advantage of the disruption and increased use of information technology.<sup>803</sup> In addition, while briefers and some Council members noted the importance of ensuring respect for human rights and international human rights and humanitarian law when countering terrorism,<sup>804</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation expressed concern about the high level of politicization of issues related to the protection of human rights and the fight against violent extremism and extremist ideology. The forthcoming comprehensive review of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) was also raised and several Council members noted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the initial timeline for that process.<sup>805</sup> In addition, in a videoconference held on 16 December,<sup>806</sup> Council members heard the end-of-year briefing by the outgoing Chairs of the various subsidiary bodies, namely, the Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia; the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015)

<sup>797</sup> Viet Nam, Tunisia, France, Estonia, Niger, China, Indonesia, South Africa, Russian Federation and Belgium. For more information about the role of regional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security, see part VIII.

<sup>798</sup> Germany, Viet Nam, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom, South Africa and Belgium.

<sup>799</sup> See [S/2020/560](#).

<sup>800</sup> In his statement, the High Commissioner referred to a separate meeting under the item "Protection of civilians in armed conflict" at which COVID-19 was referred to as a protection crisis. For more details, see part I, sect. 26.

<sup>801</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 19.

<sup>802</sup> See [S/2020/1143](#).

<sup>803</sup> China, Dominican Republic, France, South Africa and Viet Nam.

<sup>804</sup> Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

<sup>805</sup> Germany, Russian Federation and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

<sup>806</sup> See [S/2020/1258](#).

concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities; the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011); the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004); the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006); the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya; the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali; the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. In their briefings, several Chairs raised the issue of a more equitable distribution of chairmanships of subsidiary

organs among the elected and permanent members of the Council.<sup>807</sup> Furthermore, Chairs discussed the importance of transparency and respect for the procedural aspects of the work of the respective committees and working groups.<sup>808</sup> Other topics discussed during the briefing included the working conditions of the members of the panels of experts, the implementation of sanctions measures and the institutional set-up for the way in which the United Nations dealt with sanctions regimes.

<sup>807</sup> Belgium, Indonesia and Germany.

<sup>808</sup> Belgium, Indonesia and Dominican Republic.

Table 1

**Meeting: briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.8714 6 February 2020					Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Prime Minister and Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania	All Council members, invitee

Table 2

**Videoconference: briefing by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
18 June 2020	S/2020/560	Letter dated 22 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

Table 3

**Videoconferences: briefings by chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Council**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
23 November 2020	S/2020/1143	Letter dated 25 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
16 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1258</a>	Letter dated 18 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

### **31. The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security**

During the period under review, the Council held no meetings in connection with the item entitled “The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security”. Council members did, however, hold one videoconference in 2020. The Council issued one presidential statement in connection with the item, which was announced during a videoconference in accordance with the procedures established following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>809</sup> More information on the videoconferences is given in the table below.<sup>810</sup>

On 18 December, the members of the Council held a videoconference<sup>811</sup> in connection with the item, focused on “Strengthening the cooperation between the Security Council and the International Court of Justice”. At the videoconference, Council members heard a briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice, who emphasized the need to strengthen the partnership between the Council and the Court to uphold the rule of law at the international level. He recalled that the Council had only once exercised its powers under Article 36 (3) of the Charter<sup>812</sup> to recommend that disputing parties settle their dispute through the Court, namely in the *Corfu Channel case (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland v. Albania)*. The Council had also only once requested an advisory opinion from the Court under Article 96 of the Charter<sup>813</sup> in the case of *Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 (1970)*. He indicated, however, that the vitality of the relationship between the two principal organs could not be evaluated by the quantity, but rather by the quality, of their collaboration. Stating that the Court had consistently supported the mission of the Council to maintain

international peace and security, the President of the Court made some recommendations that could further reinforce cooperation between the two organs. First, he shared the view of the General Assembly that a request for an advisory opinion from the Court could play an important role in the Council’s work on the prevention of situations or disputes from becoming a threat to international peace and security and expressed his belief that the Council could consider such a possibility more often. Secondly, he suggested the possibility of an expanded dialogue between the Court and the Council in that, in addition to the annual briefing of the President of the Court to the Council, the Council could include in its schedule a visit to the Court once every three years, following the triennial change in the composition of the Court. Lastly, his third suggestion concerned the jurisdiction of the Court. In that regard, he drew attention to the presidential statements issued in 2006, 2010 and 2012,<sup>814</sup> in which the Council had called upon States to consider accepting the jurisdiction of the Court in accordance with its Statute. He noted that in the previous eight years, no further presidential statements had been issued by the Council and expressed the belief that such statements contributed to strengthening the relationship between the two organs and to the international rule of law and that they could be made periodically – every three to five years – starting from the date of the videoconference.

Following the briefing,<sup>815</sup> Council members affirmed the important role of the International Court of Justice in promoting and strengthening the rule of law, including in preventing conflicts and facilitating lasting peace and stability. In accordance with the procedures agreed upon following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to Council members 11 delegations submitted written statements.<sup>816</sup> Many participants noted the complementary nature of the mandates of the Court and the

<sup>809</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>810</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 25.

<sup>811</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#). For more information on the discussion, see part IV, sect. III.

<sup>812</sup> See resolution [22 \(1947\)](#).

<sup>813</sup> See resolution [284 \(1970\)](#).

<sup>814</sup> See [S/PRST/2006/28](#), [S/PRST/2010/11](#) and [S/PRST/2012/1](#).

<sup>815</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#).

<sup>816</sup> Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Denmark, Japan, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Peru and Portugal. For further details, see part II, sect. I.



Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. In that connection, most participants called for strengthening the relationship between the Council and the Court to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law. Many participants called for a greater involvement with the Court by, among other things, making use of the referral of legal disputes to the Court whenever necessary, in accordance with Article 36 (3) of the Charter.<sup>817</sup> Participants at the videoconference made concrete proposals, such as inviting the President of the International Court of Justice to brief the Council when non-compliance with Court decisions could threaten international peace and security, having the Council more involved in following up on provisional measures specified by the International Court of Justice<sup>818</sup> and fully supporting the Court's decisions,<sup>819</sup> including by ensuring compliance with the Court's judgments.<sup>820</sup> At the videoconference, the representative of South Africa announced that his delegation had drafted and placed before the Council for its consideration a draft presidential statement addressing the aforementioned issues. He expressed the hope of reaching an agreement on the text, which he said would help advance the

peaceful resolution of conflicts and put an end to violent conflicts.

Following the videoconference, on 21 December the Council issued a presidential statement in connection with the item, by which it noted the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Charter and the one hundredth anniversary of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice.<sup>821</sup> It reaffirmed its commitment to international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter, including the importance of the International Court of Justice in the international architecture and the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>822</sup> The Council stressed the importance of all the provisions of the Charter regarding the peaceful settlement of disputes and the International Court of Justice, including those pertaining to the interaction between the Council and the International Court of Justice.<sup>823</sup> The Council recognized the positive contribution of the Court to the rule of law at the international level and its key role in adjudicating disputes among States, as well as the need to enhance efforts aimed at capacity-building and assisting Member States.<sup>824</sup> The Council also expressed its continued commitment to fostering interaction between the Court and the Council in accordance with their respective mandates under the Charter of the United Nations.<sup>825</sup>

<sup>817</sup> President of the International Court of Justice, Estonia, Niger, Tunisia, Austria, Bangladesh, Japan, Liechtenstein, Peru and Portugal. For further details on the discussion, see part VI, sect. IV.

<sup>818</sup> Belgium.

<sup>819</sup> Mexico.

<sup>820</sup> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

<sup>821</sup> See [S/PRST/2020/13](#), second paragraph.

<sup>822</sup> *Ibid.*, first and fifth paragraphs.

<sup>823</sup> *Ibid.*, third paragraph.

<sup>824</sup> *Ibid.*, sixth and eighth paragraphs.

<sup>825</sup> *Ibid.*, tenth paragraph.

## Videokonferences: the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security

<i>Videokonference date</i>	<i>Videokonference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
18 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1286</a>	Letter dated 23 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
21 December 2020	No record <sup>a</sup>		<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/13</a>

<sup>a</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part I, chap. IV.B.

## 32. Items relating to non-proliferation

### A. Non-proliferation

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting under the item entitled "Non-proliferation", which took the form of a

briefing.<sup>826</sup> More information on the meetings, including on the participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. In 2020, the Council failed to

<sup>826</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.



adopt a draft resolution in connection with the item owing to the lack of a sufficient number of votes. Council members also held three open videoconferences in connection with the item. More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below.<sup>827</sup>

Under the item, Council members heard briefings by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the President-designate of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the representative of Belgium as the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) and the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

On 26 February, the Security Council held a meeting<sup>828</sup> under the sub-item entitled “Supporting the Non-proliferation Treaty ahead of the 2020 Review Conference”. The Council was briefed by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the President-designate of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. During the meeting, the High Representative reaffirmed the Treaty’s crucial role in constraining the proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as its function as a de facto negotiating forum for nuclear disarmament. She added that failure to secure a successful outcome at the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons would risk undermining the value that many Member States placed on the Treaty and devalue the review cycle as a way to strengthen the implementation of the Treaty and the regime as a whole. She suggested several issues that should form a part of any consensus document, including a high-level reaffirmation of commitment to the Treaty and all its obligations, recommitment to the norm against the use of nuclear weapons, development of a package of risk-reduction measures to avoid the prospect of nuclear-weapon use, endorsement of the additional protocol as the safeguards standard, and a new vision for disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control to address current nuclear weapons challenges. She underscored the importance of the reaffirmation of Council members’ support for the Treaty and an expression of their commitment to securing success at the Review Conference, given that many Council members would be key players there. The President-designate said that the Treaty and its Review Conference represented an almost universal forum to

discuss issues central to international peace and security, which gave the Treaty a unique level of legitimacy. Explicitly referring to Article 26 of the Charter, which conferred upon the Council the responsibility for disarmament and the regulation of armaments, he noted that issues concerning disarmament and arms control had been an important part of the United Nations since its inception.<sup>829</sup> He observed that the Review Conference came at a time of growing concerns and uncertainties and needed to be opened up to all voices and ideas, making sure that the next generation of leaders and practitioners were included in the conversation and that the voices of women and the gender perspective were considered and included in the conclusions.<sup>830</sup> While acknowledging the Treaty’s valuable contribution to international peace and security, several Council members expressed their concern regarding the termination of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, the future of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, the nuclear situation in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the standoff involving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.<sup>831</sup> Council Members further noted that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remained crucial in constraining new weapons development and called on all States that had not signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to do so.<sup>832</sup>

The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs briefed Council members twice, in June and December, in relation to the ninth and tenth reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#).<sup>833</sup> During her first briefing,<sup>834</sup> on 30 June, in addition to addressing some of the details of the Secretary-General’s ninth report with respect to the implementation of the nuclear-, ballistic missile- and arms-related provisions of the Plan, the Under-Secretary-General expressed regret at the withdrawal of the United States from the Plan of Action. She added that the United States’ reimposition

<sup>827</sup> See also [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 31.

<sup>828</sup> See [S/PV.8733](#).

<sup>829</sup> For more information on the practice of the Council in connection with Article 26, see part V, sect. III.

<sup>830</sup> See [S/PV.8733](#).

<sup>831</sup> Germany, Russian Federation, China, Dominican Republic, United Kingdom, Estonia, France, United States and Belgium.

<sup>832</sup> Germany, Viet Nam, Dominican Republic, United Kingdom, Estonia, France and Belgium.

<sup>833</sup> [S/2020/531](#) and [S/2020/1177](#).

<sup>834</sup> See [S/2020/644](#).

of national sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran and the decision not to extend waivers for trade in oil with the Islamic Republic of Iran and for all remaining projects originating under the Plan of Action were contrary to the goals of the Plan of Action. Referencing a letter from the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Secretary-General indicating that the United States sanctions had been constraining his country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, she recalled the Secretary-General's appeal for the waiving of sanctions that could undermine a country's capacity to respond to the pandemic. The Under-Secretary-General also expressed regret that the Islamic Republic of Iran had surpassed limits stipulated in the Plan of Action on its uranium-enrichment level and its stockpiles of heavy water and low-enriched uranium and that it had lifted limitations in the Plan of Action on its nuclear research and development activities. She appealed to the Islamic Republic of Iran to return to full implementation of the Plan of Action, encouraged all participants in the Plan of Action to resolve all differences within the dispute-resolution mechanism under the Plan and urged all Member States to avoid provocative rhetoric and actions that could have a further negative impact on the Plan of Action and regional stability. Notwithstanding the challenges to the Plan of Action, she recalled that the Plan remained the best way to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear programme and that faithful adherence to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) was fundamental to regional stability. The Head of the European Union Delegation to the United Nations stated that nuclear proliferation remained a global threat with potentially worldwide consequences. The Plan of Action had removed the prospect of a nuclear-armed Islamic Republic of Iran from the regional security equation in a verifiable manner. He noted that it was deeply worrisome that the Islamic Republic of Iran had decreased its nuclear-related commitments under the Plan of Action, in particular its continued accumulation of low-enriched uranium in excess of the stockpile and enrichment level thresholds in the Plan, the continued expansion of research and development with advanced centrifuges and the enrichment activities in Fordow. He also recognized the challenges brought about by the United States' withdrawal from the Plan of Action and the reimposition of sanctions, and expressed deep regret at the United States' decision to end the three waivers covering key nuclear projects covered by the Plan in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the Arak modernization project. The representative of Belgium, as the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), informed Council members that the ninth

report of the Facilitator had not been approved by all the members of the Council, and briefed instead on the highlights of the activities under the 2231 format between December 2019 and June 2020.<sup>835</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation expressed profound disappointment with the ninth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#),<sup>836</sup> adding that it had clearly failed to meet the high standards of impartiality expected in such documents.<sup>837</sup> While expressing regret at the withdrawal of the United States from the Plan of Action, some Council members confirmed their commitment to preserving the agreement.<sup>838</sup> Some Council members also expressed regret at the imposition of unilateral sanctions by the United States.<sup>839</sup> The Secretary of State of the United States said that the Secretary-General's report confirmed that weapons used to attack Saudi Arabia in September 2019 were of Iranian origin and that the weapons interdicted off the coast of Yemen in November of 2019 and February 2020 were also of Iranian origin, adding that the Islamic Republic of Iran was already violating the arms embargo even before its expiration date. He also said that the Islamic Republic of Iran had continued to supply militia groups with arms that were used against the United States and coalition forces. In that regard, he said that the overwhelming preference of the United States was to work with the Council to extend the arms embargo to protect human life and to protect the United States' national security and the national security of Council members. He also welcomed the statement of the United Kingdom, France and Germany recognizing that lifting the embargo would have major implications for regional security and stability, adding that renewing the arms embargo would exert more pressure on Tehran "to start behaving like a normal nation." The representative of the Russian Federation submitted that there were no legal or other grounds to raise the issue of the arms embargo in the Council. The approval-based procedures for the transfer of armaments to and from the Islamic Republic of Iran had been designed as temporary measures and their extension beyond 18 October 2020 had never been either envisaged or discussed. Given all that, he considered it naive to suggest that there could be room for engaging the Council on the issue. The representative of the Islamic

<sup>835</sup> See [S/2020/644](#). See also [S/2020/508](#).

<sup>836</sup> [S/2020/531](#).

<sup>837</sup> See [S/2020/644](#).

<sup>838</sup> Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa.

<sup>839</sup> Belgium, China, France, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa.

Republic of Iran stressed that the United States had persistently violated resolution 2231 (2015), a resolution that it had co-sponsored, and had tried to force other States to violate that very text. He also said that the timetable for the removal of arms restrictions embodied in resolution 2231 (2015) was an inseparable part of the hard-won compromise enabling the participants in the Plan of Action to finally agree on the overall package of the Plan of Action and resolution 2231 (2015). The resolution explicitly urged its “full implementation on the timetable”. In that regard, he added that any attempt to change or amend the agreed timetable was thus tantamount to undermining resolution 2231 (2015) in its entirety.

On 14 August, the United States submitted a draft resolution, which was not adopted having failed to obtain the required number of votes. Based on the draft resolution, the Council would have decided that paragraph 5 and subparagraphs (b) and (e) of paragraph 6 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015) continued to apply until the Council decided otherwise, notwithstanding the durations specified in each paragraph or subparagraph.<sup>840</sup> That would have included preventing the supply, sale or transfer of arms or related materiel from the Islamic Republic of Iran and preventing the supply, sale or transfer of any battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, large calibre artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships, missiles or missile systems to the Islamic Republic of Iran.<sup>841</sup> In their explanations of vote,<sup>842</sup> Council members noted that they remained committed to the full implementation of the Plan of Action and that the text of the draft resolution would have jeopardized regional stability and security.<sup>843</sup> In the explanation of vote submitted by the permanent representative of the United States, she reiterated the view that the Council’s “credibility was in tatters”. She noted that by not adopting the proposed resolution, the Council had validated the world’s “number one Statesponsor of terror”. She further highlighted her country’s determination to contain “the Iranian threat” and added that unlocking the ability of the Islamic Republic of Iran to purchase sophisticated missile batteries, fighter jets, tanks and other modern weapons would trigger a regional arms race. She added that the defeat of the draft resolution outlined perfectly the Council’s condition of paralysis and inaction in the face of growing threats. In contrast, the representative of

China said that the voting result showed that unilateralism received no support and that “bullying” would fail. In its pursuit of unilateralism and “America first” in recent years, he added, the United States had abandoned its international obligations and withdrawn from multilateral agreements and international organizations, destroying its own credibility. He indicated also that the United States had repeatedly claimed that it would invoke the snapback mechanism. Having withdrawn from the Plan of Action, according to the representative of China, the United States was no longer a participant in the Plan and therefore ineligible to invoke a snapback. Should the United States insist regardless of international opinion, it was doomed to fail. Council members encouraged the parties concerned to continue dialogue, with a view to resolving their differences peacefully, including through the Plan’s dispute resolution mechanism.<sup>844</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation said that it was high time to launch a broad regional dialogue embracing all interested parties to de-escalate tensions and look for pragmatic compromise-based decisions. He referred to the suggestion made by the President of the Russian Federation on 14 August 2020 to convene an online meeting of the Heads of State of the permanent members of the Council, with the participation of the heads of Germany and the Islamic Republic of Iran, in order to outline steps that could prevent confrontation or a spike in tensions in the Council.

During the second briefing for the year in connection with the item, on 22 December,<sup>845</sup> the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs explained that in the preparation of the tenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), careful note had been taken of the developments in the Council following the receipt of the letters from the United States on 20 August and 23 September 2020.<sup>846</sup> She noted the view of the United States that, as of 20 September 2020, all provisions of prior resolutions that had been terminated by resolution 2231 (2015) applied in the same manner. As she further explained, the United States was also of the view that the measures contained in paragraphs 7, 8 and 16 to 20 of resolution 2231 (2015) were also terminated. She further noted that the majority of Council members and the Islamic Republic of Iran had written to the Council stating that, among other things, the 20 August 2020 letter from the United States did not initiate the process

<sup>840</sup> S/2020/797, para. 1.

<sup>841</sup> Resolution 2231 (2015), annex B, paras. 5 and 6.

<sup>842</sup> See S/2020/805.

<sup>843</sup> Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

<sup>844</sup> China, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

<sup>845</sup> See S/2020/1324.

<sup>846</sup> See S/2020/815 and S/2020/927.

set forth in paragraph 11 of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#).<sup>847</sup> She added that those States had expressed their strong support for the Plan of Action and the continued implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). The Under-Secretary-General further stated that both the President of the Council for the month of August and the President for the month of September had indicated that they were not in a position to take any action with regard to the letter from the United States dated 20 August 2020. She added that the President of the Council in October had also taken note of those developments. She also expressed regret at the steps taken by the United States when it withdrew from the Plan, as well as the steps taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran to reduce some of its nuclear-related commitments under the Plan.<sup>848</sup> The Head of the European Union Delegation, speaking on behalf of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Coordinator of the Joint Commission of the Joint Plan of Action, stated that the remaining participants of the Plan had demonstrated their conviction and willingness to work diplomatically to preserve the deal, proving its importance and value.<sup>849</sup> He expressed particular concern about the Islamic Republic of Iran's continued accumulation of low-enriched uranium in excess of the stockpile and enrichment level thresholds in the Plan of Action. He also expressed his appreciation at the indications of the return of the Islamic Republic of Iran to full implementation of the Plan. Having taken note of the United States' announcement and its position regarding the snapback mechanism under resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), he stressed that the United States could not be considered a Plan of Action participant State and could not initiate the process of reinstating United Nations sanctions under resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). As the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of

resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), the representative of Belgium briefed Council members on the tenth report of the Facilitator.<sup>850</sup> He noted that following the 20 August 2020 letter from the Secretary of State of the United States, 13 Council members had expressed differing views on the letter, which had been duly reflected in the report.<sup>851</sup> He explained that according to annex B, the sanctions against arms transfers to and from the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the travel ban, had expired on 18 October 2020 and that differing stances on that matter, too, had been expressed by Member States in letters circulated during the reporting period. Following the briefings, several Council members reiterated their position regarding the United States' attempt to initiate the process of reinstating United Nations sanctions under resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) as either having no legal basis or going against its obligations under resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#).<sup>852</sup> The representative of the United Kingdom expressed the hope that the following year the United States would rejoin the Plan of Action and the Islamic Republic of Iran would return to compliance with the agreement. She added that a return to diplomacy represented the best means of bringing greater security to the region, upholding the nuclear non-proliferation regime and preventing the Islamic Republic of Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. The representative of the United States said that the Council had a responsibility to address the Islamic Republic of Iran's destabilizing behaviour. He said that a failure to do so would call into question the credibility of the organ and send a dangerous message to other "rogue actors and despots around the world". He recognized the attention in the report to the snapback of previous United Nations sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran, and expressed regret at the decision of the Secretary-General to encourage the continued use of the procurement channel in resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), which he considered to be inconsistent with the snapback. He then called on the Secretary-General and all Council members to fully implement all United Nations sanctions measures, including those reimposed through the snapback mechanism. Council members further expressed concerns about the non-compliance by the Islamic Republic of Iran with its nuclear obligations and noted, with regret, the law recently adopted by the Iranian Parliament that could pave the way to the significant development of the Islamic Republic of Iran's enrichment programme and reduced access for

<sup>847</sup> See letter dated 21 September 2020 from the representative of Belgium, also on behalf of Estonia, France and Germany ([S/2020/931](#)); letters dated 20 August 2020 ([S/2020/817](#)) and 20 September 2020 ([S/2020/923](#)) from representative of China; letter dated 26 August 2020 from the representative of Germany, also on behalf of Belgium, Estonia and France ([S/2020/839](#)); letter dated 21 August 2020 from the representative of Indonesia ([S/2020/824](#)); letters dated 20 August 2020 ([S/2020/821](#)) and 21 September 2020 ([S/2020/928](#)) from the representatives of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia; and letters dated 20 August 2020 ([S/2020/816](#)), 21 August 2020 ([S/2020/828](#)) and 20 September 2020 ([S/2020/924](#)) from the representative of the Russian Federation.

<sup>848</sup> For the report of the Secretary-General, see [S/2020/1177](#). For more information on the discussion in connection with the snapback mechanism, see part V, sect. II.B.

<sup>849</sup> See [S/2020/1324](#).

<sup>850</sup> See [S/2020/1244](#).

<sup>851</sup> See [S/2020/1324](#).

<sup>852</sup> China, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia.



the International Atomic Energy Agency.<sup>853</sup> The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran said that by pursuing a hostile policy towards the Plan of Action and his country since 8 May 2018, the United States had also engaged in persistent widespread public and private harassment of the Islamic Republic of Iran's business partners. By doing so, he argued that the United States had committed multiple cases of "significant non-performance" under the Plan and was, therefore, in continuous systematic material breach of its legal obligations under resolution 2231 (2015), the Charter of the United Nations and international law. He explained that instead of taking remedial measures, as authorized in the Plan of Action, the Islamic Republic of Iran, upon the request of the E3 – France, Germany and the United Kingdom – had exercised restraint and strategic patience for one year. He noted that maximum restraint had been met with the so-called maximum

pressure of the United States and its ever-increasing unlawful sanctions, as well as the utter failure of the E3 and the European Union to implement their commitments. He added that the Islamic Republic of Iran had been left with no choice but to take certain remedial steps, in full conformity with paragraphs 26 and 36 of the Plan of Action, pursuant to which, in the case of "a re-introduction or re-imposition of the sanctions", the Islamic Republic of Iran had the right "to cease performing its commitments under this JCPOA in whole or in part". He noted that the United States had imposed over 1,500 sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran, adding that such sanctions were in fact "an all-out war with economic measures instead of weapons". He added that the so-called maximum pressure policy of the United States against the Islamic Republic of Iran would not yield any result and noted that the only way out was to go back to the prompt, full and unconditional implementation of the Plan of Action.

<sup>853</sup> Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States.

**Table 1**  
**Meeting: non-proliferation**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for- against- abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8733</a> 26 February 2020	Supporting the Non-Proliferation Treaty ahead of the 2020 Review Conference			High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, President-designate of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons	All Council members, <sup>a</sup> all invitees	

<sup>a</sup> Germany was represented by its Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs.

**Table 2**  
**Videoconferences: non-proliferation**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
30 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/644</a>	Letter dated 2 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
14 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/805</a>	Letter dated 15 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/797</a> (not adopted) 2-2-11 <sup>a</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/803</a>
22 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1324</a>	Letter dated 24 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<sup>a</sup> *For*: Dominican Republic, United States; *against*: China, Russian Federation; *abstaining*: Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, Viet Nam.

## B. Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

During the period under review, Council members held a videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea” to announce the adoption of a resolution, under Chapter VII of the Charter.<sup>854</sup> In addition, Council members held consultations of the whole and closed videoconferences in connection with the item.<sup>855</sup> More information on the videoconference is given in the table below.

<sup>854</sup> Owing to technical difficulties, instead of an open videoconference to announce the vote on resolution [2515 \(2020\)](#) the videoconference was closed. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>855</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 34. See also [S/2020/344](#), [S/2020/1045](#) and [S/2021/203](#).

On 30 March, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2515 \(2020\)](#). By the resolution, the Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts appointed pursuant to resolution [1874 \(2009\)](#) in support of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1718 \(2006\)](#), for a period of 12 months, until 30 April 2021.<sup>856</sup> The Council requested the Panel to provide periodic reports and expressed its intent to review the Panel's mandate and to take appropriate action regarding a further extension no later than 26 March 2021, as well as to continue to follow the work of the Panel.<sup>857</sup>

<sup>856</sup> Resolution [2515 \(2020\)](#), para. 1. For more information on the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1718 \(2006\)](#) and the Panel of Experts, see part IX, sect. I.

<sup>857</sup> Resolution [2515 \(2020\)](#), paras. 1, 2 and 4.

### Videoconference: non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
30 March 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/270</a>		Resolution <a href="#">2515 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII) <a href="#">S/2020/246</a>

## 33. Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting under the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, which took the form of an open

debate.<sup>858</sup> More information on the meeting, including on participants and speakers is given in table 1 below. Council members also held three open videoconferences

<sup>858</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.



in connection with the item and the Council adopted one resolution.<sup>859</sup> More information on the videoconferences is given in table 2 below. In addition to the meeting and videoconferences, in 2020 Council members also held an informal interactive dialogue on 22 July in connection with the item.<sup>860</sup>

In 2020, Council members were briefed by a number of speakers, including the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General, the former Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, the President of the Economic and Social Council and representatives from international and regional organizations, such as the African Union Development Agency, and speakers from civil society and non-governmental organizations.

On 13 February, at the initiative of Belgium, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>861</sup> the Council convened a high-level open debate<sup>862</sup> under the sub-item entitled “Transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict situations”. In her statement, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights stated that lasting peace was interlinked with justice, development and respect for human rights. Her experience in Chile had convinced her that transitional justice processes that were context-specific, nationally owned and focused on victims could connect, empower and transform societies, thereby contributing to lasting and just peace. She emphasized truth-seeking initiatives as they enabled victims to recount their experiences and opened new spaces where victims and perpetrators could re-establish a connection, adding that such processes were often deeply empowering for victims. The High Commissioner further noted that criminal accountability was vital but should be accompanied by a broad range of complementary measures to support truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence. Following the briefing by the High Commissioner, the President of the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition of Colombia stated that transitional justice was the most comprehensive, dynamic and promising peacebuilding instrument at the disposal of victims around the world and peoples who had endured gross human rights violations during situations of internal armed conflict. He focused on five main points: victims, truth in transitional justice, non-repetition, comprehensive transition and the role of

the Security Council and the international community. With regard to the latter, the Council and the international community must play a vital role in ensuring transitional justice. Peace was the responsibility of a nation’s citizens, but the cases that called for transitional justice involved extreme ruptures in the human experience. Ensuring transitional justice was therefore incumbent on the world community, as these were dynamically and externally interrelated conflicts that no country could manage alone. The Executive Director of the Foundation for Human Rights in South Africa, Trustee of the Desmond Tutu Peace Centre and Chair of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan stated that it was important to ensure that peace and justice were seen as mutually reinforcing imperatives and not replaced by the erroneous notion that peace must come first, before accountability. She called on the Council to address impunity using a prevention lens to ensure the non-recurrence of violations and to address the indirect causes of conflict that exacerbated conflict, namely, structural violence, discrimination, economic exploitation, unequal power relations and climate justice.

During the discussion, several Council members shared the experience of their respective countries’ national reconciliation processes.<sup>863</sup> Several Council members called for inclusive transitional justice and highlighted the importance of the role of women in reconciliation processes.<sup>864</sup> During the debate, some speakers emphasized the importance of accountability within reconciliation processes and stressed the need to combat impunity.<sup>865</sup> Some argued that the International Criminal Court could help to bring justice or support to victims of gross violations.<sup>866</sup> Several Council members rejected one-size-fits-all strategies or generic approaches and argued that transitional justice processes should take into consideration national and local contexts.<sup>867</sup> Council members stated that the Council should play a greater role in promoting and supporting transitional justice processes.<sup>868</sup>

<sup>863</sup> Niger, Estonia, South Africa, Tunisia and Germany.

<sup>864</sup> Belgium, Estonia, South Africa, United States, Indonesia, France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominican Republic and Viet Nam.

<sup>865</sup> Belgium, Niger, Estonia, Tunisia, United Kingdom, France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Germany.

<sup>866</sup> Belgium, Estonia, Tunisia, Germany and France.

<sup>867</sup> Belgium, South Africa, United States, Indonesia, Tunisia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, France, China, Viet Nam and Russian Federation.

<sup>868</sup> Belgium, Estonia, South Africa, Indonesia, Tunisia, Germany and Dominican Republic. For more information on the discussion, see part VI, sect. IV.

<sup>859</sup> Resolution 2558 (2020). For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>860</sup> See A/75/2, part II, chap. 28. See also S/2021/9.

<sup>861</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 4 February 2020 (S/2020/98).

<sup>862</sup> See S/PV.8723.

On 12 August, at the initiative of Indonesia, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>869</sup> Council members held an open videoconference<sup>870</sup> in connection with the item, under the sub-item entitled “Pandemics and the challenges of sustaining peace”. Council members were briefed by the Secretary-General, former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Director of the New York University Center on International Cooperation.

The Secretary-General stated that the COVID-19 pandemic threatened hard-won development and peacebuilding gains and risked exacerbating conflicts or fomenting new ones. He identified three key dangers, namely, the erosion of public trust, the destabilization of the global economic order, and the weakening of the social fabric. Nevertheless, he argued that the pandemic also created opportunities for peace, noting that the appeal for a global ceasefire had prompted positive responses from Governments and non-State actors and that the adoption of resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) had been a step in the right direction. He called on the Council to use its influence for an investment in prevention. In that regard, the responses to the pandemic had to be conflict-sensitive and inclusive. In addition, sustaining peace required an integrated and coherent approach through strong collaboration among humanitarian, development and peace actors. The Council and the Peacebuilding Commission could help to marshal a collaborative response to the peacebuilding impact of the pandemic, drawing on lessons from previous health crises, such as the Ebola virus disease outbreak. The Secretary-General added that the approach to the peacebuilding needs in the context of the pandemic had to be flexible and tailored, citing examples from the Peacebuilding Fund. In his statement, the former Secretary-General welcomed the adoption of resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) calling for a humanitarian ceasefire, but expressed regret that valuable months had been wasted in arguments over the details of the text. That, he said, had weakened the message that the Council needed to send to all warring parties, namely, that it was the time to confront a common enemy. He noted that the impact of the pandemic on conflict-affected settings had been much worse than initially thought, both in terms of the

immediate health and humanitarian ramifications, but also in the areas of social cohesion, governance and the rule of law. He stressed that global solidarity had been loosened, while multilateralism had been under threat. Noting that the economic impacts of the pandemic would be both long-lasting and severe, he cited warnings of famines by the World Food Programme and the loss of opportunities for education. With reference to the joint resolutions on peacebuilding adopted by the Council and the General Assembly (Council resolution [2282 \(2016\)](#) and Assembly resolution [70/262](#)) and the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the former Secretary-General stressed that they had offered an opportunity to the United Nations to focus on preventing conflicts so that the systemic causes of conflicts, rather than just the symptoms, were holistically addressed; the lessons learned could also be applied to the response to COVID-19. He said that the experience of the crisis must also spur the international community to change the priorities and the understandings of what threats and values really mattered, addressing the inequalities in societies and the gaps in social protection. Furthermore, the pandemic had demonstrated the genuine utility of sustaining peace and proved the benefits of enhancing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and it served as an opportunity to promote greater discussions and activities on emerging threats. It had also shown that the United Nations needed to work more effectively with various partners, including regional organizations, international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society. In that regard, the Peacebuilding Commission was well positioned to help to synergize multi-stakeholder partnerships by making full use of its distinctive convening power. The Director of the New York University Center on International Cooperation stated that the pandemic had exposed fragility in all countries, in health systems and economic, social and political fabric. She identified five major drivers of conflict, namely, economic shock and rising inequality, practical problems in convening peace processes and elections, growing food insecurity, a decrease in remittances and issues concerning trade and migration, and unequal access to public-health goods. Nevertheless, she argued that positive opportunities for peacebuilding existed, such as the unprecedented demand for more international collective action, the call for ceasefires issued by the Secretary-General and supported in resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), the opportunity to use a sustaining-peace lens from early on in the response to the pandemic and the investment in universal health and equal access to vaccines.

<sup>869</sup> The Council has before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 30 July 2020 ([S/2020/765](#)).

<sup>870</sup> See [S/2020/799](#). Estonia and Indonesia were represented by their respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs; Germany was represented by its Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office; South Africa was represented by its Minister for International Relations and Cooperation; and Viet Nam was represented by its Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

She added that those problems could become international threats to peace and security if not addressed by the Council, arguing that they formed an example of an extreme public health and economic shock that deserved to qualify as a peacebuilding risk.

Council members warned that the pandemic threatened to reverse or delay hard-won peacebuilding gains in conflict-affected areas.<sup>871</sup> Some speakers stressed the importance of international cooperation and multilateralism in the fight against the pandemic.<sup>872</sup> Council members welcomed and reaffirmed the Secretary-General's appeal for an immediate global ceasefire and facilitation of humanitarian activities during the period of crisis.<sup>873</sup> Furthermore, some participants called for the lifting of sanctions, arguing that they could undermine countries' ability to address the pandemic.<sup>874</sup> Some speakers emphasized the inclusion of both women and youth in the response to the pandemic and in peacebuilding processes in general.<sup>875</sup> Several Council members highlighted the importance of the Peacebuilding Commission during the pandemic,<sup>876</sup> some of which called for a greater advisory role for the Commission vis-à-vis the Council.<sup>877</sup>

On 3 November, at the initiative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>878</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item on the theme "Contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity".<sup>879</sup> At the videoconference,<sup>880</sup> Council

members heard briefings by the Deputy Secretary-General, the Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency, the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies and the President of the Economic and Social Council.<sup>881</sup>

The Deputy Secretary-General stated that the COVID-19 pandemic continued to exacerbate the risks and drivers of conflict, reversing development and peacebuilding gains, aggravating conflicts and undermining efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. She stated that the climate emergency was a major driver of inequality, insecurity and conflict. Noting that the drivers of conflict were not static, she stressed that building and sustaining peace required addressing the root causes as they developed and interacted with one another. The pandemic had highlighted the necessity of investing in inclusive, equitable governance and institutions, as well as tackling root causes, so as to address the drivers of all kinds of crises and shocks. The Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency drew attention to the critical situation in West Africa in general and in the Sahel in particular. Given the high natural population growth, those States and their Governments' capacity to provide public services and administer their territory would remain glaringly inadequate. He emphasized the security crisis throughout the region, which affected civilian populations causing food insecurity and displacement of populations. Moreover, structural obstacles to development and the challenging security situation were compounded by new risk factors exacerbating an already fragile situation, such as the warming in the Sahel and the increase in the frequency of extreme weather events. He suggested several measures to mitigate the socioeconomic fragility and financial poverty of States and concluded by emphasizing the importance of data, their analysis and the consensus built around them as tools for the formulation of holistic, coherent and sustainable policies and methods of intervention. The Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies highlighted the reparatory justice movement against the legacies of slavery, violent colonization and institutional racism. He called upon the United Nations to reconvene the 1960s Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the

<sup>871</sup> Indonesia, Viet Nam, South Africa, Germany, Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and United Kingdom. For more information on the discussion, see part VII, sect. I.

<sup>872</sup> Viet Nam, South Africa, Germany, Belgium, China, France and Tunisia.

<sup>873</sup> Viet Nam, South Africa, China and Niger.

<sup>874</sup> Viet Nam, South Africa, China, Russian Federation and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

<sup>875</sup> Estonia, Germany, Dominican Republic, France, Niger and Tunisia.

<sup>876</sup> Estonia, South Africa, Germany, Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, France, Russian Federation and United Kingdom.

<sup>877</sup> Estonia, Germany and Dominican Republic.

<sup>878</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 30 October 2020 (S/2020/1064).

<sup>879</sup> An analytical summary of the videoconference was subsequently distributed annexed to a letter dated 29 December 2020 from the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the Secretary-General (S/2020/1328).

<sup>880</sup> See S/2020/1090. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was represented by its Prime Minister. Belgium was represented by its Minister of Development Cooperation; Estonia was represented by its Deputy Minister for

Foreign Affairs; Germany was represented by its Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office; the Russian Federation was represented by its Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs; South Africa was represented by its Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation; Tunisia was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs; the United Kingdom was represented by its Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia; and Viet Nam was represented by its Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>881</sup> See S/2020/1090.

Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to settle the matter of reparations, noting that it was a necessary part of the International Decade for People of African Descent adopted by the United Nations to alleviate the continuing suffering of people of African descent who had been the targeted victims of violent colonization. He also called upon the Council to acknowledge the reparations for the slavery movement and to “assist the world in moving on and beyond the historical site of these crimes”. The President of the Economic and Social Council referred to Articles 55 and 65 of the Charter and argued that the Charter’s framers had clearly conceived that the United Nations would both collectively maintain and enforce peace and create the conditions for peace and stability. He argued that the Member States had failed to live up to the ideals of collective and cooperative security and recalled in that regard the Secretary-General’s observation earlier in the year that “inequality was the hallmark of our times”. He stressed that the origins of many, if not most, of the conflicts and disputes on the agenda of the Security Council could be traced to this unequal world order and called for the implementation by the international community of several forms of debt suspension and restructuring, as well as reforms to address structural inequalities.<sup>882</sup>

At the meeting,<sup>883</sup> a number of Council members stressed that the COVID-19 pandemic had exposed vulnerabilities and exacerbated root causes of conflict.<sup>884</sup> Council members also highlighted climate change as a major driver of conflict.<sup>885</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation stated, however, that climate change was not to be considered as a universal factor underlying conflict and global insecurity. Council members called for a whole-of-system approach to peacebuilding with an enhanced coordination among United Nations institutions and agencies.<sup>886</sup> Some Council members underscored the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.<sup>887</sup> Several Council members stressed that peace and development were linked and interdependent.<sup>888</sup> Several participants acknowledged the

work of the Peacebuilding Commission and called for the strengthening of its advisory role.<sup>889</sup>

In 2020, the Council unanimously adopted one resolution in connection with the item. Pursuant to the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace,<sup>890</sup> the General Assembly and the Council concluded the 2020 comprehensive review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture through the adoption of identical resolutions, namely, Assembly resolution [75/201](#) and Council resolution [2558 \(2020\)](#), both of 21 December.<sup>891</sup> By resolution [2558 \(2020\)](#), the Council reaffirmed that development, peace and security and human rights were interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Moreover, the Council expressed grave concern regarding the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across the world, especially in conflict-affected countries.<sup>892</sup> The Council welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace by Member States as well as the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission, and called upon it to continue strengthening its advisory, bridging and convening roles in support of nationally owned priorities and efforts in the countries and regions under its consideration. The Council noted that peacebuilding financing remained a critical challenge and therefore took note of the Assembly’s decision to convene a high-level meeting during its seventy-sixth session to advance, explore and consider options for ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding. By the same resolution, the Council called for a further comprehensive review of United Nations peacebuilding in 2025 and requested the Secretary-General to present to the Assembly

<sup>882</sup> For more information on the relations between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, see part IV, sect. II.

<sup>883</sup> See [S/2020/1090](#).

<sup>884</sup> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, Germany, Russian Federation, South Africa, Viet Nam, China, Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia and Niger.

<sup>885</sup> Belgium, Estonia, Germany, South Africa, United Kingdom, China, Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia and Niger.

<sup>886</sup> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Belgium, Russian Federation, South Africa, China, France and Indonesia.

<sup>887</sup> South Africa, Viet Nam, China, Indonesia and Niger.

<sup>888</sup> Belgium, Estonia, South Africa, United Kingdom, China, Niger, Indonesia and France.

<sup>889</sup> Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), El Salvador, European Union, Georgia, Guatemala, Ireland, Japan, Malta, Namibia, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Switzerland and United Arab Emirates. For more information on the Peacebuilding Commission, see part IX, sect. VII.

<sup>890</sup> See [S/2020/773](#). In addition to the report of the Secretary-General, inputs for the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture were also provided by, among others, the Peacebuilding Commission through the letter dated 2 July 2020 from the Chair of the Commission ([S/2020/645](#)) and the group of independent eminent persons through its letters transmitted by the Secretary-General in a letter dated 6 July 2020 (see [S/2020/678](#)). The group of independent eminent persons was requested to submit its reflections on the implementation of the resolutions on the peacebuilding architecture through identical letters dated 31 January 2020 and 3 February 2020 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Council ([S/2020/91](#)).

<sup>891</sup> For more information on relations between the Council and the General Assembly, see part IV, sect. I.

<sup>892</sup> Resolution [2558 \(2020\)](#), third and seventh preambular paragraphs.



and the Council an interim report in 2022 and a second, detailed report in 2024 in advance of the review, as well as to continue to present a report every two years following that

review, on continued implementation of the resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.<sup>893</sup>

<sup>893</sup> Ibid., paras. 1, 2, 4 and 5.

**Table 1**  
**Meeting: peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8723</a> 13 February 2020	Transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict situations  Letter dated 4 February 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General ( <a href="#">S/2020/98</a> )		42 Member States <sup>a</sup>	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, President of the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition of Colombia, Executive Director of the Foundation for Human Rights in South Africa, Permanent Observer of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations	All Council members <sup>b</sup> and all invitees <sup>c</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Gambia, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and Ukraine.

<sup>b</sup> Belgium (President of the Security Council) was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence; Estonia was represented by its Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs; and the Niger was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Abroad.

<sup>c</sup> Guatemala was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs; and Spain was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation. The representative of Norway spoke on behalf of the Nordic countries. The representative of Azerbaijan spoke on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. The Head of the Delegation of the European Union spoke on behalf of the European Union and its member States, as well as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine. The High Commissioner for Human Rights participated in the meeting by videoconference from Geneva.



Table 2  
**Videoconferences: peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
12 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/799</a>	Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
3 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1090</a>	Letter dated 5 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
21 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1273</a>	Letter dated 21 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2558 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/1269</a>

### 34. Threats to international peace and security

During the period under review, the Council held no meetings in connection with the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security”. Council members did, however, hold three videoconferences in 2020 in connection with the item.<sup>894</sup> More information on the videoconferences is given in the table below. In addition, the Council adopted its resolution [2544 \(2020\)](#) in connection with the item.

In 2020, in connection with the item, Council members heard two briefings on the progress in the work of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da’esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD), at which the Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD briefed the members of the Council on the activities of the Investigative Team. In the videoconference held on 15 June, he presented the fourth report<sup>895</sup> on the activities of UNITAD and informed the Council about the significant progress made in the identification and collection of new sources of evidentiary material which, if fully harnessed, had the potential to mark a paradigm shift in the prosecution of ISIL (Da’esh) members for the crimes they had committed in Iraq.<sup>896</sup> The Special Adviser noted that UNITAD had moved forward a number of its lines of investigation into a phase of evidence consolidation and legal analysis. He further provided Council members with updates on the progress made in the investigation of crimes in the

areas of Mosul, Sinjar and Tikrit, noting the cooperation of UNITAD with the Iraqi and Kurdistan Regional Government authorities. With regard to the fifth report of UNITAD,<sup>897</sup> on 10 December Council members held another videoconference<sup>898</sup> in which the Special Adviser presented the innovative solutions that UNITAD had developed to confront the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, including the use of remote interviews and submission of evidence through a new online portal. The Special Adviser stated that the provision of meaningful support by UNITAD to Iraqi investigative judges represented an important moment in the implementation of its mandate, adding that with the potential adoption of legislation in Iraq allowing for the prosecution of international crimes, it was possible to begin to see a clear path towards the fulfilment of the promise made by the Council to survivors and affected communities through resolution [2379 \(2017\)](#). The Special Adviser also underlined the partnerships built by UNITAD with non-governmental organizations and with the religious leadership of Iraq. Concluding his briefing, the Special Adviser noted that UNITAD would continue to rely on the unanimous support of the Council members. Following the briefing, several Council members expressed their full support for the work of UNITAD,<sup>899</sup> with some focusing on the importance of cooperation with a range of local actors, including civil society.<sup>900</sup> Other Council members noted the

<sup>894</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>895</sup> See [S/2020/386](#).

<sup>896</sup> See [S/2020/547](#).

<sup>897</sup> See [S/2020/1107](#).

<sup>898</sup> See [S/2020/1193](#).

<sup>899</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Niger, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>900</sup> Germany, Indonesia and South Africa.

importance of respecting the sovereignty and jurisdiction of Iraq over crimes committed on its territory and called on UNITAD to maintain its impartiality and discharge its duties in line with its mandate.<sup>901</sup>

On 18 September, pursuant to a request by the Government of Iraq,<sup>902</sup> the Council unanimously

adopted resolution [2544 \(2020\)](#), by which it extended the mandate of the Special Adviser and UNITAD until 18 September 2021.<sup>903</sup> By the same resolution, the Council also requested the Special Adviser to continue to submit and present reports to the Council on the team's activities every 180 days.<sup>904</sup>

<sup>901</sup> China, Russian Federation, Tunisia and Viet Nam.

<sup>902</sup> See [S/2020/909](#).

<sup>903</sup> Resolution [2544 \(2020\)](#), para. 2.

<sup>904</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4. For more information, see part IX, sect. III.

### **Videoconferences: threats to international peace and security**

<i>Videoconference data</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
15 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/547</a>	Letter dated 17 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
18 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/917</a>	Letter dated 18 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2544 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/920</a>
10 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1193</a>	Letter dated 18 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

## **35. Maintenance of international peace and security**

During the period under review, the Council held three meetings in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security". One of the meetings took the form of a high-level open debate and two were convened to adopt decisions.<sup>905</sup> The Council adopted four resolutions, one of them under Chapter VII of the Charter, and issued one presidential statement. More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held nine videoconferences in connection with the item. More information on the videoconferences is given in table 2 below. In addition to meetings and videoconferences, Council members also held informal consultations of the whole and closed videoconferences in connection with the item.<sup>906</sup>

As in previous periods, a broad range of new and existing sub-items of both a thematic and a regional

nature were discussed in connection with the item.<sup>907</sup> The thematic sub-items were: (a) Upholding the United Nations Charter; (b) Implications of COVID-19; (c) Youth and peace and security; (d) Climate and security; (e) Humanitarian effects of environmental degradation and peace and security; (f) Global governance after COVID-19; and (g) Security sector reform. The region-specific sub-items were: (a) Comprehensive review of the situation in the Persian Gulf region; and (b) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution [2491 \(2019\)](#) relating to the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Libya.

On 9 January, at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>908</sup> the Council held a high-level open debate<sup>909</sup> marking the seventy-fifth

<sup>905</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>906</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 35.

<sup>907</sup> For more information on new sub-items, see part II, sect. III.A.

<sup>908</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 31 December 2019 ([S/2020/1](#)).

<sup>909</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

anniversary of the United Nations on the subject “Upholding the United Nations Charter”. The meeting was resumed twice and was held over a period of three days, on 9, 10 and 13 January.<sup>910</sup> At the meeting, the Council heard briefings by the Secretary-General and the Chair of the Elders.<sup>911</sup>

The Secretary-General noted that the New Year had begun with fresh turmoil and long-standing suffering. He mentioned that geopolitical tensions had reached dangerous levels, most recently in the Gulf. Against this backdrop, he emphasized that the Charter remained the shared framework of international cooperation for the common good, which also served as a reminder of the primacy of the rule of law and human dignity. He reminded Council members that the privilege of United Nations membership carried vital responsibilities to uphold the Charter’s tenets and values, particularly in preventing and addressing conflict.

The Chair of the Elders said that the world was facing two distinct existential threats, namely, nuclear proliferation and the climate crisis. Although responding to those threats was critical, it was harder to do at a time when multilateral cooperation was being undermined by populism and nationalism. Echoing the Secretary-General, she recalled that Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations required parties to any dispute that threatened international peace and security to negotiate or use other peaceful means to resolve their conflict. With reference to the tensions between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran, she explained that dialogue and negotiations were urgently needed, and urged Member States participating in the meeting to consider what the United Nations could do to bring them to the table in the spirit of the Charter.

Following the briefings, Council Members and other participants reaffirmed the importance of multilateralism and the need to uphold and respect the purposes and principles of the Charter. The need for the Council to address emerging as well as new threats and the use of force in line with the Charter of the United Nations was also discussed during the meeting. Many speakers emphasized the primary responsibility of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security and the need for States to make maximum use of the tools available to them under the Charter, especially in the areas of conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of international disputes,

including the role of regional organizations or agencies to address matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>912</sup>

On 27 April, at the initiative of the Dominican Republic, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>913</sup> Council members held a videoconference<sup>914</sup> in connection with the item, under the theme “Youth and peace and security” and specifically entitled “Towards the fifth anniversary of the youth and peace and security agenda: accelerating implementation of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018)”. At the videoconference, the members of the Council heard briefings by the Secretary-General, the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth, the Project Coordinator for Youth without Borders Organization for Development, Yemen, and the Founder of the Young Adult Empowerment Initiative, South Sudan/Uganda. At the videoconference, the Secretary-General presented his first report on youth and peace and security<sup>915</sup> and noted that, since the issuance of the report, the COVID-19 pandemic had acutely affected young people from lost jobs to family stress, mental health and other hardships.<sup>916</sup> More than 1.54 billion children and youth were out of school. Young refugees, displaced persons and others caught up in conflict or disaster now faced even more vulnerability. He added that despite the challenges facing young people, they were still finding ways to engage, to support each other and to demand and drive change on issues such as the battle against COVID-19, supporting the call for a global ceasefire and the battle against climate change. He called on Member States to address those challenges by investing in young people’s participation, organizations and initiatives, including strengthening human rights protections and protecting the civic space on which youth participation depended.

The Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth dedicated her statement to all the young people who were putting their communities ahead of themselves in war zones, refugee camps, favelas and settlements. Noting that 2020 marked the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), she considered it an opportune moment to take stock of the youth and peace and security agenda and its progress and successes, as well as address its challenges and gaps. She recommended regular and systematic reporting to

<sup>910</sup> This was owing to the financial difficulties faced by the United Nations, which resulted in meetings of the Council being restricted to take place only from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

<sup>911</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>912</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part III, sects. I and II, part V, sect. I, part VI, sect. IV, part VII, sect. I, and part VIII, sect. I.

<sup>913</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 13 April 2020 ([S/2020/302](#)).

<sup>914</sup> See [S/2020/346](#).

<sup>915</sup> [S/2020/167](#).

<sup>916</sup> See [S/2020/346](#).

the Council on the implementation of resolutions [2250 \(2015\)](#) and [2419 \(2018\)](#), and to put young people at the heart of the Council's efforts to bring about global peace and security.

In their statements, Council members welcomed the Secretary-General's report and took note of his recommendations for the meaningful participation of young people in peace and security efforts. Many Member States emphasized the core challenges that could have a devastating impact on youth development, especially the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. They called for inclusive, strategic actions and funding for programming and institutional support to further accelerate the youth and peace and security agenda.

On 2 July, at the initiative of Germany, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>917</sup> the Council held a videoconference<sup>918</sup> under the sub-item entitled "Implications of COVID-19". At the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Secretary-General, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the African Union Commissioner of Social Affairs. The Secretary-General said that the COVID-19 pandemic was fast becoming a protection crisis, which continued profoundly to affect peace and security across the globe. He noted that the pandemic had made diplomacy more challenging. It had also highlighted the risks of bioterrorist attacks, showing some of the ways in which preparedness might fall short if a disease were to be deliberately manipulated to be more virulent or intentionally released in multiple places at once. He also expressed concern that the pandemic was triggering or exacerbating human rights challenges, noting that populists, nationalists and others who were already seeking to roll back human rights were finding in the pandemic a pretext for repressive measures unrelated to the disease.

The President of ICRC stated that ICRC was seeing first-hand how the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic aftershocks were deepening fragility, spiking humanitarian needs, accentuating the impact of violence and conflict, opening the doors to alarming levels of stigmatization, increasing global poverty, heightening instability and tensions and reversing hard-won development gains. He said that there were six essential lessons for a pandemic response in humanitarian settings, notably: (a) that international humanitarian law needed to be better respected; (b) that assistance and protection must be available to all those in need without the threat of politicization or

manipulation; (iii) that the response should go far beyond health needs and mitigate the wider secondary impacts of pandemics; (iv) that responses must reach the most vulnerable and marginalized community members; (v) that there must be action to proactively guard against any rollback of civilian protections; and (vi) that responses would be effective only if there was community trust and engagement.

Following the briefings, Council members discussed the security implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, including its impact on fragile societies and peace operations. Many speakers maintained that the Council had a primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and should address the effects of the pandemic. They stressed the need for a greater role of the Council in addressing the crisis, while calling for global solidarity and cooperation towards a collective responsibility to protect civilians.<sup>919</sup>

On 14 July, the Council held a meeting<sup>920</sup> at which it unanimously adopted resolution [2535 \(2020\)](#). At the meeting, the representative of the Dominican Republic also spoke on behalf of France, who was a co-penholder of the draft, and noted that the resolution reflected the Council's recognition of and support for the pivotal role that young people played in the maintenance of peace and security. Citing the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the first resolution on youth and peace and security, as well as the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, he emphasized the need to listen to and work with young people who were the missing piece for peace and development. He called for the development of a guide dedicated to the protection of young people, including the appointment of focal points for youth and peace and security both within the United Nations system and in countries and regional organizations. The representative of the Niger noted that one in four young people were still affected by violence and conflict despite it being five years after the Council had recognized, for the first time, the specific situation of youth in armed conflict. He added that young people lacked educational and economic opportunities and their human rights were violated and curtailed, even more so during the global COVID-19 pandemic. It was therefore crucial that the Council not only recognize the specific situation of young people but also leverage their role in and potential for preventing conflicts, building peaceful and inclusive societies and effectively addressing humanitarian needs by strengthening the role of young peacebuilders,

<sup>917</sup> A concept note was circulated by letter dated 22 June 2020 ([S/2020/571](#)).

<sup>918</sup> See [S/2020/663](#).

<sup>919</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part V, sect. I and part VII, sect. I.

<sup>920</sup> See [S/PV.8748](#).



engaging youth in humanitarian responses and inviting youth organizations to brief the Council.<sup>921</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation expressed his expectation that future discussions on youth issues should be comprehensive in nature. Regarding youth participation in peace processes, including peace settlements and peacebuilding, he stated that it was important to eliminate obstacles, including by introducing preventive measures with respect to the spread of extremist ideologies and terrorism among young people.

On 24 July, at the initiative of Germany,<sup>922</sup> Council members held a videoconference<sup>923</sup> on the theme “Climate and security” at which they were briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas, the Director of the Centre national d’études stratégiques et de sécurité of the Niger and the Director of Sustainable Pacific Consultancy of Niue. The Assistant Secretary-General stated that the climate emergency was a danger to peace. Although there was no automatic link between climate change and conflict, he noted that climate change did exacerbate existing risks and created new one, and that the consequences varied from region to region. To cope with climate change, he stressed the need to leverage new technologies and enhance the analytical capacity to translate long-term climate foresight into actionable, near-term analysis, as well as to strengthen multidimensional partnerships. In his statement, the Director of the Centre national d’études stratégiques et de sécurité addressed the extent to which climate change was affecting the livelihoods of citizens in the Sahel. He examined the broader consequences of climate change on regional security, while highlighting the role of the Niger in alleviating climate change. He proposed that the United Nations should conduct an integrated climate security assessment before assisting countries, including assisting in building national-to-local capabilities to monitor and manage climate change effects, as well as task United Nations country teams that were in contact with relevant government bodies to collect authoritative information on the impact of climate-related security risks in conflict settings and make those results available to the Member States. The Director of Sustainable Pacific Consultancy highlighted the effects of climate change on the Pacific

small-island developing States. She called on the Council to continue to build on and integrate the best available science, modelling and risk assessments into its work and to coordinate with the many existing efforts already under way across the development, climate change and humanitarian bodies of practice.

Many Council members and other Member States emphasized that the Council must work within its mandate to address the impact of climate change on the situations on its agenda, including through regular reporting, while other speakers cautioned against it. Several speakers<sup>924</sup> also called for the appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Climate and Security.<sup>925</sup>

On 9 September, at the initiative of the Niger, which held the Presidency for the month, Council members held a videoconference<sup>926</sup> at which they were briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In her briefing, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs highlighted three heightened risks, namely, the erosion of trust in public institutions, the aggravation of certain human rights challenges during the pandemic and the risk to political and peace processes. She also acknowledged that contrary to expectations, a significant change in the dynamics of a number of ongoing armed conflicts as a result of COVID-19 had not been observed. She also provided an update on the status of the Secretary-General’s call on 23 March 2020 for a global ceasefire, noting that the initial response had been encouraging with a number of temporary truces announced, but that many had expired without extension resulting in little improvement on the ground. Special representatives, envoys and mediators had stepped up efforts to advance political and peace discussions in a number of regions and had addressed how operations had been adapted in the midst of the pandemic. The Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations provided an update on the measures taken to address the enormous challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to peacekeeping operations and to the countries where they were deployed. He stated that with the unified and consistent backing of the Council, peacekeeping operations had quickly and effectively put in place a range of measures that had ensured operational

<sup>921</sup> The representative of the Niger delivered his statement on behalf of Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, the United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

<sup>922</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 18 July (S/2020/725).

<sup>923</sup> See S/2020/751.

<sup>924</sup> Germany, Estonia, France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ireland, Fiji, Nauru, Spain and Tuvalu.

<sup>925</sup> For further details on the discussion, see part V, sect. I.

<sup>926</sup> See S/2020/897.



continuity and ongoing mandate implementation across all operations. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator said that there were growing reasons to believe that in the medium and longer term the weakest, most fragile and conflict-affected countries would be those worst affected by COVID-19. He pointed out that beyond the economy, the biggest indirect effect of the virus was on public services, especially health and education, and warned that inadequate economic and political action from the international community could lead to greater instability and conflicts in the coming years and result in more crises on the agenda of the Council. He also addressed the launch of the United Nations-coordinated Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 in March 2020 by the Secretary-General, describing how it had been used to combat the pandemic.

Council members commended the peacekeepers and humanitarian workers who were assisting in the implementation of the COVID-19 response plans. They emphasized the need for continued support for peacekeeping operations so as to strengthen their medical capacities and ensure the safety, security and health of peacekeepers and to enable them to fully implement their mandates despite the pandemic. Many speakers referred to resolution 2532 (2020) as a step in the right direction in addressing the impact of COVID-19 on international peace and security and urged all relevant parties to respect the call of the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire.

On 17 September, at the initiative of the Niger,<sup>927</sup> Council members held a videoconference<sup>928</sup> in connection with the item, under the sub-item entitled “Humanitarian effects of environmental degradation and peace and security”, during which they were briefed by the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, in Particular in Africa, and Ms. Inna Modja, Land Ambassador and environmental activist. The President of ICRC called for more in-depth policy reflections on the links between environmental degradation, climate risk, humanitarian needs and peace and security. He cited climate shocks as a key issue of concern, alongside poverty and injustice for people affected by conflict, and explained the twofold focus of ICRC to mitigate

the impacts of conflict and protect communities from harm and to respect international humanitarian law to enhance the protection of the environment. He noted that the cumulative pressures of conflict, climate change and environmental degradation could affect the survival of communities living in the Sahel and the Lake Chad region. He affirmed that peace and security would not be established by focusing on military and security measures to curb conflict and violence. Acknowledging that many would agree in general terms on the linkages between peace, security and the climate and the environment, he noted that the “how” of the response still needed more critical analysis and sharing of experiences, adding that ICRC would welcome regular and systematic discussions on the issue. The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stated that an assessment of the root causes of conflicts showed that a large proportion had a link to the environment, which might either be due to the abundance of natural resources such as oil, minerals or wildlife, or to scarcity of land, water or vegetation. He cautioned that to prevent conflicts while protecting the planet, the international community ought to first tackle the effects of environment degradation. Ms. Modja emphasized the urgency to find solutions to the consequences of desertification and climate change and the impact that they could have on security and peace.

Following the briefings, speakers addressed a variety of themes, including the effects of the destruction of the natural environment in armed conflict, the humanitarian consequences of climate change and land degradation and how to better adapt and implement the climate mechanisms, international law and policies to contribute to the protection of the environment and natural resources in order to prevent armed conflict. Many speakers called on the Council to act in an integrated and coherent approach in addressing these multidimensional challenges.<sup>929</sup>

On 24 September, again at the initiative of the Niger,<sup>930</sup> Council members held a videoconference<sup>931</sup> under the sub-item entitled “Global governance after COVID-19”, at which they heard briefings by the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. Noting that the COVID-19 pandemic was a full-blown crisis unfolding against a backdrop of high geopolitical tensions, the Secretary-General said that the pandemic was a clear test of

<sup>927</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 1 September 2020 (S/2020/882).

<sup>928</sup> See S/2020/929.

<sup>929</sup> For further details on the discussion, see part VIII, sect. I.

<sup>930</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 1 September 2020 (S/2020/883).

<sup>931</sup> See S/2020/953.

international cooperation that the international community had failed owing to a lack of global preparedness, cooperation, unity and solidarity. As the United Nations marked its seventy-fifth anniversary in 2020, the Secretary-General emphasized the need for innovative thinking on global governance and multilateralism fit for the twenty-first century. He added that the General Assembly declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary had created space for a process of reflection on the future of multilateral cooperation and the post-COVID world. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission stressed the need for effective global governance and called on all States to recommit to a collaborative approach to the pandemic response, while highlighting the initiatives of the African Union in addressing the crisis including the establishment of an African special fund for the COVID-19 response.

Following the briefings, Council members discussed the need for global governance reform to strengthen convergence towards sustainable global peace and security, especially during the pandemic. Several speakers highlighted the challenges faced with regard to the World Health Organization (WHO) while calling for its strengthening to adequately respond to the global pandemic. The representative of the United States stated that the decision of its Government to withdraw from WHO was due to its lack of independence, transparency and accountability. Most speakers expressed their support for the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire amid the pandemic.

On 20 October, at the initiative of the Russian Federation,<sup>932</sup> which held the Presidency for the month, Council members held a videoconference<sup>933</sup> under the sub-item entitled "Comprehensive review of the situation in the Persian Gulf region". Council members heard briefings from the Secretary-General, the President and Chief Executive Officer of the International Crisis Group and the President of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The Secretary-General stated that given the complex and multifaceted challenges in the Persian Gulf region, it was important to reflect more deeply on how the international community, particularly the Council, could work in unison to promote peace and security in that vital part of the world. Referring to the situation in Yemen, he expressed concern that nearly six years of war had devastated the lives of millions of Yemenites and had undermined confidence-building

efforts in the region. He reiterated his appeal for an immediate global ceasefire to focus on the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. Concerning regional stability, the Secretary-General stated that the issue of nuclear non-proliferation was critical, while expressing his support for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action as an important instrument against nuclear proliferation. As the United Nations marked its seventy-fifth anniversary, the Secretary-General noted that the Organization would continue its work to help to reduce tensions in the Persian Gulf region. The President and Chief Executive Officer of the International Crisis Group cautioned that conditions for a war that would affect not just the Gulf but the broader Middle East were arguably riper than at any time in recent memory and could break out in any number of places. He noted that the aspirations of the people of the Middle East for decent and peaceful lives had been stymied by rivalries and lack of cooperation among their Governments. In his remarks, he addressed some of the causes and the possible remedies. Noting the absence of any institutional mechanism for parties to air their grievances, he affirmed that the Gulf region needed to initiate a collective and inclusive security dialogue encompassing the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq, aiming at diminishing tensions. The United Nations, too, could play an important role. Resolution 598 (1987), which ended the Iran-Iraq war, provided a mandate for the Secretary-General to convene a regional security dialogue to lay the groundwork for a security architecture tolerable to all sides. He added that the main threat faced with regard to the region was not so much a war of choice but an inadvertent one resulting from miscalculation, misinterpretation or lack of timely communication.

In his statement, the President of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences stated that owing to the tremendous geoeconomic and geostrategic significance and openness of the Gulf subregion, tensions were increasing, which was seriously threatening security and political and economic stability in the subregion. He expressed support for collective, solidarity-based efforts free of confrontational approaches and demonization. It was that approach which was laid down in the concept of collective security in the Persian Gulf proposed by the Russian Federation in 2019, the implementation of which would allow the normalization of the situation in the subregion. In that regard, he recalled that in August, the President of the Russian Federation had put forward a proposal to convene a summit of the five permanent members of the Security Council, with the

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<sup>932</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 14 October 2020 (S/2020/1013).

<sup>933</sup> See S/2020/1037.

participation of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Germany, to agree on the parameters of joint efforts aimed at the creation of reliable mechanisms for ensuring security and strengthening confidence-building measures in the Persian Gulf zone. He also mentioned that the issue of confidence-building measures and transparency was key to the initial stage of the process of a rapprochement among the parties.

Following the briefings, Council members discussed the challenges in the Persian Gulf region, while urging the Council to support regional initiatives. They emphasized the urgent need for peaceful solutions to the crises in Yemen, the Syrian Arab Republic and other parts of the Gulf region. The need for a unified approach and multilateral diplomacy to enhance efforts towards building trust and confidence throughout the region was stressed by Member States. Some participants endorsed the development of a regional security architecture in collaboration with the United Nations and international partners to address the security concerns of all stakeholders,<sup>934</sup> while the representative of the United States noted that the international community did not need yet another mechanism to promote Gulf security.<sup>935</sup>

On 3 December, at the initiative of South Africa, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>936</sup> Council members held a videoconference<sup>937</sup> under the sub-item entitled “Security sector reform”. Council members were briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, the Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union. In her briefing, the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa acknowledged that there was a broad recognition that security sector governance was a key element of United Nations support to national efforts to sustain peace and prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict across the entire peace continuum. Expectations, however, needed to be realistic. She pointed out that security sector governance and reform was a complex and long-term endeavour, sometimes spanning a generation and requiring a deep understanding of the root causes of a conflict, sustained political will to overcome resistance and the space to implement difficult political decisions. In her statement she put forth three recommendations to the Council and Member States to optimally position

the United Nations in advancing nationally owned and led security sector governance and reform efforts by, first, recognizing security sector governance and reform primarily as political processes and ensuring that peace operation mandates on security sector reform were linked to broader political objectives; secondly, systematically recognizing the coordination role of the United Nations and the necessity of partnerships as means to align international assistance with national security sector priorities; and thirdly, supporting inclusive security sector reform processes and prioritizing efforts aiming at increasing women’s participation in national security services by identifying and addressing systemic barriers to their recruitment, retention and promotion.

The Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions elaborated on the role of the United Nations in assisting national authorities in building an effective and accountable security sector. He noted, however, that challenges persisted. United Nations regional offices and special envoys lacked reliable security sector reform capacity, particularly in the context of implementing the Secretary-General’s conflict-prevention agenda. The mismatch between financial needs and the resources availed and committed to by donors was a major concern in many countries. Ensuring an effective division of labour and fostering the strategic coherence of international assistance, including in the context of implementing political agreements, continued to be a challenge.

The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union briefed on the initiatives of the African Union in assisting member States to address the challenges in security sector governance and reform. According to him, the African Union master road map of practical steps to silence the guns in Africa by 2020 acknowledged that the failure to transform African defence and security forces into professional and disciplined national security institutions subjected to civilian oversight and control had often led to the eruption of or relapse into conflicts, thus perpetuating cycles of violence and disrupting stabilization and peacebuilding efforts. He noted that since the adoption of its security sector reform policy framework in 2013, the African Union had continued to deploy efforts to assist member States in addressing the challenges of security sector governance and reform. He also underlined that the African Union was mindful that the governance of the security sector was a sine qua non for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. However, it was politically complex, long-term and often costly and therefore required full engagement by State and

<sup>934</sup> Viet Nam, Belgium and France.

<sup>935</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part III, sect. II, part VI, sect. IV, and part VIII, sect. I.

<sup>936</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 25 November 2020 (S/2020/1145).

<sup>937</sup> See S/2020/1176.

non-State stakeholders, with strong national ownership guided by high-level political leadership.

Following the briefings, Council members highlighted their countries' initiatives in the implementation of security sector governance reform. Speakers discussed the linkages between security sector governance and reform and peacebuilding and sustaining peace, including the importance of providing resources and sustainable funding for activities related to security sector reform initiatives. Participants also stressed the role played by the United Nations in improving the effectiveness of peace operations and the strengthening of security sector governance and nationally led reform. Many speakers called for inclusive security sector reform processes and prioritization efforts aimed at increasing women's participation in the security services. The representative of South Africa stated that her country had undertaken to update resolution 2151 (2014) to make it more relevant, taking into account the evolving situation regarding the realization of the objectives of security sector governance and reform. The adoption of resolution 2553 (2020) was announced at the same videoconference. In explaining his delegation's vote on the resolution, the representative of the United Kingdom indicated that his delegation welcomed the intent of the penholder to update resolution 2151 (2014) to reflect progress in the development of normative and operational frameworks on security sector reform. However, while sufficiently content to vote in favour of resolution 2553 (2020), due to the importance of its subject matter, he highlighted some concerns which had led his delegation to qualify the United Kingdom's support. First, he noted that the process of penholding ahead of the resolution's tabling fell far short of the expectations and standards of Council practice. Secondly, he said that for security sector reform to be successful and sustainable, it had to be inclusive and participatory. In that regard, he made clear that the United Kingdom would continue to interpret the content of the resolution as meaning that international security sector reform efforts should be delivered in full accordance with the principles of women's empowerment and gender equality set out in resolution 1325 (2000) and all other relevant resolutions on women and peace and security.

In 2020, the Council adopted four resolutions and issued one presidential statement in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security". The decisions of the Council addressed some of the themes outlined above. In a presidential statement issued on 9 January,<sup>938</sup> on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, the

<sup>938</sup> S/PRST/2020/1.

Council reaffirmed its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, including its purposes and principles, and called on Member States to fully comply with the Charter through mainstreaming the purposes and principles of the Charter into policymaking and implementation mechanisms.<sup>939</sup> The Council stressed the need for enhanced inclusive dialogue in the interest of all Member States to share different experiences, national best practices and lessons learned in implementing their obligations under the Charter.<sup>940</sup> The Council also reaffirmed its commitment to multilateralism and the central role of the United Nations.<sup>941</sup> While recognizing the positive contribution of the United Nations over 75 years to upholding the Charter, the Council underscored the importance of the widest possible dissemination of in-depth knowledge of the Charter and encouraged the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations agencies to incorporate activities to promote the role of the Charter in their programmes to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.<sup>942</sup> The Council further underlined the importance of the role of regional and subregional organizations and arrangements and of cooperation with them, consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter.<sup>943</sup>

On 1 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2532 (2020), in which it recognized the efforts and measures proposed by the Secretary-General concerning the response to the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in conflict-affected countries, in particular his appeal for an immediate global ceasefire.<sup>944</sup> The Council demanded a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda and called upon all parties to armed conflicts to engage immediately in a durable humanitarian pause for at least 90 consecutive days, in order to enable the safe, unhindered and sustained delivery of humanitarian assistance, provision of related services by impartial humanitarian actors, in accordance with the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and medical evacuations, in accordance with international law, including international humanitarian law and refugee law as applicable.<sup>945</sup> The Council requested the Secretary-General: (a) to help ensure that all relevant parts of the United Nations system, including United Nations country teams, in accordance

<sup>939</sup> Ibid., first and fourth paragraphs.

<sup>940</sup> Ibid., fourth paragraph.

<sup>941</sup> Ibid., first paragraph.

<sup>942</sup> Ibid., fifth paragraph.

<sup>943</sup> Ibid., sixth paragraph.

<sup>944</sup> Resolution 2532 (2020), eighth preambular paragraph.

<sup>945</sup> Ibid., paras. 1 and 2.



with their respective mandates, accelerated their response to the COVID-19 pandemic; (b) to provide updates to the Council on the United Nations efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic in countries in situations of armed conflict or affected by humanitarian crises, as well as on the impact of COVID-19 on the ability of peacekeeping operations and special political missions to deliver their mandated priority tasks; and (c) to instruct peacekeeping operations to provide support, within their mandates and capacities, to host country authorities in their efforts to contain the pandemic, in particular to facilitate humanitarian access, including to internally displaced persons and refugee camps, and allow for medical evacuations. The Council further requested the Secretary-General and Member States to take all appropriate steps to protect the safety, security and health of all personnel in United Nations peace operations, while maintaining the continuity of operations, and to take further steps towards the provision of training for peacekeeping personnel on issues related to preventing the spread of COVID-19.<sup>946</sup>

On 14 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2535 \(2020\)](#), taking note of the first report of the Secretary-General on youth and peace and security.<sup>947</sup> By the resolution, the Council called on all relevant actors to consider ways to increase the inclusive representation of youth for the prevention and resolution of conflict, as well as in peacebuilding, and urged Member States to protect youth from violence in armed conflict and further urged Member States to facilitate an inclusive, safe, enabling and gender-responsive environment in which youth actors were recognized and provided with adequate support and protection to implement violence prevention activities and support social cohesion.<sup>948</sup> The Council also stressed the importance of providing opportunities for young people to strengthen resilience against radicalization to violence and terrorist recruitment and of creating policies for youth that would positively contribute to peacebuilding efforts.<sup>949</sup> The Council requested the Secretary-General and his special envoys to include the views of youth in relevant discussions pertinent to the maintenance of peace and security, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and to facilitate the full, effective and meaningful participation of youth at all decision-making levels. The Council requested the Secretary-General to provide guidance for all peacekeeping and other relevant United Nations missions on the implementation of the youth and peace and security agenda and to develop dedicated

guidance on the protection of young people. The Secretary-General was also requested to include information and related recommendations on issues of relevance to young people in the context of armed conflict and to submit a biennial report to the Council on the implementation of the resolution and of resolutions [2250 \(2015\)](#) and [2419 \(2018\)](#).<sup>950</sup>

On 2 October, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2546 \(2020\)](#), by which it renewed the authorizations regarding acts of migrant smuggling and human trafficking in Libya's territorial sea as set out in paragraphs 7, 8, 9 and 10 of resolution [2240 \(2015\)](#), for a further period of 12 months.<sup>951</sup> It further renewed the reporting requests set out in paragraph 17 of its resolution [2240 \(2015\)](#) and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council 11 months after the adoption of the resolution on its implementation, in particular with regard to the implementation of paragraphs 7 to 10 of its resolution [2240 \(2015\)](#).<sup>952</sup>

On 3 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2553 \(2020\)](#), by which it reaffirmed the importance of security sector reform in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, including conflict prevention and in the stabilization and reconstruction of States in the aftermath of conflict.<sup>953</sup> The Council also stressed the importance of the relevant bodies of the United Nations undertaking mission planning processes for security sector reform and underlined that the management of a transition from a peacekeeping operation or special political mission in relation to its security sector reform activities should be based upon a timely analysis, in consultation with the host country and in close coordination with the United Nations country team.<sup>954</sup> The Council resolved to continue to promote the role of the United Nations Secretariat in supporting security sector reform and requested the Secretary-General to consider undertaking a number of tasks in the context of relevant country-specific mandates, including strengthening the comprehensive, integrated and coherent approach of the United Nations in security sector reform.<sup>955</sup> In that regard, the Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on his efforts to strengthen the United Nations comprehensive approach to security sector reform in September 2021.<sup>956</sup>

<sup>946</sup> Ibid., paras. 4, 5 and 6.

<sup>947</sup> [S/2020/167](#).

<sup>948</sup> Resolution [2535 \(2020\)](#), paras. 1, 4 and 5.

<sup>949</sup> Ibid., paras. 7 and 8.

<sup>950</sup> Ibid., paras. 20–22, 24 and 26.

<sup>951</sup> Resolution [2546 \(2020\)](#), para. 2. For more information on the situation in Libya, see part I, sect. 11. For more information on the authorization, see part VII, sect. IV.

<sup>952</sup> Resolution [2546 \(2020\)](#), para. 3.

<sup>953</sup> Resolution [2553 \(2020\)](#), para. 1.

<sup>954</sup> Ibid., paras. 12 and 14.

<sup>955</sup> Ibid., para. 20.

<sup>956</sup> Ibid., para. 25.



Table 1  
 Meetings: maintenance of international peace and security

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8699</a> 9 January 2020	Upholding the United Nations Charter		94 Member States <sup>a</sup>	Chair of the Elders, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Permanent Observer of the International Committee of the Red Cross to the United Nations, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine	All Council members, <sup>b</sup> 92 Member States, <sup>c,d</sup> all other invitees	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/1</a>
<a href="#">S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1)</a> 10 January 2020 and <a href="#">S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2)</a> 13 January 2020	Letter dated 31 December 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General ( <a href="#">S/2020/1</a> )					
<a href="#">S/PV.8748</a> 14 July 2020		Draft resolution submitted by 84 Member States <sup>e</sup> ( <a href="#">S/2020/680</a> )	70 Member States <sup>f</sup>		Dominican Republic, <sup>g</sup> Niger, Russian Federation	Resolution <a href="#">2535 (2020)</a> 15-0-0
<a href="#">S/PV.8763</a> 2 October 2020	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution <a href="#">2491 (2019)</a> ( <a href="#">S/2020/876</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by 27 Member States <sup>h</sup> ( <a href="#">S/2020/957</a> )	23 Member States <sup>i</sup>			Resolution <a href="#">2546 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 (adopted under Chapter VII)

<sup>a</sup> Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Yemen.

<sup>b</sup> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was represented by its Prime Minister. Estonia was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs; Germany was represented by its Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office; and Viet Nam was represented by its Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>c</sup> Haiti was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship; Hungary was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade; Kenya was represented by the Diplomatic and Political Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Nicaragua was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs; Thailand was represented by the Special Envoy of the Minister for Foreign Affairs; Timor-Leste was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation; and Ukraine was represented by its Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs.

- <sup>d</sup> Azerbaijan spoke on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement; Norway spoke on behalf of the Nordic countries; the Philippines spoke on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; Ukraine also spoke on behalf of Canada, Germany and Sweden; and the Head of the Delegation of the European Union spoke on behalf of the European Union and its member States, as well as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.
- <sup>e</sup> Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay and Viet Nam.
- <sup>f</sup> Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay.
- <sup>g</sup> The representative of the Dominican Republic also spoke on behalf of France. The representative of the Niger also spoke on behalf of Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, the United Kingdom and Viet Nam.
- <sup>h</sup> Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.
- <sup>i</sup> Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

**Table 2**  
**Videoconferences: maintenance of international peace and security**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
27 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/346</a>	Letter dated 29 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
1 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/632</a>	Letter dated 1 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2532 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/638</a>
2 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/663</a>	Letter dated 8 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
24 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/751</a>	Letter dated 28 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
9 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/897</a>	Letter dated 11 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
17 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/929</a>	Letter dated 21 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
24 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/953</a>	Letter dated 28 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
20 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1037</a>	Letter dated 22 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
3 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1176</a>	Letter dated 8 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/1167</a>

### 36. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting in connection with the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”, which took the form of a briefing.<sup>957</sup> Council members also held three open videoconferences in connection with the item.<sup>958</sup> More information on the meeting, including on participants and speakers, is given in table 1 below. Additional information on the videoconferences is given in table 2 below. The Council also issued two presidential statements in connection with the item.

On 30 January, at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>959</sup> the Council held a meeting<sup>960</sup> focused on cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). At the meeting, the Council heard briefings by the Secretary-General and the Secretary-General of the ASEAN Council. In his remarks, the Secretary-General noted that since the formalization of the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the United Nations in 2011, the two organizations were today focusing on

how to strengthen their cooperation in addressing threats to peace and security. Looking ahead, he said that there were multiple potential areas of practical cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations in the areas of peace and security. In that regard, he highlighted the strengthening of cooperation between the two organizations on peacekeeping, implementing the women and peace and security agenda and the youth and peace and security agenda, human rights, and counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism, as well as on addressing cross-border security threats and transnational organized crime and exploring early warning arrangements and threat analysis. With regard to the climate crisis and natural disaster management, he suggested strengthening the ties with ASEAN nations to strengthen adaptation and build resilience to disasters and to forge strategic synergies, collaborations and paths forward for future work. In his intervention, the Secretary-General of ASEAN touched upon two matters, namely the contributions of ASEAN to peace, security and prosperity, and its relations with its external partners, including the United Nations. On the former, he spoke about a number of areas, such as the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, by which ASEAN member States committed to maintaining peaceful relationships with one another, guided by the principles of mutual respect, non-interference in each other’s internal affairs and the peaceful settlement of disputes. He also highlighted the unique contribution of ASEAN to nurturing a conducive environment for peace and stability, including its ability to initiate and be the

<sup>957</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>958</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>959</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 9 January 2020 ([S/2020/30](#)).

<sup>960</sup> See [S/PV.8711](#).

driving force on regional mechanisms and frameworks for promoting dialogue, cooperation and confidence-building, bringing together not only its member States but also external partners, including key players in the region and major global powers. On the relations of ASEAN with the United Nations, he noted that tangible results had been achieved since the five-year plan of action to implement the Joint Declaration was put in place in 2016, which he deemed a testament to the commitment of the two organizations in sustaining a comprehensive partnership. He also looked forward to commencing work on crafting the next plan of action of the ASEAN-United Nations comprehensive partnership for the period 2021–2025. In closing, he said that the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations provided an opportune time for the States Members of the United Nations, including ASEAN countries, to work closely together towards strengthening the United Nations.

Following the briefings, Council members recognized the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations under Chapter VIII of the Charter, with some urging a greater reflection on such issues as how to strengthen coordination and coherence between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations regarding peace and security matters.<sup>961</sup> Several Council members also discussed specific situations in the South-East Asia region, such as the situation in the South China Sea and the Rohingya refugees in Myanmar, including the judicial proceedings initiated at the International Court of Justice by the Gambia against Myanmar.<sup>962</sup> Council members also acknowledged the role played by ASEAN in conflict prevention, resolution and management, as well as in the area of peacekeeping, and praised the progress achieved in relation to the women and peace and security agenda. Council members also highlighted areas where the two organizations could further cooperate, such as on the fight against terrorism and organized crime and climate change. In closing, the representative of Viet Nam expressed the hope that the momentum created by the meeting would be carried into the future to forge a more robust cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN.

On 28 May, Council members held an open videoconference<sup>963</sup> in connection with the item, focused on cooperation between the United Nations

and the European Union. At the videoconference, Council members heard a briefing by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. In his intervention, the High Representative outlined areas of action of the European Union on matters of international peace and security, particularly in the Sahel and Libya, as well as the Middle East and Europe. He also informed Council members regarding the launch of Operation IRINI of the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean with the core task of implementing the United Nations arms embargo on Libya. The High Representative further noted that the COVID-19 pandemic risked unravelling the progress in recent years towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and that it could exacerbate existing conflicts and generate new geopolitical tensions. He closed his briefing with some broader strategic reflections on the need to recommit to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and to support putting the climate and security nexus on the Council's agenda.

In their statements, Council members addressed and highlighted some of the main contributions of the European Union to international peace and security, including on peacekeeping, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, human rights and humanitarian assistance. In addition, some Council members made reference to the launch of Operation IRINI.<sup>964</sup> A number of Council members also reaffirmed their commitment and expressed support to deepening international cooperation in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>965</sup>

On 8 September, at the initiative of the Niger, which held the Presidency for the month,<sup>966</sup> Council members held a videoconference<sup>967</sup> in connection with the item, focused on the role of the International Organization of la Francophonie. Council members were briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, the Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia, in his capacity as Chair of the Ministerial Conference of the International Organization of la Francophonie. In her briefing, the Assistant Secretary-General noted that it was a particularly opportune time to look at the partnership

<sup>961</sup> For further details on the discussion, see part VIII, sect. I.B.

<sup>962</sup> See [S/PV.8711](#).

<sup>963</sup> See [S/2020/489](#).

<sup>964</sup> Belgium, France, Niger, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>965</sup> China, France, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>966</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 1 September 2020 ([S/2020/880](#)).

<sup>967</sup> See [S/2020/893](#).

between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie at their seventy-fifth and fiftieth anniversaries, respectively. She also noted that the two organizations were currently cooperating to promote international peace and security, sustainable development, good governance, democracy, rule of law, human rights and the inclusion of women and youth. In her briefing, she highlighted the cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie in the areas of early warning and conflict prevention, electoral assistance and observation of electoral processes, as well as in the areas of peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding. The Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie highlighted the organization's three main areas of action in support of international peace and security, namely peacekeeping, crisis prevention and management, and supporting the democratic processes of its Member States. She further reported about the launch, on 25 September 2019, of a francophone platform in the Council to provide a framework for regular dialogue on international peace and security issues, with a view to amplifying the francophone voice in the Council, to develop convergences between francophones on issues on the Council's agenda and to continue the organization's actions to promote the French language and linguistic diversity in the work of the Council. In his briefing, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia focused on the cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie and noted that at a time when the negative consequences of the COVID-19 crisis were likely to weigh particularly heavily on developing countries and on the most vulnerable people, the two organizations needed to strongly affirm their willingness to promote peace, cooperation, solidarity and the values of living together in harmony. He added that it was in that regard that the International Organization of la Francophonie strongly supported the call of the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire and Council resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#).

Following the briefings, Member States praised the work of the International Organization of la Francophonie in promoting democracy, the rule of law, human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women. In addition, some speakers noted that many peacekeeping operations took place in French-speaking countries, and in that regard the representative of France argued that proficiency in French was a guarantee of effectiveness and needed therefore to be a precondition for deployment, while other speakers noted that multilingualism and communicating in French with local actors and civilians promoted increased confidence in the personnel of United

Nations missions and built trust, better understanding and engagement with the local community.<sup>968</sup>

On 4 December, Council members held a high-level open videoconference<sup>969</sup> in connection with the item, focused on cooperation with the African Union. At the videoconference, Council members were briefed by the Secretary-General and by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. The Secretary-General stated that cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union and the African regional economic communities and other regional mechanisms had gained in depth and scope, particularly since the 2017 signing of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and, in 2018, the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He added that African Heads of State and Government had presented a compelling vision for peace and security through the flagship initiative of Silencing the Guns in Africa and the Lusaka master road map. In that regard, he elaborated on the several ways in which the United Nations had sought to support those initiatives, including through technical assistance to mediation and disarmament capacities, partnering with the African Union to create the African Women Leaders Network and investment in youth-empowerment activities. The Secretary-General also highlighted other areas of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union and signalled that action in Africa by the two organizations would benefit from a number of concrete steps, namely, further institutionalization of the cooperation at every level, which would also require a stronger collaboration between the Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, ensuring the predictability of financing for African Union peace support operations through assessed contributions, and doing much more to involve and engage women and young people in the peace and security agenda.

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission stated that cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union was not only a necessity for both organizations but a prerequisite for the implementation of their mandates of promoting and upholding international peace and security. He also supported predictable, sustainable and flexible financing for African Union-led or African Union-authorized peace support operations, based on the principle of the use of

<sup>968</sup> Dominican Republic, Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Viet Nam, Côte d'Ivoire, Ireland, Romania and Senegal.

<sup>969</sup> See [S/2020/1179](#).



United Nations assessed contributions. He also stated that the annual consultative meetings between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union since 2007 had been key in strengthening Council-to-Council engagement and noted that the two organizations had also increased operational cooperation and coordination by working hand in hand to support peace processes. Several Council members called for deeper cooperation between the Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union,<sup>970</sup> and others expressed support for United Nations-assessed contributions to African Union-led peace support operations.<sup>971</sup>

On 4 December, the Council issued two presidential statements in connection with the item, which were announced simultaneously at an open videoconference. In the first of the two presidential statements, the Council commended the increasing contribution of the African Union to the maintenance of peace and security and expressed its willingness to continue its cooperation and collaboration with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa.<sup>972</sup> It also recognized that since the strengthening of the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union, significant gains had been made in finding sustainable solutions to African armed conflicts and moving the continent onto a path towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>973</sup> The Council continued to encourage the United Nations and the African Union to strengthen their efforts to coordinate their engagement in a mutually supportive manner,

across the range of possible responses to conflict, in line with their Joint Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, and also emphasized the need for joint action between the two organizations to end sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations.<sup>974</sup> The Council also acknowledged the need for more support to enhance African Union peace operations and encouraged further dialogue between the United Nations and the African Union to achieve it.<sup>975</sup>

In the second of the presidential statements (S/PRST/2020/12), the Council took note of the improved security situation in Burundi and of the six principal priorities presented by the President of Burundi, Evariste Ndayishimiye, for his Government in his inauguration speech on 18 June 2020, following the broadly peaceful elections.<sup>976</sup> The Council also called upon the United Nations, the African Union, the East African Community, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the guarantors of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi of 2000 to coordinate their efforts in assisting Burundian stakeholders in the implementation of the Arusha Agreement, which had helped to sustain a decade of peace in Burundi.<sup>977</sup> Finally, noting that the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi had completed his assignment on 30 November 2019, the Council requested the Secretary-General to cease periodic reporting on the situation in that country and looked forward to the Secretary-General covering the situation in Burundi as part of his regular reporting on the Great Lakes region and Central Africa.<sup>978</sup>

<sup>970</sup> South Africa, Niger, Tunisia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Belgium, Germany, Indonesia and Dominican Republic.

<sup>971</sup> South Africa, Tunisia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and United Kingdom.

<sup>972</sup> S/PRST/2020/11, sixth and fifteenth paragraphs.

<sup>973</sup> Ibid., fifth paragraph.

<sup>974</sup> Ibid., eleventh and eighteenth paragraphs.

<sup>975</sup> Ibid., tenth paragraph.

<sup>976</sup> S/PRST/2020/12, first paragraph.

<sup>977</sup> Ibid., fifth paragraph.

<sup>978</sup> Ibid., sixth paragraph. For more information on the Great Lakes region, see part I, sect. 3. See also part IX, sect. VI for more information on special advisers, envoys and representatives.

**Table 1  
Meetings: cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.8711 30 January 2020	Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)			Secretary-General of ASEAN	Secretary-General, 13 Council members, <sup>a</sup> invitee	

## Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2020

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
	Letter dated 9 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2020/30)					

<sup>a</sup> Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger and South Africa), United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

Table 2

### **Videoconferences: cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
28 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/489</a>	Letter dated 2 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
8 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/893</a>	Letter dated 10 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the Security Council	
4 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1179</a>	Letter dated 8 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the Security Council	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/11</a> <a href="#">S/PRST/2020/12</a>

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**Part II**  
**Provisional rules of procedure and related  
procedural developments**

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## Introductory note

Part II of the present Supplement covers the practice of the Security Council in relation to its provisional rules of procedure and relevant Articles of the Charter of the United Nations. Since the provisional rules of procedure are routinely applied by the Council at its formal meetings, the focus of part II is on special applications of the rules in the proceedings of the Council, rather than on the standard applications of the rules.

In the present Supplement, owing to the major impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the functioning of the Council, part II includes a new section devoted exclusively to the numerous innovations introduced as of March 2020. From 12 March to 14 July 2020, the Council suspended the holding of meetings in person in the Security Council Chamber. Council members instead initiated the practice of holding videoconferences in open and in closed formats as a means of continuing the work of the Council. From 14 July until the end of the year, the work of the Council was conducted using hybrid model, alternating in-person meetings with videoconferences. In 2020, videoconferences, whether open or closed, were not considered formal meetings of the Council. This had a direct impact on the application of the provisional rules of procedure and on the ability of the Council to vote.

As a result, Council members agreed that resolutions would be adopted through a written procedure, the outcome of which would be announced in a videoconference and would have the same legal status as those voted on in the Security Council Chamber. In addition, Council members agreed that presidential statements would be issued following a no-objection procedure and subsequently announced at an open videoconference and would have the same status as those adopted in the Security Council Chamber. While Council members agreed on procedures for the adoption of draft resolutions and the issuance of presidential statements, no procedure was agreed upon for procedural votes.

Part II is divided into 11 sections. Section I provides an overview of the procedural developments and the working methods agreed upon by the members of the Council following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Following previous supplements, sections II to XI are divided in the order of the relevant chapters of the provisional rules of procedure, as follows: section II, meetings and records (Article 28 of the Charter and rules 1–5 and 48–57); section III, agenda (rules 6–12); section IV, representation and credentials (rules 13–17); section V, presidency (rules 18–20); section VI, Secretariat (rules 21–26); section VII, conduct of business (rules 27, 29–30 and 33); section VIII, participation (Articles 31–32 of the Charter and rules 37 and 39); section IX, decision-making and voting (Article 27 of the Charter and rules 31–32, 34–36, 38 and 40); section X, languages (rules 41–47); and section XI, status of the provisional rules of procedure (Article 30 of the Charter).

The remaining rules are covered in other parts of the present Supplement, as follows: rule 28, concerning subsidiary organs of the Council, in parts IX and X, and concerning Council missions, in part VI; and rule 61, concerning relations with other United Nations organs, in part IV.

During the period under review, there were no instances of the application of rules 58 to 60 concerning the admission of new Members, and the present Supplement therefore contains no material relating to those rules.

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During the period under review, the Council held a total of 81 meetings, of which 79 were public and 2 were private. The members of the Council held 46 informal consultations of the whole in 2020. In accordance with the working methods of the Council adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the members of the Council also held 269 videoconferences, of which 143 were open and 126 were closed. Council members continued to hold informal interactive dialogues and Arria-formula meetings. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the Arria-formula meetings and half of the informal interactive dialogues were held virtually by videoconference. The Council continued to expand the practice of holding informal “wrap-up” sessions at the end of the month, except for the month of March, when no wrap-up sessions were held. Similarly, most wrap-up sessions were held virtually owing to the lack of in-person meetings.

In 2020, the Council was seized of 69 agenda items and considered 42 items, compared with 49 in 2019. Of the 42 items considered by the Council in 2020, 23 concerned country-specific and regional situations and 19 dealt with thematic and other issues.<sup>1</sup>

During the period under review, the Council adopted 57 resolutions and issued 13 statements by the President. The Council also issued 11 notes by the President and 242 letters from the President. Four draft resolutions were not adopted owing to the lack of the required nine affirmative votes and three draft resolutions were not adopted because of the negative vote of a permanent member. In 2020, an objection to the extension of an invitation pursuant to rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure led to a procedural vote on one occasion.

Aspects relating to the working methods of the Council continued to be raised and discussed by Council members, in particular at an open videoconference<sup>2</sup> on working methods held on 15 May in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)” (see cases 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7). Participants exchanged views on how to ensure transparency, efficiency, inclusivity and interactivity in the work of the Council, in particular as that related to the format of Council meetings, the agenda, the role of the Council presidency, participation in Council meetings and other activities, and inclusivity and burden-sharing in the decision-making process. Members and non-members of the Council also discussed the features and further development of the working methods of the Council adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the period under review, from 17 to 19 January, members of the Council also held an informal retreat<sup>3</sup> on the working methods of the Council, organized by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Kuwait as the incoming and former Chairs of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, respectively. As part of the discussion, Council members addressed, among other issues, the implementation of the note by the President dated 30 August 2017, how to strike a balance between transparency and efficiency in the work of the Council, intra-Council dynamics, the process of drafting outcome documents and the issue of penholdership, and best practices relating to the Council’s relationship with the wider membership, other United Nations organs and regional organizations.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2020, the Council considered one item, entitled “Election of five members of the International Court of Justice”, that had not been on the list of items of which the Council was seized (see S/PV.8773). See also S/2020/10.

<sup>2</sup> See S/2020/418.

<sup>3</sup> See S/2020/172.

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## I. Procedural developments during the coronavirus disease pandemic

### Note

The Council held 52 meetings between 1 January and 11 March 2020. Following the declaration by the World Health Organization of the COVID-19 pandemic on 11 March 2020 and the subsequent decision of the Secretary-General on 16 March 2020 to restrict presence in the United Nations Headquarters to essential personnel only,<sup>4</sup> the members of the Council agreed to adopt a series of new working methods, including new procedures for the adoption of resolutions, to allow the work of the Council to be carried out virtually and ensure the continuity of its mandate. Accordingly, the Council did not hold any in-person meetings from 12 March to 14 July and instead convened 128 videoconferences.<sup>5</sup> From 14 July until the end of the year, the Council held in-person meetings and videoconferences interchangeably.

From 14 July to 5 October, in-person meetings were held in the Economic and Social Council Chamber instead of the Security Council Chamber in order to ensure the necessary social distancing consistent with the health and safety guidelines agreed upon by the respective presidencies of the Council in coordination with the Secretary-General.<sup>6</sup> On

8 October, in-person meetings resumed in the Security Council Chamber.<sup>7</sup> In November, Council members agreed that the use of the Economic and Social Council Chamber remained an option for in-person meetings so as to provide flexibility.<sup>8</sup> In-person informal consultations were also held in the Economic and Social Council Chamber and Security Council Chamber instead of the Consultations Room.

Section I covers the practices and procedures developed by the Council in relation to its working methods during the COVID-19 pandemic. It comprises four subsections, on new working methods, videoconferences, participation and decision-making and voting.

### A. New working methods

From March to December 2020, each President of the Council outlined, in a letter addressed to the representatives of the members of the Council, the working methods agreed upon by Council members for the month, usually maintaining and building on the measures outlined in previous months. Table 1 below lists all the letters of the President of the Council circulated in 2020 concerning the working methods of the Council during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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<sup>4</sup> See [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>5</sup> The Council held its 8745th meeting in person on 12 March ([S/PV.8745](#)) and its 8746th meeting in person on 14 July ([S/PV.8746](#)). For more information on the meetings of the Council in 2020, see sect. II below.

<sup>6</sup> See [S/2020/639](#), [S/2020/778](#) and [S/2020/877](#).

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<sup>7</sup> See [S/2020/966](#) and [S/2020/1077](#).

<sup>8</sup> See [S/2020/1077](#).

Table 1

#### Letters from the President of the Security Council addressed to the representatives of the members of the Council in 2020 concerning working methods during the COVID-19 pandemic

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Presidency</i>	<i>Summary of working methods agreed upon</i>
27 March 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/253</a>	Letter dated 27 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Written procedure for the adoption of resolutions</li><li>• Procedure for convening videoconferences</li><li>• Announcement of videoconferences</li><li>• Participation of non-members of the Council</li><li>• Videoconference records</li></ul>

**Part II. Provisional rules of procedure and related procedural developments**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Presidency</i>	<i>Summary of working methods agreed upon</i>
2 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/273</a>	Letter dated 2 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Dominican Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedure for convening videoconferences</li> <li>• Informal videoconference plan</li> <li>• Videoconference nomenclature</li> <li>• Announcement of videoconferences</li> <li>• Live streaming of open videoconferences</li> <li>• Adoption of the agenda (rule 9)</li> <li>• Accreditation of representatives (rule 13)</li> <li>• Participation of rule 37 invitees</li> <li>• Participation of rule 39 invitees</li> <li>• Languages of videoconferences</li> <li>• Videoconference records</li> <li>• Outcomes of videoconferences</li> <li>• Procedure for the adoption of presidential statements</li> <li>• Conduct of videoconferences</li> </ul>
7 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/372</a>	Letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Estonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal programme of work</li> <li>• Videoconference nomenclature</li> <li>• Adoption of the agenda (rule 9)</li> <li>• Accreditation of representatives (rule 13)</li> <li>• Conduct of business under chapter VI of the provisional rules of procedure</li> <li>• Participation of non-Council members</li> <li>• Announcement of videoconferences</li> <li>• Videoconference records</li> <li>• Live streaming of open videoconferences</li> <li>• Outcomes of videoconferences</li> <li>• Written procedure for the adoption of resolutions</li> <li>• Procedure for the adoption of presidential statements</li> </ul>

## Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2020

<i>Date</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Presidency</i>	<i>Summary of working methods agreed upon</i>
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct of videoconferences</li> <li>• Subsidiary organs</li> </ul>
2 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/490</a>	Letter dated 2 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of the guidelines agreed upon under previous presidencies, as set out in the annex to the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Council (<a href="#">S/2020/372</a>)</li> </ul>
1 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/639</a>	Letter dated 1 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modalities of in-person meetings of the Security Council for July 2020 in the Economic and Social Council Chamber</li> </ul>
4 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/778</a>	Letter dated 4 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of the working methods of previous presidencies, as set out in the annex to the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Council (<a href="#">S/2020/372</a>) and of the modalities of in-person meetings of the Council, as set out in the annex to the letter dated 1 July 2020 from the President of the Council (<a href="#">S/2020/639</a>)</li> </ul>
2 September 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/877</a>	Letter dated 2 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Niger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of the working methods of previous presidencies, as set out in the annex to the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Council (<a href="#">S/2020/372</a>) and of the modalities of in-person meetings of the Council, as set out in the letter dated 1 July 2020 from the President of the Council (<a href="#">S/2020/639</a>), as well as the letter dated 4 August 2020 from the President of the Council (<a href="#">S/2020/778</a>) and its additional note</li> <li>• Languages in videoconferences</li> </ul>
1 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/966</a>	Letter dated 1 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Russian Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of the working methods of previous presidencies, as set out in the annex to the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Council (<a href="#">S/2020/372</a>)</li> <li>• Modalities of in-person meetings of the Council for October 2020 in the Security Council Chamber</li> </ul>



<i>Date</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Presidency</i>	<i>Summary of working methods agreed upon</i>
2 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1077</a>	Letter dated 2 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	<p>Extension of the working methods of previous presidencies, as set out in the annex to the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council (<a href="#">S/2020/372</a>), for Council work conducted virtually</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of the working methods set out in the annex to the letter dated 1 October 2020 from the President of the Council (<a href="#">S/2020/966</a>) for in-person meetings in the Security Council Chamber</li> <li>• Prioritization of multilingualism</li> <li>• Interaction and engagement with non-Council members</li> </ul>
3 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1163</a>	Letter dated 3 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of the working methods of previous presidencies, as set out in the annex to the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Council (<a href="#">S/2020/372</a>), and of the modalities of in-person meetings of the Council, as set out in the annex to the letter dated 1 July 2020 from the President of the Council (<a href="#">S/2020/639</a>)</li> </ul>

The letters from the President of the Council dated 27 March and 2 April 2020 provided that the measures agreed upon therein were “temporary, extraordinary and provisional” to enable the Council to discharge its mandate and would not be considered as a precedent in the future.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the letters dated 7 May, 2 June, 4 August, 2 September, 2 November and 3 December 2020 indicated that the methods and modalities of work were only responses to the exceptional and extraordinary circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>10</sup> and would not set a precedent for the future.<sup>11</sup> All of the letters established that the implementation of the agreed upon measures would be assessed and further renewed, adjusted or discontinued, subject to agreement among all Council members.

Furthermore, the letter from the President of the Council dated 2 April provided that there was “no

agreement to consider the discussions of the Council held on the virtual platform as formal meetings”.<sup>12</sup> The letter also confirmed that the work of the Council would be undertaken “in the spirit of the Council’s provisional rules of procedure”, ensuring that Council members participating in a virtual Council discussion were represented by appropriately credentialed delegates, pursuant to rule 13 of the provisional rules of procedure; that the agenda was adopted at the outset of each videoconference, pursuant to rule 9; and that any other relevant rules were to be observed as a matter of practice, under chapter VI of the provisional rules of procedure (rules 27–39).<sup>13</sup> It was also established that videoconferences would be conducted on the items reflected in the “informal video-conference plan”, also referred to as the informal plan, issued by the presidency of the Council after consultation with Council members during the first working day of the presidency. The informal plan would include the open and closed videoconferences

<sup>9</sup> See [S/2020/253](#) and [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>10</sup> See [S/2020/372](#), [S/2020/490](#), [S/2020/778](#), [S/2020/877](#) and [S/2020/1163](#).

<sup>11</sup> See [S/2020/1077](#).

<sup>12</sup> See [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* See also [S/2020/372](#).

that usually appeared as briefings and consultations in the informal programme of work of the Council.<sup>14</sup>

The letters from the President dated 1 July and 1 October laid out the modalities for the convening of in-person meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Economic and Social Council Chamber and the Security Council Chamber, respectively.<sup>15</sup> The letter dated 1 July noted that, in the light of the positive developments regarding the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council intended to undertake a gradual and phased shift towards in-person meetings at Headquarters and laid out the modalities concerning location, access, health and security for convening in the Economic and Social Council Chamber in July 2020.<sup>16</sup> The letter clarified that, for in-person meetings, the provisional rules of procedure applied. In addition, upon receiving a request from a member of the Council for a meeting to be convened at Headquarters, the presidency would consult with members to achieve a consensual decision. The letter dated 1 July and the subsequent letters in 2020 stated that Council members had agreed that the decision to convene in-person meetings on the premises of the United Nations Headquarters rested with the Council, subject to revision, adjustment or suspension.<sup>17</sup>

By a letter dated 1 October, the President of the Council indicated that the plan was to conduct by default meetings in the “traditional format foreseen by the Charter of the United Nations and the provisional rules of procedure of the Council”. The letter also laid out the protocol for the presence of Council members in the Security Council Chamber and the modalities for in-person meetings in October 2020. Regarding incoming Council members, the letter provided that they would be entitled to two observers’ places in the Chamber assigned by the Secretariat during both meetings and informal consultations without setting a precedent for the times when the consultations of the Council were conducted in the Consultations Room.<sup>18</sup>

## B. Videoconferences

From 24 March to 14 July 2020, the Council held public and private discussions exclusively by videoconference. From 14 July until the end of the

year, videoconferences were held interchangeably with in-person meetings (on average, Council members held 7 meetings and 22 open videoconferences per month).

### Nomenclature

In a letter from the President of the Council dated 2 April, it was specified that the nomenclature to be utilized for the virtual discussions would be as follows: “open video teleconference on [item on the agenda to be discussed]”, followed by “closed video teleconference on [item on the agenda to be discussed]”. In addition, consultations would be referred to as “closed video teleconference on [item on the agenda to be discussed]”.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, in a letter dated 7 May, in addition to the established terminology, the President of the Council made reference to “video teleconference meetings”, “video teleconference briefings”, and “video teleconference consultations”.<sup>20</sup> However, these terms were not used in the provisional informal programme of work. Instead, the provisional informal programme of work made reference to “Open VTC” and “Closed VTC”, and “Adoption” for the announcement of votes held in accordance with the agreed written procedure, as described in further detail in subsection D below. As of November 2020, the informal provisional programme of work introduced a new nomenclature using “VTC” followed by the formats of public meetings of the Council provided for in paragraph 21 of the annex to the note by the President dated 30 August 2017.<sup>21</sup> Hence, the informal provisional programme of work made reference to “VTC briefing”, “VTC debate” and “VTC open debate”. In addition, the informal provisional programme of work made reference to “VTC consultations” for consultations held by videoconference and “Adoption” for the announcement of votes held in accordance with the agreed written procedure.<sup>22</sup>

### Languages

Owing to technical constraints, virtual discussions held by videoconference were initially

<sup>14</sup> See [S/2020/273](#). See also [S/2020/372](#) concerning the “informal programme of work of the Council” for May 2020.

<sup>15</sup> See [S/2020/639](#) and [S/2020/966](#).

<sup>16</sup> See [S/2020/639](#).

<sup>17</sup> See [S/2020/639](#), [S/2020/778](#), [S/2020/877](#), [S/2020/966](#), [S/2020/1077](#) and [S/2020/1163](#).

<sup>18</sup> See [S/2020/966](#).

<sup>19</sup> See [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>20</sup> See [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>21</sup> See [S/2017/507](#).

<sup>22</sup> See [S/2021/203](#). During 2020, the provisional programme of work was referred to differently depending on the presidency for the month, as “informal plan” (in April 2020), “provisional informal programme of work” (in May 2020), “informal provisional programme of work” (in May, June, July, August, September and November 2020) and “provisional programme of work” (in October and December 2020).

conducted only in English.<sup>23</sup> Starting on 31 August, Council members commenced the use of a remote interpretation platform for open videoconferences. By a letter dated 2 September 2020, the President of the Council announced that during its presidency, his delegation intended to conduct the business of the Council and deliver its national statements in its official language. In that connection, the deployment of the interpretation platform to allow Council members to speak in their official languages was strongly encouraged.<sup>24</sup> By a letter dated 2 November 2020, the President of the Council noted that Council members had agreed to prioritize multilingualism for greater effectiveness and involvement at meetings.<sup>25</sup> While agreement was reached among Council members to have interpretation available in open videoconferences, no similar agreement was reached for closed videoconferences, including closed videoconferences of subsidiary organs.

In 2020, the Council held a total of 269 videoconferences, of which 143 were open and 126 were closed. For further details, see the annex below.

## Formats

### *Open videoconferences*

The Council's practice in connection with open videoconferences evolved during the period under review, progressively enhancing participation and transparency. The evolution was largely explained by the impact of the pandemic on the operation of the United Nations Headquarters and the measures adopted in conjunction with the Secretariat to mitigate the impact and ensure the continued functioning of the Council.

In a letter from the President of the Council dated 27 March 2020, it was established that the President of the Council would announce to the public and Member States, 24 hours in advance, the intention to schedule videoconferences of members of the Council. Furthermore, the letter provided that: (a) the President could invite Member States that were not members of the Council to participate in a videoconference of members of the Council, "when the interests of that Member [were] specially affected and there [were] no objections from any Council member"; and (b) to ensure the transparency of those videoconferences, the

President would, within 48 hours, circulate as a document of the Council a compilation of the interventions of the briefers and members and non-members of the Council participating in the videoconference who requested the inclusion of their statements in the document. The letter specified, however, that "this would not apply to videoconferences of the members of the Council that were announced in advance as closed videoconferences".<sup>26</sup>

In a letter dated 2 April 2020, it was established that: (a) the President would invite Member States, members of the Secretariat or individuals who were not members of the Council to participate in a videoconference "within the principles of rules 37 and 39" of the provisional rules of procedure if there were no objections from Council members; (b) the President would share with the wider membership of the United Nations, one day before the event and through email, a message in which the videoconference would be announced (the message would also be available to the wider membership and the general public in the programme of work on the website of the Council); and (c) open videoconferences, when substituting a regular briefing of the Council, would be divided into two parts. The first part would be a public live feed of the relevant briefings, moderated by the President of the Council and streamed by United Nations webcast and, at its conclusion, the President would invite the Council to hold either an open or a closed videoconference, which would not be webcast. The letter further provided that the second part of the open videoconferences would be fully webcast as soon as technically feasible.<sup>27</sup> As a result, from 7 to 16 April, webcasts of the first part of the videoconferences were made available.<sup>28</sup> As of 21 April, open videoconferences were webcast in their entirety.<sup>29</sup>

On 27 April, the Council held its first open videoconference with extensive participation of non-Council members, similar to an open debate as provided for in paragraph 21 of the note by the President dated 30 August 2017.<sup>30</sup> However, given the technical limitations imposed by videoconferences, it was agreed that participation by non-members of the Council would be limited to the submission of written

<sup>23</sup> See [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#). Nonetheless, under the presidency of France in June 2020, the members of the Council delivered statements in videoconferences in English and French (see, for example, [S/2020/514](#)).

<sup>24</sup> See [S/2020/877](#).

<sup>25</sup> See [S/2020/1077](#).

<sup>26</sup> See [S/2020/253](#).

<sup>27</sup> See [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>28</sup> See [S/2020/286](#), [S/2020/305](#) and [S/2020/313](#).

<sup>29</sup> See the letter of the President of the Council dated 23 April 2020 compiling the statements of the first open videoconference for which a webcast was provided, held on 21 April in connection with the item "Protection of civilians in armed conflict" ([S/2020/340](#)).

<sup>30</sup> See [S/2017/507](#).

statements. The open videoconference was held in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and focused on youth and peace and security. In accordance with the understanding reached by Council members regarding the videoconference and consistent with the procedures established in the letters from the President dated 27 March and 2 April 2020,<sup>31</sup> the Presidency circulated a letter compiling the statements delivered by the briefers, Council members and non-Council members, as well as the written statements submitted by other entities.<sup>32</sup>

In a letter from the President of the Council dated 7 May 2020, it was established that: (a) participation in videoconferences would be open to non-members of the Council to deliver statements orally as soon as it became technically feasible; (b) all open videoconferences would be streamed by United Nations webcast in full; and (c) members and non-members of the Council were invited to send statements to the presidency as soon as possible, and no later than the day of the meeting, for inclusion in the compilation document containing the interventions of the briefers and those of the members and non-members of the Council participating in the videoconference.<sup>33</sup> The technical limitations for the participation of large numbers of non-Council members in open videoconferences persisted during the period under review. Moreover, once in-person meetings resumed, participation by non-Council members in open debates was restricted because of the necessary health and safety guidelines. Therefore, non-Council members continued to participate in open debates by submitting written statements.

#### *Closed videoconferences*

The Council’s practice concerning closed videoconferences remained largely unchanged from March to December 2020. In a letter from the President of the Council dated 27 March 2020, it was established that certain virtual discussions of the Council would be announced as closed videoconferences, in which Member States who were not members of the Council would not be invited to participate. The letter further established that the procedure for publishing statements from Member States would not apply to closed videoconferences.<sup>34</sup> In a letter from the President of the Council dated 2 April 2020, it was established that, to the extent possible and in

agreement with Council members, the Presidency would facilitate the negotiation of press statements or elements for the press after every Council discussion and that the President would thereafter orally deliver any agreed elements for the press through United Nations webcast.<sup>35</sup> In a letter from the President of the Council dated 7 May 2020, it was confirmed that closed videoconferences would not be webcast.<sup>36</sup>

#### **Other informal meetings of the members of the Security Council held by videoconference**

In addition to the open and closed videoconferences convened in lieu of in-person meetings and informal consultations of the whole, Council members also held six informal interactive dialogues and 18 out of 22 Arria-formula meetings by videoconference in 2020.<sup>37</sup>

### **C. Participation**

As reflected in the letters from the President of the Council listed in table 1, non-members of the Council were invited to participate in videoconferences as of March 2020 “when the interests of that Member [were] specially affected and there [were] no objections from any Council member” and as of April 2020 “within the principles of rules 37 and 39” if there were no objections from Council members.<sup>38</sup> As explained above, given the technical limitations imposed by videoconferences and the health and safety guidelines implemented for in-person meetings, participation by non-members of the Council decreased significantly during the period under review.<sup>39</sup> However, in accordance with letters from the President of the Council dated 27 March, 2 April and 7 May 2020, the written statements of non-Council members who requested to participate in videoconferences were circulated as part of the compilation documents annexed to letters from the President of the Council.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>35</sup> See [S/2020/273](#). See also [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>36</sup> See [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>37</sup> For more information on informal interactive dialogues and Arria-formula meetings held in 2020, see sect. II.C below.

<sup>38</sup> See [S/2020/253](#) and [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>39</sup> For more information on participation in 2020, see sect. VIII below.

<sup>40</sup> See [S/2020/253](#), [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#). See also [S/2020/906](#), transmitting a compilation of statements of non-members of the Council in connection with the 8756th meeting of the Council, held on 10 September under the item entitled “Children and armed conflict” (see [S/PV.8756](#)).

<sup>31</sup> See [S/2020/253](#) and [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>32</sup> See [S/2020/346](#).

<sup>33</sup> See [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>34</sup> See [S/2020/253](#).



## D. Decision-making and voting

### Resolutions

Following the decision to suspend in-person meetings in the Security Council Chamber in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, by a letter from the President of the Council dated 27 March 2020 it was agreed that Council resolutions would be adopted through a written procedure. The letter indicated that following a request from a Council member or members presenting a draft resolution in blue, the President would circulate a letter to members of the Council announcing that the draft resolution, to be included in the letter as an annex, would be put to a vote, and requesting Council members to provide their votes in writing within a non-extendable period of 24 hours.<sup>41</sup> In addition, there would be an announcement in the Council's programme of work that the process was under way. The draft resolution would be translated into the six official languages of the United Nations before the end of the 24-hour period.

Within the 24-hour period, every delegation would send the Director of the Security Council Affairs Division a letter from its permanent representative or chargé d'affaires, submitted electronically to the Division, indicating its vote (in favour, against or abstention) on the draft resolution and, if applicable, an explanation of vote. The Division would acknowledge receipt, keep votes confidential during that period and communicate the result to the President of the Security Council upon the expiry of the 24-hour voting period. The Council member or members presenting the resolution would not be able to withdraw or amend the resolution once the voting period had begun. Any delegation that failed to respond within the 24-hour voting period would be considered to have been absent from the vote.<sup>42</sup>

Within three hours following the conclusion of the voting period, the President of the Council would circulate a letter listing the vote of each delegation and the outcome to all Council members and any Member States concerned. If the draft resolution was adopted, the President would also submit the outcome to the Security Council Affairs Division, which would then circulate the resolution to all Council members and Member States concerned. Upon receipt of the outcome, Council members would have six hours to submit a written explanation of their vote. The Member States

concerned would also be able to submit a written statement with the agreement of the Council, in line with rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure. Within 12 hours of the conclusion of the voting period, the President would convene a videoconference of the Council to announce the outcome of the vote.<sup>43</sup>

In accordance with the letter from the President of the Council, resolutions adopted through the written voting procedure were to have the same legal status as those voted on in the Security Council Chamber. On 30 March 2020, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2515 (2020) in connection with the item entitled "Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea", which was the first resolution adopted in accordance with the written voting procedure.<sup>44</sup> During the period under review, the Council adopted 34 resolutions under the written voting procedure out of a total of 57 resolutions adopted in 2020. Table 2 lists the resolutions adopted through the written voting procedure and table 3 lists draft resolutions and amendments considered under the written voting procedure but not adopted.

Departing from the procedure described above, in 2020 amendments were put to a vote within less than 24 hours. In four sequential letters circulated between 8 and 10 July, the President of the Council invoked rule 33 of the provisional rules of procedure, according to which a motion to introduce an amendment shall have precedence "over all principal motions and draft resolutions relative to the subject before the meeting". As provided for in the letters, taking into account the extraordinary circumstances in connection with the Council's practice and working methods, in particular the absence of "meetings" as referred to in rule 33, the President of the Council put various amendments to a vote in writing within a period of less than 24 hours. The amendments were proposed in relation to draft resolutions submitted in connection with the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East", and more specifically the renewal of the cross-border humanitarian mechanism established in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014).<sup>45</sup> The four amendments proposed were put to a vote sequentially and concurrently between 9 and 11 July within a 12-hour voting period.<sup>46</sup> As a result, the Council considered and did not adopt amendments to draft resolutions submitted by Belgium and Germany,<sup>47</sup> and by the Russian Federation<sup>48</sup> and China.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>41</sup> That agreement notwithstanding, the non-extendable voting period was, at times, adjusted to less than 24 hours based on the urgency of certain voting procedures. For example, the voting period on resolution 2533 (2020) and the proposed draft amendments under the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East" ranged from 3 to 12 hours. See, for example, S/2020/699, S/2020/700, S/2020/701 and S/2020/702. A draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation, contained in document S/2020/683, was put to a vote for a non-extendable period of two hours (see S/2020/694).

<sup>42</sup> See S/2020/253.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> See S/2020/270.

<sup>45</sup> For more information, see part I, sect. 20.

<sup>46</sup> See S/2020/669, S/2020/699, S/2020/700 and S/2020/701.

<sup>47</sup> See S/2020/667 and S/2020/684. The draft resolution contained in document S/2020/684 was nonetheless adopted as resolution 2533 (2020), albeit not unanimously.

<sup>48</sup> See S/2020/668, S/2020/690 and S/2020/691.

<sup>49</sup> See S/2020/692.



Table 2  
Resolutions adopted by the Council through the written voting procedure, 2020

<i>Resolution and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Written records of voting procedure</i>	<i>Written records of voting outcome</i>
<a href="#">2515 (2020)</a> 30 March 2020	Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea	<a href="#">S/2020/270</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/246</a>
<a href="#">2516 (2020)</a> 30 March 2020	The situation in Somalia	<a href="#">S/2020/266</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/247</a>
<a href="#">2517 (2020)</a> 30 March 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	<a href="#">S/2020/267</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/248</a>
<a href="#">2518 (2020)</a> 30 March 2020	United Nations peacekeeping operations	<a href="#">S/2020/268</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/249</a>
<a href="#">2519 (2020)</a> 14 May 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	<a href="#">S/2020/408</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/405</a>
<a href="#">2520 (2020)</a> 29 May 2020	The situation in Somalia	<a href="#">S/2020/466</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/459</a>
<a href="#">2521 (2020)</a> 29 May 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	<a href="#">S/2020/469</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/462</a>
<a href="#">2522 (2020)</a> 29 May 2020	The situation concerning Iraq	<a href="#">S/2020/467</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/460</a>
<a href="#">2523 (2020)</a> 29 May 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	<a href="#">S/2020/468</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/461</a>
<a href="#">2524 (2020)</a> 3 June 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	<a href="#">S/2020/496</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/494</a>
<a href="#">2525 (2020)</a> 3 June 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	<a href="#">S/2020/497</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/495</a>
<a href="#">2526 (2020)</a> 5 June 2020	The situation in Libya	<a href="#">S/2020/509</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/504</a>
<a href="#">2527 (2020)</a> 22 June 2020	The situation in Somalia	<a href="#">S/2020/573</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/569</a>
<a href="#">2528 (2020)</a> 25 June 2020	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	<a href="#">S/2020/601</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/589</a>
<a href="#">2529 (2020)</a> 25 June 2020	International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals	<a href="#">S/2020/602</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/590</a>
<a href="#">2530 (2020)</a> 29 June 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/624</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/612</a>
<a href="#">2531 (2020)</a> 29 June 2020	The situation in Mali	<a href="#">S/2020/625</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/613</a>
<a href="#">2532 (2020)</a> 1 July 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	<a href="#">S/2020/638</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/632</a>
<a href="#">2533 (2020)</a> 11 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/702</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/698</a>

<i>Resolution and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Written records of voting procedure</i>	<i>Written records of voting outcome</i>
<a href="#">2538 (2020)</a> 28 August 2020	United Nations peacekeeping operations	<a href="#">S/2020/856</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/851</a>
<a href="#">2539 (2020)</a> 28 August 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/857</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/853</a>
<a href="#">2540 (2020)</a> 28 August 2020	The situation in Somalia	<a href="#">S/2020/858</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/854</a>
<a href="#">2541 (2020)</a> 31 August 2020	The situation in Mali	<a href="#">S/2020/867</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/859</a>
<a href="#">2544 (2020)</a> 18 September 2020	Threats to international peace and security	<a href="#">S/2020/920</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/917</a>
<a href="#">2548 (2020)</a> 30 October 2020	The situation concerning Western Sahara	<a href="#">S/2020/1075</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1063</a>
<a href="#">2549 (2020)</a> 5 November 2020	The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina	<a href="#">S/2020/1087</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1085</a>
<a href="#">2553 (2020)</a> 3 December 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	<a href="#">S/2020/1167</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1166</a>
<a href="#">2554 (2020)</a> 4 December 2020	The situation in Somalia	<a href="#">S/2020/1173</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1170</a>
<a href="#">2555 (2020)</a> 18 December 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/1263</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1252</a>
<a href="#">2556 (2020)</a> 18 December 2020	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	<a href="#">S/2020/1265</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1253</a>
<a href="#">2557 (2020)</a> 18 December 2020	Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts	<a href="#">S/2020/1266</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1254</a>
<a href="#">2558 (2020)</a> 21 December 2020	Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	<a href="#">S/2020/1273</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1269</a>
<a href="#">2559 (2020)</a> 22 December 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	<a href="#">S/2020/1280</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1276</a>
<a href="#">2560 (2020)</a> 29 December 2020	Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts	<a href="#">S/2020/1311</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1305</a>

Table 3  
**Draft resolutions and amendments considered by the Council under the written voting procedure but not adopted, 2020**

<i>Draft resolution or amendment and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Written records of voting procedure</i>	<i>Written records of voting outcome</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/654</a> 7 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/661</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/657</a>
<a href="#">S/2020/658</a> 8 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/671</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/664</a>

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<i>Draft resolution or amendment and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Written records of voting procedure</i>	<i>Written records of voting outcome</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/667</a> 10 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/693</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/681</a>
<a href="#">S/2020/668</a> (amendment to draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/667</a> ) 9 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/669</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/670</a>
<a href="#">S/2020/683</a> 10 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/694</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/688</a>
<a href="#">S/2020/690</a> (amendment to draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/684</a> ) 11 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/699</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/695</a>
<a href="#">S/2020/691</a> (amendment to draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/684</a> ) 11 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/700</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/696</a>
<a href="#">S/2020/692</a> (amendment to draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/684</a> ) 11 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/2020/701</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/697</a>
<a href="#">S/2020/797</a> 14 August 2020	Non-proliferation	<a href="#">S/2020/805</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/803</a>
<a href="#">S/2020/852</a> 31 August 2020	Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts	<a href="#">S/2020/870</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/865</a>
<a href="#">S/2020/1054</a> 30 October 2020	Women and peace and security	<a href="#">S/2020/1076</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1066</a>

### Presidential statements

By a letter from the President dated 2 April 2020, it was agreed that the adoption of statements by the President that had been electronically agreed upon by consensus following a no-objection procedure of no less than 48 hours, would be announced by the President during an open videoconference.<sup>50</sup> By a letter from the President dated 7 May 2020, the length of the no-objection procedure was modified to no less than 24 hours.<sup>51</sup> It was specified that the statements would

have the same status as those adopted in the Security Council Chamber and that they would be published as a document of the Council.<sup>52</sup> On 29 April, during an open videoconference held in connection with the item entitled “Protection of civilians in armed conflict”, the President announced for the first time the adoption of a presidential statement<sup>53</sup> in accordance with the procedure. As listed in table 4, out of a total of 13 presidential statements issued by the Council in 2020, four were issued under the procedure.

<sup>50</sup> See [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>51</sup> See [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>52</sup> See [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>53</sup> [S/PRST/2020/6](#).

Table 4  
**Presidential statements issued by the Council through the written procedure, 2020**

<i>Presidential statement and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/6</a> 29 April 2020	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	No record <sup>a</sup>
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/11</a> 4 December 2020	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations	<a href="#">S/2020/1179</a>
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/12</a> 4 December 2020	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations	<a href="#">S/2020/1179</a>
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/13</a> 21 December 2020	The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security	No record <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part I, chap. IV.B. The Council adopted the presidential statement following its debate on 21 April (see [S/2020/340](#)).

<sup>b</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part I, chap. IV.B. The Council adopted the presidential statement following its debate on 18 December (see [S/2020/1286](#)).

### Procedural votes

While the letter of the President of the Security Council dated 27 March 2020 provided for voting on draft resolutions,<sup>54</sup> no similar procedure was devised

<sup>54</sup> See [S/2020/253](#).

for procedural votes. Moreover, as mentioned above, videoconferences were not considered formal meetings of the Council and therefore procedural votes could not take place. Since procedural disagreements could not be addressed through voting, consensus became the norm in relation to all procedural questions.

## II. Meetings and records

### Note

Section II covers the practice of the Council concerning meetings, publicity and the records of the Council, in relation to Article 28 of the Charter of the United Nations and rules 1 to 5 and 48 to 57 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

#### Article 28

1. *The Security Council shall be so organized as to be able to function continuously. Each member of the Security Council shall for this purpose be represented at all times at the seat of the Organization.*

2. *The Security Council shall hold periodic meetings at which each of its members may, if it so desires, be represented by a member of the government or by some other specially designated representative.*

3. *The Security Council may hold meetings at such places other than the seat of the Organization as in its judgment will best facilitate its work.*

#### Rule 1

*Meetings of the Security Council shall, with the exception of the periodic meetings referred to in rule 4, be held at the call of the President at any time he deems necessary, but the interval between meetings shall not exceed fourteen days.*

#### Rule 2

*The President shall call a meeting of the Security Council at the request of any member of the Security Council.*

#### Rule 3

*The President shall call a meeting of the Security Council if a dispute or situation is brought to the attention of the Security Council under Article 35 or under Article 11 (3) of the Charter, or if the General Assembly makes recommendations or refers any question to the Security Council under Article 11 (2), or if the Secretary-General brings to the attention of the Security Council any matter under Article 99.*

*Rule 4*

*Periodic meetings of the Security Council called for in Article 28 (2) of the Charter shall be held twice a year, at such times as the Security Council may decide.*

*Rule 5*

*Meetings of the Security Council shall normally be held at the seat of the United Nations.*

*Any member of the Security Council or the Secretary-General may propose that the Security Council should meet at another place. Should the Security Council accept any such proposal, it shall decide upon the place and the period during which the Council shall meet at such place.*

*Rule 48*

*Unless it decides otherwise, the Security Council shall meet in public. Any recommendation to the General Assembly regarding the appointment of the Secretary-General shall be discussed and decided at a private meeting.*

*Rule 49*

*Subject to the provisions of rule 51, the verbatim record of each meeting of the Security Council shall be made available to the representatives on the Security Council and to the representatives of any other States which have participated in the meeting not later than 10 a.m. of the first working day following the meeting.*

*Rule 50*

*The representatives of the States which have participated in the meeting shall, within two working days after the time indicated in rule 49, inform the Secretary-General of any corrections they wish to have made in the verbatim record.*

*Rule 51*

*The Security Council may decide that for a private meeting the record shall be made in a single copy alone. This record shall be kept by the Secretary-General. The representatives of the States which have participated in the meeting shall, within a period of ten days, inform the Secretary-General of any corrections they wish to have made in this record.*

*Rule 52*

*Corrections that have been requested shall be considered approved unless the President is of the*

*opinion that they are sufficiently important to be submitted to the representatives on the Security Council. In the latter case, the representatives on the Security Council shall submit within two working days any comments they may wish to make. In the absence of objections in this period of time, the record shall be corrected as requested.*

*Rule 53*

*The verbatim record referred to in rule 49 or the record referred to in rule 51, in which no corrections have been requested in the period of time required by rules 50 and 51, respectively, or which has been corrected in accordance with the provisions of rule 52, shall be considered as approved. It shall be signed by the President and shall become the official record of the Security Council.*

*Rule 54*

*The official record of public meetings of the Security Council, as well as the documents annexed thereto, shall be published in the official languages as soon as possible.*

*Rule 55*

*At the close of each private meeting the Security Council shall issue a communiqué through the Secretary-General.*

*Rule 56*

*The representatives of the Members of the United Nations which have taken part in a private meeting shall at all times have the right to consult the record of that meeting in the office of the Secretary-General. The Security Council may at any time grant access to this record to authorized representatives of other Members of the United Nations.*

*Rule 57*

*The Secretary-General shall, once each year, submit to the Security Council a list of the records and documents which up to that time have been considered confidential. The Security Council shall decide which of these shall be made available to other Members of the United Nations, which shall be made public, and which shall continue to remain confidential.*

*This section comprises five subsections, namely: A. Meetings, concerning the convening of meetings pursuant to rules 1 to 5 as well as rule 48; B. Informal consultations of the whole; C. Other informal meetings of the members of the Security Council;*



D. Discussions concerning meetings; and E. Records, maintained pursuant to rules 49 to 57.

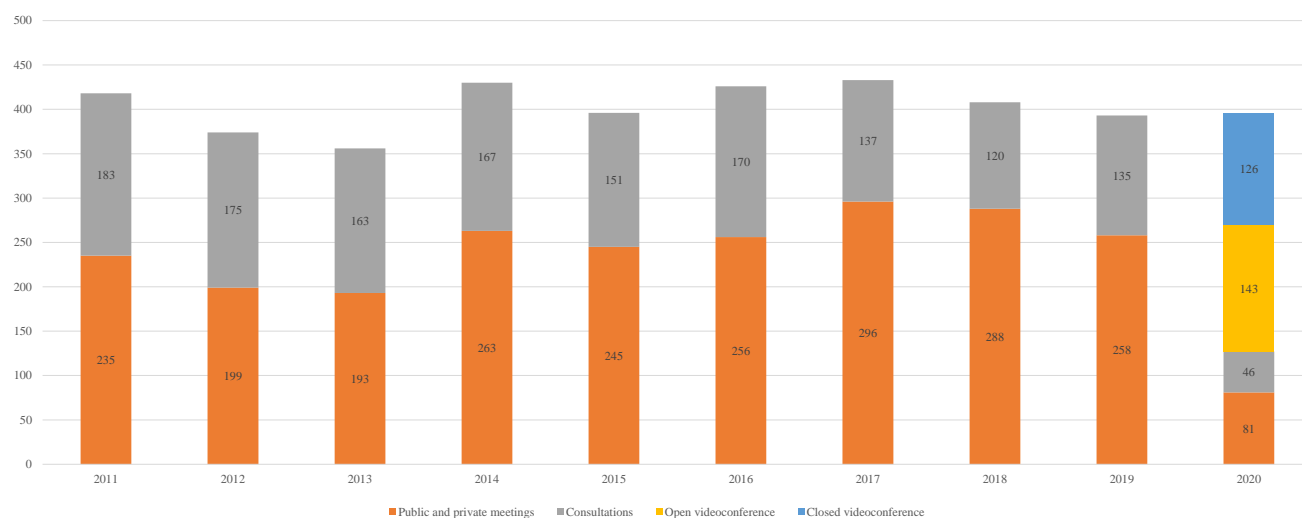
During the period under review, the Council held 81 meetings, of which 79 were public meetings and two were private meetings. In addition, in 2020 the Council held a total of 46 informal consultations of the whole (also known as consultations or informal consultations). In accordance with the working methods of the Council developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, Council members also held 269 videoconferences, of which 143 were open videoconferences and 126 were closed videoconferences. Council members also continued to hold informal interactive dialogues and Arria-formula meetings. Six informal interactive dialogues and 22 Arria-formula meetings were held during the year (three informal interactive dialogues and 18 Arria-

formula meetings were held by means of a videoconference).

Figure I shows the total number of meetings and informal consultations of the whole held from 2011 to 2020, along with the number of open and closed videoconferences held in 2020. The figure reflects the deep impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the functioning and working methods of the Security Council.

During the period under review, the question of the format of meetings was raised during an open videoconference in connection with the working methods of the Council (see case 1).

Figure I  
Number of meetings, consultations and videoconferences, 2011–2020



## A. Meetings

### Application of rules relating to meetings

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the adoption of new working methods that included the use of videoconferences, the Council did not hold any meetings from 12 March to 14 July 2020, exceeding the 14-day interval between meetings as provided for under rule 1 of the provisional rules of procedure.<sup>55</sup> The Council continued, on occasion, to convene more

than one meeting a day and it did so also with respect to videoconferences.

In 2020, the Council held no periodic meetings pursuant to rule 4 or any meetings away from Headquarters in accordance with rule 5.

During the reporting period, no communications were received from Member States requesting the Council to convene a meeting that explicitly cited rule 2 or 3 as the basis of the request. Table 5 below lists two communications requesting an urgent or special meeting, one without explicit reference to rules 2 or 3 and one explicitly invoking Article 35 of the Charter.

<sup>55</sup> The Council held its 8745th meeting on 12 March 2020 (S/PV.8745) and its 8746th meeting on 14 July 2020 (S/PV.8746).

Table 5  
**Letters in which Member States requested an urgent or special meeting, 2020**

<i>Letter addressed to the President of the Council</i>	<i>Summary</i>	<i>Meeting or videoconference convened (date and agenda item)</i>
Letter dated 13 May 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2020/399</a> )	Requesting the Council to urgently hold necessary discussions to recognize that the aggression perpetrated by the Governments of Colombia and the United States against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela between 3 and 4 May 2020 was an armed attack and to issue a clear statement condemning and prohibiting the use or threat of the use of force against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	<a href="#">S/2020/435</a> The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela 20 May 2020
Letter dated 19 June 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2020/566</a> )	Pursuant to Article 35 of the Charter, requesting that the Council urgently consider the developments related to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam at the earliest possible opportunity under the item entitled “Peace and security in Africa”	<a href="#">S/2020/636</a> Peace and security in Africa 29 June 2020

*Complaints raised by Member States concerning the application of rule 3*

On 6 February, at the request of the United Kingdom, France and the United States, the Council held a meeting<sup>56</sup> under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East” to discuss the situation in the north-west of the Syrian Arab Republic. In his remarks, citing the violation of multiple truces by “militants upon the instructions of their handlers”, the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic questioned why “no one in the Security Council called for an emergency meeting to discuss the bombardment of Aleppo by terrorists”.

In a letter dated 3 April 2020 addressed to the President of the Security Council, citing the “dangerous actions” by the United States, which threatened the peace and security of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the entire region, the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela stated that despite the previous communications of his delegation requesting the Council to use its power under Article 34 of the Charter to “open an investigation” into the situation, there had not been an effective response from the Council and the situation had deteriorated in terms of security and respect for international law.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> See [S/PV.8715](#).

<sup>57</sup> [S/2020/277](#). See also [S/2020/130](#). For more information on Article 34 of the Charter, see part VI, sect. II.

**Format**

*Public meetings*

The Council continued to convene meetings in public as provided for in rule 48 of the provisional rules of procedure, mainly for the purposes of: (a) receiving briefings on country-specific or regional situations or thematic issues under its consideration; (b) holding debates on particular items,<sup>58</sup> and (c) adopting decisions.<sup>59</sup> In 2020, given the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of meetings held by the Council decreased significantly.

In 2020, the Council held a total of 81 meetings, of which 79 (97.5 per cent) were held in public. By comparison, in 2019 the Council held a total of 258 meetings, of which 243 were held in public, and in 2018 it held a total of 288 meetings, of which 275 were held in public. In 2020, Council members also held 269 videoconferences, of which 143 (53.2 per cent) were open and 126 (46.8 per cent) were closed.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>58</sup> In 2020, the Council continued the practice of resuming meetings due to financial constraints that restricted meetings to taking place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. (see [S/PV.8699](#), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#), [S/PV.8706](#), [S/PV.8706 \(Resumption 1\)](#), [S/PV.8723](#) and [S/PV.8723 \(Resumption 1\)](#)).

<sup>59</sup> On the format of public meetings, see also the note by the President dated 30 August 2017 ([S/2017/507](#), annex, sect. II.C.1).

<sup>60</sup> For more information on the features of open and closed videoconferences of the Council, see sect. I.B above. For a list of all the videoconferences held by the Council in 2020, see the annex to the present part.

During the period under review, Council members held 4 meetings and 15 videoconferences at which two or more Council members were represented at the ministerial or higher levels, 16 of which were held in connection with thematic items and 3 of which were held in connection with regional and country-specific items. In 2020, the Council held four videoconferences at which more than half of the Council members were represented at the ministerial or higher levels. Those videoconferences were held in connection with the items entitled “The situation in Mali”, “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, “Maintenance of international peace and security” and “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”. In addition, the Council held two meetings and four videoconferences at which one or more Council members were represented at the level of Head of State or Government. Three of the four videoconferences were presided over by Heads of State. On 24 September, at the initiative of the Niger, which held the presidency for the month,<sup>61</sup> Council members held an open videoconference<sup>62</sup> in connection with the item entitled

“Maintenance of international peace and security”, which focused on global governance after the COVID-19 pandemic. Four Council members were represented at the level of Head of State or Government, including the Niger, which was represented by its President, and nine Council members were represented at the ministerial level, which was the highest number of Council members represented at a high level at a Council meeting or videoconference in 2020. On 3 November, the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines presided over an open videoconference<sup>63</sup> in connection with the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, focusing on the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity. On 4 December, the President of South Africa presided over an open videoconference<sup>64</sup> in connection with the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations”, focusing on cooperation with the African Union.

Table 6 lists all the high-level meetings and videoconferences held in 2020 at which two or more Council members were represented at the ministerial or higher levels.

<sup>61</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 1 September 2020 (S/2020/883).

<sup>62</sup> See S/2020/953.

<sup>63</sup> See S/2020/1090.

<sup>64</sup> See S/2020/1179.

Table 6  
High-level meetings and videoconferences, 2020

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>High-level participation</i>
S/PV.8699 9 January 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	<b>Heads of State or Government (1)</b> <b>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</b> (Prime Minister) <b>Ministerial level (3)</b> <b>Estonia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Germany</b> (Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office), <b>Viet Nam</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs)
S/PV.8721 12 February 2020	Children and armed conflict	<b>Heads of State or Government (1)</b> <b>Belgium</b> (King) <sup>a</sup> <b>Ministerial level (2)</b> <b>Estonia</b> (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Indonesia</b> (Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs)
S/PV.8723 13 February 2020	Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	<b>Ministerial level (3)</b> <b>Belgium</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence), <b>Estonia</b> (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Niger</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Abroad)

## Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2020

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>High-level participation</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8734</a> 27 February 2020	The situation in the Middle East	<b>Ministerial level (2)</b> <b>Belgium</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Development), <b>Germany</b> (Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs)
<a href="#">S/2020/465</a> 27 May 2020	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	<b>Heads of State or Government (1)</b> <b>Estonia</b> (President) <b>Ministerial level (5)</b> <b>Germany</b> (Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office), <b>Indonesia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Regional Integration), <b>Tunisia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>United Kingdom</b> (Special Representative of the Prime Minister on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia)
<a href="#">S/2020/541</a> 11 June 2020	The situation in Mali	<b>Ministerial level (8)</b> <b>Belgium</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence), <b>Dominican Republic</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Estonia</b> (Minister of Defence), <b>France</b> (Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs), <b>Niger</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Abroad), <b>South Africa</b> (Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation), <b>Tunisia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>United Kingdom</b> (Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia)
<a href="#">S/2020/663</a> 2 July 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	<b>Ministerial level (6)</b> <b>Estonia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>France</b> (Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs), <b>Germany</b> (Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Tunisia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>United Kingdom</b> (Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia), <b>Viet Nam</b> (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs)
<a href="#">S/2020/686</a> 8 July 2020	The situation in Libya	<b>Ministerial level (6)</b> <b>China</b> (Special Representative of President Xi Jinping, State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Germany</b> (Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Niger</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Abroad), <b>Tunisia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>South Africa</b> (Minister for International Relations and Coordination), <b>United Kingdom</b> (Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa)
<a href="#">S/2020/727</a> 17 July 2020	Women and peace and security	<b>Ministerial level (4)</b> <b>Belgium</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence), <b>Germany</b> (Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>South Africa</b> (Minister for International Relations and Cooperation), <b>Niger</b> (Minister for the Advancement of Women and Child Protection)
<a href="#">S/2020/751</a> 24 July 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	<b>Ministerial level (6)</b> <b>Belgium</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Development Cooperation), <b>Estonia</b> (Minister of the Environment), <b>Germany</b> (Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Tunisia</b> (Secretary of State to the Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>United Kingdom</b> (Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia), <b>Viet Nam</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs)

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>High-level participation</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/791</a> 6 August 2020	Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts	<b>Ministerial level (3)</b> <b>Indonesia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Tunisia</b> (Secretary of State to the Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Viet Nam</b> (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs)
<a href="#">S/2020/799</a> 12 August 2020	Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	<b>Ministerial level (5)</b> <b>Indonesia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Estonia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Germany</b> (Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office), <b>South Africa</b> (Minister for International Relations and Cooperation), <b>Viet Nam</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs)
<a href="#">S/2020/929</a> 17 September 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	<b>Ministerial level (3)</b> <b>Niger</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Abroad), <b>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Regional Integration), <b>United Kingdom</b> (Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia)
<a href="#">S/2020/953</a> 24 September 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	<b>Heads of State or Government (4)</b> <b>Estonia</b> (President), <b>Niger</b> (President), <b>South Africa</b> (President), <b>Tunisia</b> (President) <b>Ministerial level (9)</b> <b>Belgium</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence), <b>China</b> (State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>France</b> (Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs), <b>Germany</b> (Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office), <b>Indonesia</b> (Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Russian Federation</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Regional Integration), <b>United Kingdom</b> (Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia), <b>Viet Nam</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs)
<a href="#">S/2020/1037</a> 20 October 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	<b>Ministerial level (5)</b> <b>China</b> (State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Niger</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Abroad), <b>Russian Federation</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>South Africa</b> (Minister for International Relations and Cooperation), <b>Viet Nam</b> (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs)
<a href="#">S/2020/1084</a> 29 October 2020	Women and peace and security	<b>Ministerial level (2)</b> <b>Germany</b> (Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office), <b>United Kingdom</b> (Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa)
<a href="#">S/2020/1090</a> 3 November 2020	Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	<b>Head of State or Government (1)</b> <b>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</b> (Prime Minister) <b>Ministerial level (8)</b> <b>Belgium</b> (Minister of Development Cooperation), <b>Estonia</b> (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Germany</b> (Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office), <b>Russian Federation</b> (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>South Africa</b> (Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation), <b>Tunisia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>United Kingdom</b> (Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia), <b>Viet Nam</b> (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs)

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>High-level participation</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/1176</a> 3 December 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	<b>Ministerial level (7)</b> <b>Belgium</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade), <b>Estonia</b> (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Germany</b> (Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office), <b>Indonesia</b> (Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</b> (Minister of State with responsibility for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade), <b>South Africa</b> (Minister of International Relations and Cooperation), <b>Tunisia</b> (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs)
<a href="#">S/2020/1179</a> 4 December 2020	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations	<b>Heads of State or Government (4)</b> <b>Niger</b> (President), <b>South Africa</b> (President), <b>Tunisia</b> (President), <b>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</b> (Prime Minister) <b>Ministerial level (7)</b> <b>Belgium</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade), <b>China</b> (State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Estonia</b> (Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Germany</b> (Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs), <b>Indonesia</b> (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Multilateral Affairs), <b>United Kingdom</b> (Minister for Africa), <b>Viet Nam</b> (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs)

<sup>a</sup> The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Belgium presided over the meeting.

#### *Private meetings*

During the period under review, the Council continued to hold meetings in private, in accordance with rule 48 of the provisional rules of procedure. Private meetings continued to constitute a small percentage of all Council meetings, with only 2 meetings, or 2.5 per cent, of a total of 81 Council meetings held in 2020 (see figure II).<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, as

indicated in table 7, both were meetings held with countries contributing troops and police under the item entitled “Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B”. In 2020, Council members also held eight closed videoconferences with countries contributing troops and police and one closed videoconference to hear the annual briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice.

<sup>65</sup> On the format of private meetings, see also the note by the President dated 30 August 2017 ([S/2017/507](#), annex, sect. II.C.2).



Figure II  
Public and private meetings, 2020

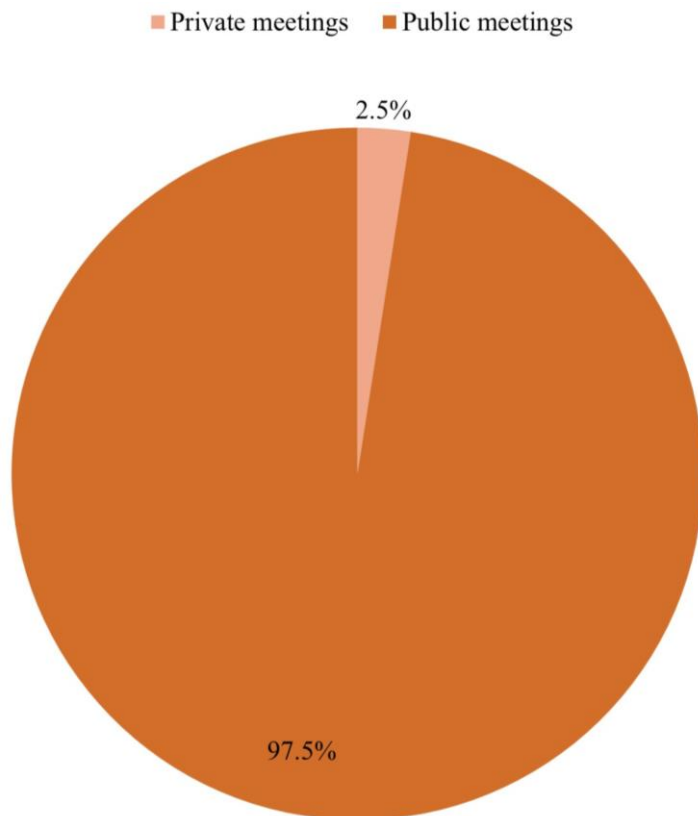


Table 7  
Private meetings, 2020

<i>Item</i>	<i>Meeting record and date</i>
Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B (two meetings)	S/PV.8705, 16 January 2020 S/PV.8740, 3 March 2020

## B. Informal consultations of the whole

Informal consultations of the whole are not official meetings of the Council. The members gather in private for the purpose of holding discussions and receiving briefings from the Secretariat and representatives of the Secretary-General. The meetings are normally held in the Consultations Room, adjacent to the Security Council Chamber. During the period under review, in accordance with the health and safety guidelines agreed upon by Council members as part of the working methods of the Council during the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person informal consultations were also held in the Economic and Social Council Chamber and the Security Council Chamber.

In 2020, Council members held 46 informal consultations of the whole compared with 135 in 2019 and 120 in 2018 (see figure I above). During the period under review, Council members also held virtual informal consultations by means of closed videoconferences.<sup>66</sup> Frequently, informal consultations or closed videoconferences were held, respectively, immediately after public meetings or open videoconferences.

Pursuant to the Council's established practice, no official records of informal consultations were issued and non-members were not invited. In accordance with the

<sup>66</sup> For more information on the working methods adopted by the members of the Council because of the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020, see sect. I above.

working methods agreed upon during the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual discussions announced as closed videoconferences did not include the participation of non-Council members and no written statements were published.<sup>67</sup> Frequently, however, statements to the press were issued or elements to the press were read out by the President of the Council following informal consultations or closed videoconferences.<sup>68</sup>

### C. Other informal meetings of the members of the Security Council

During the period under review, Council members continued to hold informal interactive dialogues and Arria-formula meetings.<sup>69</sup> Informal interactive dialogues and Arria-formula meetings are convened at the initiative of one or more members of the Council. In practice, informal interactive dialogues are convened with the participation of all Council members, while Arria-formula meetings are convened with the participation of all or some Council members. While informal interactive dialogues are presided over by the President of the Council, Arria-formula meetings are not. Frequently, the member or members of the Council convening the Arria-formula meeting also chair the meeting. Neither of the two types of meeting are considered formal meetings of the Council. Neither of the two types of meeting are announced in the *Journal of the United Nations* or in the Council's programme of work and no official records are prepared. Invitees to informal interactive dialogues and Arria-formula meetings include Member States, relevant organizations and individuals. In past practice, Arria-formula meetings were closed to the public, while more recently they have been open to the public or even broadcast. Informal

interactive dialogues are not open to the public or broadcast. As described below, the COVID-19 pandemic had a deep impact on the holding of these two types of meeting.

#### *Informal interactive dialogues*

According to the note by the President dated 30 August 2017, "when it deems appropriate", the Council may utilize informal dialogues to seek the views of Member States that are parties to a conflict and/or other interested and affected parties.<sup>70</sup> During the reporting period, the Council held six informal interactive dialogues, three of which were held by videoconference.<sup>71</sup> All informal interactive dialogues held in 2020 concerned country-specific or regional situations, as shown in table 8.

In 2020, the features and nature of informal interactive dialogues were addressed in one communication to the Council. In a letter dated 12 May 2020 addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Council,<sup>72</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation expressed regret that the interaction of Council members with the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which was scheduled for the same day, would be held behind closed doors in the "informal-informal" interactive dialogue format, which effectively precluded States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the OPCW policymaking organs from having any knowledge concerning the contents of the meeting. In the letter, the representative further said that his delegation would not be participating in the meeting and objected to "the practice of interaction with the OPCW Director-General behind the back of the vast majority of the OPCW membership" and shared the list of questions that his delegation had intended to ask in an open setting.

<sup>67</sup> See [S/2020/253](#).

<sup>68</sup> Not all statements to the press were issued as a result of informal consultations or closed videoconferences. For more information on elements to the press, see sect. V below.

<sup>69</sup> For more information on informal interactive dialogues and Arria-formula meetings, see [S/2017/507](#), annex, paras. 92, 95 and 97–99.

<sup>70</sup> [S/2017/507](#), annex, para. 92.

<sup>71</sup> For information on the evolution of informal interactive dialogues, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2008–2009 to 2019*.

<sup>72</sup> See [S/2020/390](#).

Table 8  
Informal interactive dialogues, 2020

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Participants (including non-members of the Council)</i>
14 January 2020	Situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region	All Council members, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Participants (including non-members of the Council)</i>
23 January 2020	United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) (100-day deadline)	All Council members, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of UNMISS, Special Envoy for South Sudan of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development
26 February 2020	Situation in Burundi	All Council members; Assistant Secretary-General for Africa
12 May 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic (report of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW))	14 Council members, <sup>b</sup> Director-General of OPCW, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Coordinator of the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team
2 June 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Resolution 2292 (2016) implementation (European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI)	All Council members, Deputy Secretary General for Common Security and Defence Policy and Crisis Response of the European External Action Service
22 July 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Implications of COVID-19 on peacebuilding and sustaining peace in conflict-affected countries	All Council members, Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support

<sup>a</sup> Held by videoconference.

<sup>b</sup> See S/2020/390.

#### *Arria-formula meetings*

As provided for in the note by the President dated 30 August 2017, Arria-formula meetings are utilized by members of the Council as “a flexible and informal forum” for enhancing their deliberations and their contact with civil society and non-governmental organizations.<sup>73</sup> In accordance with the note, Council members may invite, on an informal basis, any Member State, relevant organization or individual to participate in Arria-formula meetings. During the period under review, Council members held 22 Arria-formula meetings, 18 of which were held virtually (81.8 per cent), of which 17 were open and 1 was closed. Of the 17 open Arria-formula meetings held virtually, 10 were broadcast on United Nations Web TV, with the remainder utilizing other platforms. Of the four Arria-formula meetings held in person, three were open and one was closed.

In 2020, a number of Arria-formula meetings featured participants at the ministerial or higher level.<sup>74</sup> On 8 May, Estonia organized a virtual Arria-formula meeting on the subject “Seventy-five years from the end of the Second World War on European soil: lessons learned for preventing future atrocities, responsibility of the Security Council” with the participation of all Council members and 61 Member States. A total of 45 participants were represented at the ministerial

level.<sup>75</sup> On 4 September, Estonia, the United Kingdom and the United States, with additional co-sponsors Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Ukraine, organized a virtual Arria-formula meeting on the topic of “Human rights in Belarus” with the participation of nine Council members and 32 Member States, in which nine Member States were represented at the ministerial level.<sup>76</sup> In some instances, as indicated in table 9, Council members and non-Council members transmitted concept notes and summaries or compilations of statements made by participants during Arria-formula meetings.

In 2020, the nature of Arria-formula meetings and the question of how they should be convened was addressed in three communications from the Russian Federation to the President of the Council. In a letter dated 22 May, the representative of the Russian Federation stated that Estonia, the United Kingdom and the United States had ignored the Arria-formula meeting organized by the Russian Federation on 21 May 2020 on the situation in Crimea and the latter two countries had informed the Secretariat that they objected to the use of United Nations webcasting or archiving of the meeting. The representative noted that even though Arria-formula meetings were not official or informal meetings of the Council, the Russian Federation proceeded from a “tacit understanding” that

<sup>73</sup> See S/2017/507, annex, para. 98.

<sup>74</sup> See, for example, S/2020/458, S/2020/900 and S/2020/1169.

<sup>75</sup> See S/2020/458.

<sup>76</sup> See S/2020/900.

all Council members participated in such events, regardless of whether they approved or disapproved of its topic or spirit. In that sense, the Russian Federation distinguished Arria-formula meetings from informal interactive dialogues, where participation was understood to be voluntary. He noted the decision of his delegation to abstain from participating in the Arria-formula meeting on cybersecurity organized by Estonia on 22 May 2020 and attached his statement which was to be delivered at the meeting as an annex to the letter. The representative further said that the Russian Federation reserved the right to object to the webcasting and archiving of any future Arria-formula meeting, until Council members returned to the mutually accepted solutions.<sup>77</sup>

In a letter dated 4 June 2020, the representative of the Russian Federation expressed the view that the summary of the Arria-formula meeting on “Seventy-five years from the end of the Second World War on European soil: lessons learned for preventing future atrocities, responsibility of the Security Council”, held on 8 May, which was prepared by Estonia and circulated as a document of the Council was

“unbalanced” and did not reflect the substance of the statements made by numerous States. He added that his delegation rejected the recommendations and the conclusions set out in the aforementioned summary, which he noted were not agreed with the members of the Council and belonged solely to the Estonian delegation.<sup>78</sup>

In a letter dated 11 December 2020, drawing attention to certain aspects of holding Arria-formula meetings, the representative of the Russian Federation stated that there had been a long-standing tradition among members of the Council to participate in Arria-formula meetings organized by their colleagues out of respect, whether they approved or disapproved of the topic. He added that some members of the Council were attempting to impede the holding of Arria-formula meeting that they did not like by choosing not to participate and trying to limit their audience by objecting to their webcast through the United Nations Web TV platform.<sup>79</sup>

Arria-formula meetings held during the period under review are listed in table 9.

<sup>77</sup> See [S/2020/438](#).

<sup>78</sup> See [S/2020/502](#).

<sup>79</sup> See [S/2020/1200](#).

Table 9  
Arria-formula meetings, 2020

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Organizer(s)</i>	<i>Concept note</i>	<i>Summary</i>
20 January 2020	Implementation of resolution <a href="#">2118 (2013)</a> : Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) fact-finding mission report on Douma	Russian Federation	–	<a href="#">S/2020/96</a>
19 February 2020	Briefing by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic	Estonia, Germany, United Kingdom	–	–
21 February 2020	Reprisals against women human rights defenders and women peacebuilders who engage with the Council and its subsidiary bodies	Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, United Kingdom	–	–
6 March 2020	Human rights situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine	Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States	–	–
22 April 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Climate and security risks: the latest data. What can the United Nations do to prevent climate-related conflicts and how can we climate-proof United Nations in-country activities?	Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, Viet Nam	–	<a href="#">S/2020/392</a>

**Part II. Provisional rules of procedure and  
related procedural developments**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Organizer(s)</i>	<i>Concept note</i>	<i>Summary</i>
8 May 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Seventy-five years from the end of the Second World War on European soil: lessons learned for preventing future atrocities, responsibility of the Security Council	Estonia	<a href="#">S/2020/352</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/458</a>
21 May 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Follow-up on the Arria-formula discussion of 6 March 2020 on the situation in Crimea	Russian Federation	–	<a href="#">S/2020/530</a>
22 May 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Cyberstability, conflict prevention and capacity-building	Estonia, Belgium, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Kenya	<a href="#">S/2020/389</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/643</a>
15 July 2020 <sup>a</sup>	The illegal exploitation of natural resources in the Great Lakes region: how to translate the ongoing positive regional momentum into new options for conflict prevention, management and reform	Belgium, South Africa, United States	–	–
27 July 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Women and the Afghan peace process: ensuring women's participation and promoting their rights	Afghanistan, Germany, Indonesia, United Kingdom	–	<a href="#">S/2020/783</a>
26 August 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Cyberattacks against critical infrastructure	Belgium, Estonia, Indonesia, Viet Nam, International Committee of the Red Cross	–	–
4 September 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Human rights in Belarus	Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States	–	<a href="#">S/2020/900</a>
9 September 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Implementation of resolutions on youth and peace and security by United Nations peace operations	Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United States	–	–
28 September 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Implementation of resolution <a href="#">2118 (2013)</a> : upholding the authority of OPCW	China, Russian Federation	–	<a href="#">S/2020/1197</a>
2 October 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Access to education in conflict and post conflict contexts: role of digital technology and connectivity	Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa	–	–
9 October 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Mandating peace: enhancing the mediation sensitivity and effectiveness of the Security Council	Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Viet Nam	<a href="#">S/2020/983</a>	–
20 November 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Peace process in Afghanistan: what can the Security Council do to support the peace process in Afghanistan?	Afghanistan, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Norway, Qatar	–	<a href="#">S/2020/1169</a>
24 November 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Commemoration of the 25-year anniversary of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Russian Federation	–	–

## Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2020

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Organizer(s)</i>	<i>Concept note</i>	<i>Summary</i>
25 and 26 November 2020 <sup>a</sup>	End unilateral coercive measures now	China, Niger, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa	–	<a href="#">S/2020/1172</a>
2 December 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Implementation of the 2015 Minsk Package of Measures on the settlement in Ukraine: a year since Paris “Normandie” Summit	Russian Federation	–	–
3 December 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on the human rights situation in Yemen	Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany	–	–
9 December 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Youth and peace and security: capitalizing on intergenerational dialogue to build and sustain peace and enhance social cohesion at community levels	Dominican Republic, France, Ireland, Kenya, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia	–	–

<sup>a</sup> Held by videoconference.

### *Other informal meetings*

Following the practice started in 2007, the Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union held their fifth joint informal seminar and fourteenth annual joint consultative meeting, which were conducted by videoconference on 29 and 30 September 2020.<sup>80</sup>

## D. Discussions concerning meetings

During the period under review, questions pertaining to the meetings of the Council and videoconferences were raised in a letter dated 30 March 2020 addressed to the President of the Council from the representative of Switzerland, writing on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group. While welcoming the active discussions within the Council and proactive efforts, including by the Council’s presidency, to adapt the working methods to the extraordinary circumstances, the representative of Switzerland expressed concern that the videoconferences conducted at the end of March 2020 had not been included in the Council’s programme of work, officially announced or webcast. In that regard, the Group called for, among other measures, the inclusion of all virtual meetings in the Council’s programme of work and the improvement of

the videoconferencing network system to allow for videoconferencing sessions to be broadcast by United Nations webcast, adding that all virtual meetings of the Council taking place in lieu of discussions in the open chamber should be accessible online to the public.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, Council members and the wider membership discussed issues pertaining to the meetings of the Council and other forms of informal gatherings of members of the Council, in the context of an open videoconference, during the annual open debate on the working methods of the Council held on 15 May (see case 1).

### Case 1

#### **Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)**

On 15 May, at the joint initiative of Estonia, which held the presidency of the Council for the month, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, whose representative held the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions,<sup>82</sup> Council members convened an open videoconference<sup>83</sup> on the working methods of the Council in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”, focusing on the issue of ensuring transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the work of the Council. Council members were briefed by the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in her capacity as the Chair of the

<sup>80</sup> See [A/75/2](#). Previously, the two Councils had met on 21 October 2019 in Addis Ababa (see [S/2019/825](#) and [S/2020/192](#)). For information on prior practice concerning the informal joint meetings of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2008–2009 to Supplement 2019*.

<sup>81</sup> See [S/2020/252](#).

<sup>82</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 7 May 2020 ([S/2020/374](#)).

<sup>83</sup> See [S/2020/418](#).



Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions, the Executive Director of Security Council Report, and Edward Luck, the Arnold A. Saltzman Professor of Professional Practice in International and Public Affairs of Columbia University. At the videoconference, six Council members delivered statements.<sup>84</sup> In addition, written statements were submitted by 41 Member States.<sup>85</sup>

Members and non-members of the Council exchanged views about the nature and format of meetings and other Council activities and their impact on efficiency, effectiveness, inclusivity and interactivity in the work of the Council. They also discussed the virtual working methods of the Council adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic and how to ensure the continued functioning of the Council in future extraordinary circumstances.

Regarding the format of meetings, a number of delegations<sup>86</sup> expressed the view that the Council should hold more public meetings. Some participants<sup>87</sup> urged the Council to keep closed meetings and informal consultations of the whole to a minimum, as meaningful participation of Member States with a legitimate stake in the Council's deliberations ensured transparency throughout the decision-making process. Some<sup>88</sup> stressed that private meetings and informal consultations should be seen as exceptions and suggested that the Council should prioritize holding public meetings.

In contrast, the representative of France underscored that private discussions were needed for the Council to be efficient and effective in reaching consensus on difficult issues and that finding a better balance between public discussions and closed consultations would ensure the effectiveness of the Council in its deliberations. He called for greater use of private informal formats such as informal interactive dialogues, Arria-formula meetings and private formal meetings to engage directly and constructively with the

countries and parties concerned. The representative of the United Kingdom noted that a significant challenge lay in maintaining an appropriate balance between open and closed meetings and that achieving the right balance required Council members to approach the monthly programme of work with an open mind and avoid the trap of following the same format each time an issue appeared on the agenda. He added that the assumption that closed meetings were more effective did not always hold true. Instead he noted that to be effective, Council members had to enter those meetings with a willingness to engage in a discussion and consider action. Similarly, speaking on behalf of 24 former elected members of the Council, the representative of New Zealand stated that Council members should reflect on the ever-increasing workload and proliferation of meetings and that the Council should be prepared to innovate and adapt to ensure that it was making the best use of its time. The representative of Nigeria said that the working methods of the Council should be tailored to ensure that conflicts on its agenda, as well as emerging threats, were addressed within their time frames and at meetings designed, in terms of format and focus, to bring about the best chance of a meaningful outcome from the Council's deliberations.

Many speakers<sup>89</sup> specifically acknowledged the importance of open debates for enhancing inclusivity and legitimacy of the Council's work. Speaking on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, the representative of Switzerland encouraged the separation of open debates from the work on and adoption of a related outcome, as this would allow the wider membership to inform Council deliberations rather than merely to accompany the adoption of pre-defined Council outcomes. He further noted the need for more open debates on country situations. The delegation of Guatemala welcomed the overall increasing trend of public Council meetings through the holding of open debates, which promoted the wider participation of non-Council members. Expressing encouragement for the full and active participation of all interested Member States in the context of the extraordinary circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, several delegations<sup>90</sup> highlighted the need for open debates to be accessible in all official languages. The representative of Morocco stressed the importance of regularly holding open debates on the working methods of the Council, as continued discussion of that issue was of interest to all Member States.

<sup>84</sup> Viet Nam spoke on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Council.

<sup>85</sup> Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Ukraine.

<sup>86</sup> Australia, Brazil, Egypt, El Salvador, Italy, Philippines, Malta and Nigeria.

<sup>87</sup> Brazil, Cuba and Turkey.

<sup>88</sup> Brazil and Cuba.

<sup>89</sup> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Australia, Bahrain, El Salvador, Guatemala, Japan and Morocco.

<sup>90</sup> Canada and El Salvador.

Some delegations touched upon the need for transparency and effectiveness of informal consultations of the whole. The representative of Cuba called for the issuance of minutes of informal consultations. While noting the need to improve informal consultations, the representative of Nigeria stated that meeting behind closed doors provided the opportunity for Council members to engage informally with the aim of achieving concrete results. The delegation of Cyprus suggested that when the Council discussed a situation in closed consultations, it should first invite the affected State to offer its perspective before having its own deliberations. The representative of Malaysia called on the Council to produce summaries of closed consultations which could be shared with the broader membership. Speaking on behalf of 24 former elected members of the Council, the representative of New Zealand suggested that Member States should utilize situational awareness briefings and make requests under “any other business” to ensure that emerging threats were addressed in a timely manner. The representative of Malaysia suggested that the Council should request more early warning and situational awareness briefings from the Secretariat. The delegation of Australia echoed that point and proposed that horizon-scanning and situational awareness briefings should include input from the Peacebuilding Commission. The representative of the United Kingdom expressed support for informal horizon-scanning briefings and the development of “sofa talks” to address the challenge of the Council spending too much time in lengthy meetings that addressed the “conflicts of yesterday” rather than shouldering its responsibility to prevent future conflict. He added that informal discussions were no substitute for Council meetings, not least for reasons of transparency.

Several delegations<sup>91</sup> expressed appreciation or called for the greater use of Arria-formula meetings. The representative of El Salvador stated that Arria-formula meetings provided a space for dialogue with actors directly involved in various situations that threatened international peace, security and stability. However, they could not replace formal Council meetings. The delegation of Guatemala stated that the holding of numerous Arria-formula meetings had enabled the Council to obtain more truthful information and thus be more effective in upholding its responsibility to maintain international peace and security. The delegation of Canada, suggesting that the Council could do more to institutionalize linkages with

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<sup>91</sup> France, Australia, Guatemala, Malaysia, Nigeria and Singapore.

the Peacebuilding Commission, welcomed the practice of informal interactive dialogues between the Commission and the Council on countries and regions where both organs had important roles to play.

Members and non-members of the Council welcomed the adoption by Council members of the new working methods during the COVID-19 pandemic, thereby ensuring the continued functioning of the Council. Speaking on behalf of the elected members of the Council, the representative of Viet Nam stated that the pandemic had underlined the need for the Council to be more responsive, effective and agile to ensure its continuous functioning as mandated by the Charter. He added that during the crisis greater efforts had to be made to guarantee the Council’s ability to conduct its work continuously in accordance with normal procedures and practices. Recalling Article 28 of the Charter, which required the Council to function continuously, the representative of the United Kingdom expressed regret that the working methods had not been able to respond to the crisis in a more agile and effective way. Owing to a lack of consensus in the Council, neither the Council nor its subsidiary bodies had held formal meetings since 12 March, which led to not having verbatim transcripts of meetings. He further expressed regret that the technical platform had not been able to accommodate simultaneous interpretation or open debates and continued to suffer from technical glitches. He also noted that meetings were conducted without the benefit of the established framework of the provisional rules of procedure and the mechanisms for resolution of disagreements that they provided. By contrast, the representative of the Russian Federation expressed the view that the Council was functioning rather well under the circumstances and called for keeping the agreed *modus operandi*. The representative of Lebanon asserted that, even though the Council had been able to adapt its work through improved technology platforms, namely videoconferences, the online meetings could not permanently replace in-person meetings and should only be applied during extraordinary and unprecedented circumstances.

Several delegations<sup>92</sup> maintained that open and closed videoconferences should be considered formal meetings of the Council. The delegation of Ukraine noted that it was particularly important to hold open videoconferences whenever possible in the current circumstances and that closed videoconferences should be the exception rather than the rule. The representative of Switzerland argued that Council

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<sup>92</sup> Australia, Norway (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Poland and Switzerland (on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group).

videoconferences should be included in the formal programme of work. The delegations of Austria, New Zealand and Switzerland called for the inclusion of videoconferences in the *Journal of the United Nations*. The delegation of Brazil stated that due attention should be given to the announcement and webcasting of virtual meetings, so as to ensure that all Member States knew what was being discussed in the Council. Many speakers welcomed the organization by Estonia of the Arria-formula meeting on “Seventy-five years from the end of the Second World War on European soil”, which was held by videoconference on 8 May. They described the videoconference as an example of the successful use of new and innovative digital solutions to make meetings publicly accessible and to promote transparency and inclusivity in the extraordinary circumstances posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>93</sup> The delegation of Ukraine called for a more concerted effort to prepare substantive elements for the press following closed videoconferences.

The delegation of Australia recommended that the Secretariat record open and closed videoconferences. The representatives of Ireland and Liechtenstein called for the introduction of formal records of Council videoconferences. The representative of the United Kingdom stated that it was important for Council members to agree on the status of videoconferences so that verbatim transcripts could be produced. The representative of the Russian Federation maintained that the Council had its records, which were just called a different name under those circumstances for legal reasons and that should not be ignored.

The representative of the United Kingdom stated that going forward the Council needed to consider how to put contingency plans into place to ensure it could respond more quickly and effectively to future crises. The representative of Switzerland, speaking on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, noted the expectation that the Council would in the future be prepared to switch instantly to a virtual mode and to otherwise effectively adapt to any other situation where physical meetings were again not possible. The representative of China expressed support for the Council to improve itself on the basis of observing the Charter and its provisional rules of procedure so as to better address new circumstances and challenges in discharging its mandate. The

representative of Poland called for ensuring the continuous, transparent, effective, efficient and agile functioning of the Council, during both ordinary and exceptional circumstances, in line with the Charter, including Articles 24 (1) and 28 (1), the Council’s provisional rules of procedure, presidential notes on its working methods and other relevant documents and practices. The representative of the Russian Federation expressed the view that contingency plans had already been developed and that further contingency plans were needed for the operation and functioning of the Council in the post “lockdown” environment.

## E. Records

During the period under review, verbatim records were issued following each public meeting of the Council in accordance with rule 49 of the provisional rules of procedure and communiqués were issued following private meetings in accordance with rule 55. No questions were raised at Council meetings regarding the application of rules 49 to 57 in connection with the preparation, access to and issuance of verbatim records, communiqués or other documents.

In 2020, however, as part of the working methods of the Council adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was agreed that, until the situation changed, verbatim records of videoconferences would not be published.<sup>94</sup> That agreement notwithstanding, in order to ensure the transparency of videoconferences, it was also agreed that the President of the Council would, within 48 hours, circulate as a document of the Council a compilation document containing the interventions of the briefers and those of the members and non-members of the Council participating in the videoconference who requested the inclusion of their statements in the document. That would not apply, however, to videoconferences of the members of the Council that were announced in advance as closed videoconferences.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, the records and other information relating to videoconferences were published on the website of the Council and the webcasts of the statements delivered during open videoconferences continued to be made publicly available and archived as United Nations webcasts.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>93</sup> United Kingdom, Austria, Ecuador, Liechtenstein, United Arab Emirates and Ukraine.

<sup>94</sup> See [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>95</sup> See [S/2020/253](#), [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>96</sup> See [S/2020/372](#).

### III. Agenda

#### Note

Section III deals with the practice of the Council concerning the agenda, in relation to rules 6 to 12 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council.

#### Rule 6

*The Secretary-General shall immediately bring to the attention of all representatives on the Security Council all communications from States, organs of the United Nations, or the Secretary-General concerning any matter for the consideration of the Security Council in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.*

#### Rule 7

*The provisional agenda for each meeting of the Security Council shall be drawn up by the Secretary-General and approved by the President of the Security Council.*

*Only items which have been brought to the attention of the representatives on the Security Council in accordance with rule 6, items covered by rule 10, or matters which the Security Council had previously decided to defer, may be included in the provisional agenda.*

#### Rule 8

*The provisional agenda for a meeting shall be communicated by the Secretary-General to the representatives on the Security Council at least three days before the meeting, but in urgent circumstances it may be communicated simultaneously with the notice of the meeting.*

#### Rule 9

*The first item of the provisional agenda for each meeting of the Security Council shall be the adoption of the agenda.*

#### Rule 10

*Any item on the agenda of a meeting of the Security Council, consideration of which has not been completed at that meeting, shall, unless the Security Council otherwise decides, automatically be included in the agenda of the next meeting.*

#### Rule 11

*The Secretary-General shall communicate each week to the representatives on the Security Council a summary statement of matters of which the Security Council is seized and of the stage reached in their consideration.*

#### Rule 12

*The provisional agenda for each periodic meeting shall be circulated to the members of the Security Council at least twenty-one days before the opening of the meeting. Any subsequent change in or addition to the provisional agenda shall be brought to the notice of the members at least five days before the meeting. The Security Council may, however, in urgent circumstances, make additions to the Agenda at any time during a periodic meeting.*

*The provisions of rule 7, paragraph 1, and of rule 9, shall apply also to periodic meetings.*

During the period under review, the Secretary-General continued the practice of distributing communications from States, from organs of the United Nations or from himself concerning any matter for the consideration of the Council, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and pursuant to rule 6 of the provisional rules of procedure. The Secretary-General also continued to draw up a provisional agenda for each meeting of the Council and to communicate the provisional agenda to the representatives on the Council, in accordance with rules 7 and 8. As provided for in the letters from the President of the Council of 2 April and 7 May 2020,<sup>97</sup> presidencies worked “in the spirit of” the Council’s provisional rules of procedure, ensuring, *inter alia*, that the agenda was adopted at the outset of the videoconference, pursuant to rule 9, and that any other relevant rules were observed as a matter of practice, under chapter VI, entitled “Conduct of business”.

The practice relating to the circulation of communications or the preparation of the provisional agenda was not discussed or questioned during the period under review. No periodic meetings were held in 2020 and rule 12 was not applied. The present section is focused on the practice and discussion regarding rules 9 to 11 and is organized under the following three main headings: A. Adoption of the agenda (rule 9); B. Matters of which the Security Council is seized (rules 10 and 11); and C. Discussions concerning the agenda.

<sup>97</sup> See [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#).

## A. Adoption of the agenda (rule 9)

In accordance with rule 9 of the provisional rules of procedure, the first item of the agenda for each meeting of the Council is the adoption of the agenda.

### *Voting on the adoption of the agenda*

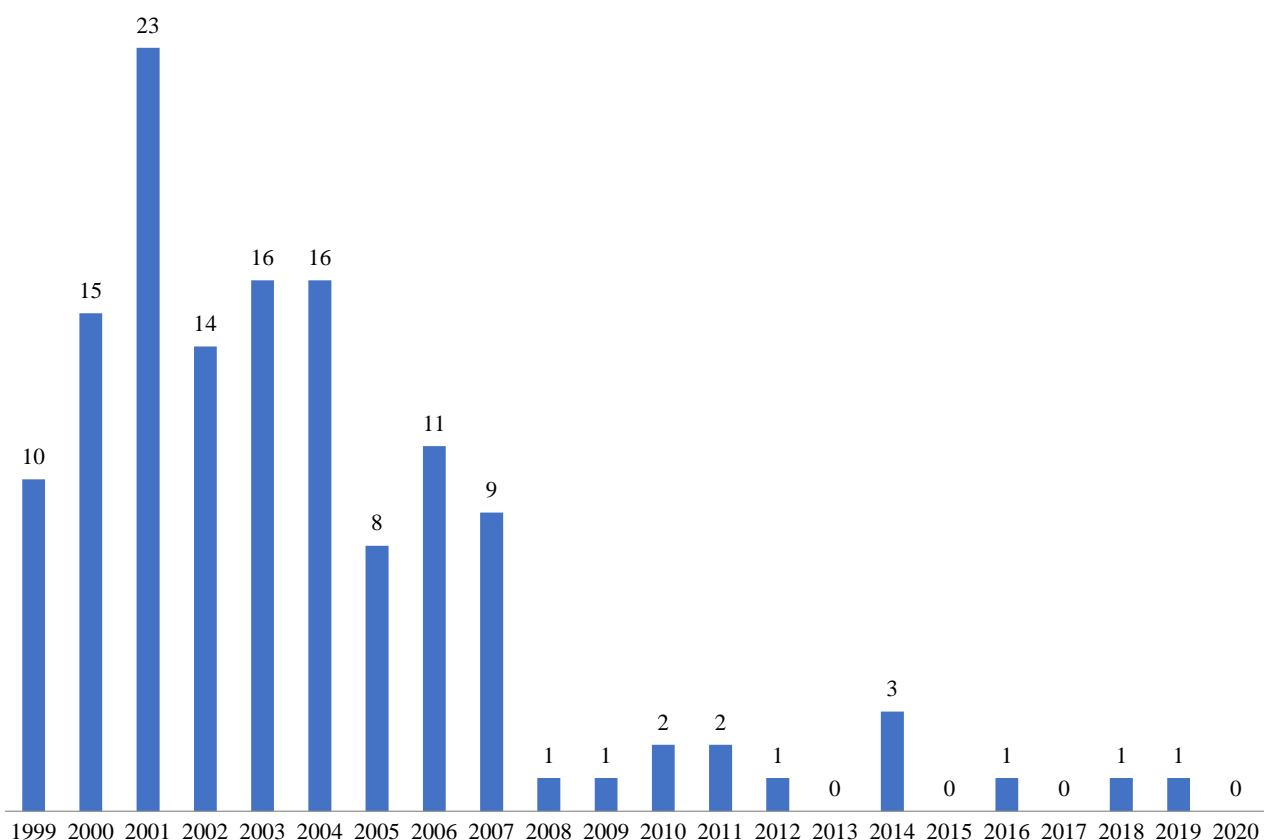
In 2020, no objection was raised to the adoption of the agenda.

### *Newly introduced agenda items*

During the period under review, the Council did not introduce any new items to the list of matters of which it was seized.

From 1999 to 2007, the Council added between 8 and 23 new items to its agenda every year. Since 2008, however, the number of new items introduced each year has decreased significantly, with no more than three new items introduced in any given year. Figure III provides information on the number of newly introduced agenda items per year since 1999.

Figure III  
Number of newly introduced agenda items per year, 1999–2020



### *Consideration of country-specific situations under existing items of a regional nature and region-specific situations under existing thematic items*

During the period under review, the Council continued the practice of using existing items of a regional nature for the consideration of evolving country-specific situations. For example, Council members continued to consider the situations in the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and Yemen under the items entitled “The situation in the Middle East” and

“The situation concerning the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”.<sup>98</sup> In 2020, under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”, Council members also considered the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).<sup>99</sup>

The Council also considered country- and region-specific situations under thematic items on its agenda. For example, Council members addressed the situation in the Persian Gulf region at an open videoconference

<sup>98</sup> For more information, see part I, sects. 20 and 21.

<sup>99</sup> See [S/2020/837](#).

held in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”.<sup>100</sup> Under the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”, the Council deliberated on region-specific situations under the sub-items entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations” and the “Role of the International Organisation of La Francophonie”.<sup>101</sup> Council members also continued to discuss the work of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da’esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant established pursuant to resolution [2379 \(2017\)](#) under the item entitled, “Threats to international peace and security”.<sup>102</sup>

*Inclusion of new sub-items under existing items*

During the period under review, the Council continued its practice of adding new sub-items to existing items for the consideration of evolving general

and cross-border threats to international peace and security. As described in more detail in section I above, videoconferences, whether open or closed, were not considered formal meetings of the Council for all relevant purposes, including the agenda of the Council and their subsequent inclusion in the summary statement of the Secretary-General on items of which the Council is seized.<sup>103</sup> Accordingly, while the Secretary-General continued to notify the General Assembly of the matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security which were being dealt with by the Council in the context of meetings, he did not do so when those matters were discussed in the context of open videoconferences.<sup>104</sup> Similarly, videoconferences were focused on a variety of topics that were not considered as formal sub-items. Tables 10 and 11 list a selection of new sub-items and topics introduced in 2020 in chronological order of their introduction.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>103</sup> For more information, see part IV, sect. I.C.

<sup>104</sup> See [A/75/300](#).

<sup>105</sup> The tables exclude cases of routine sub-items relating to briefings by Council missions, briefings by the Chairs of the Council committees, letters addressed to the President of the Council, reports of the Secretary-General and meetings of the Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#), annex II, sections A and B.

<sup>100</sup> See [S/2020/1037](#). For more information, see part I, sect. 35.

<sup>101</sup> See [S/PV.8711](#) and [S/2020/893](#). For more information, see part I, sect. 36.

<sup>102</sup> See [S/2020/547](#) and [S/2020/1193](#). For more information, see part I, sect. 34.

Table 10  
New sub-items added to existing items at formal meetings, 2020

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>New sub-item</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.8699</a> 9 January 2020 <sup>a</sup>	Maintenance of international peace and security	Upholding the United Nations Charter
<a href="#">S/PV.8711</a> 30 January 2020	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<a href="#">S/PV.8721</a> 12 February 2020	Children and armed conflict	Integrating child protection into peace processes
<a href="#">S/PV.8723</a> 13 February 2020	Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	Transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict situations
<a href="#">S/PV.8733</a> 26 February 2020	Non-proliferation	Supporting the Non-Proliferation Treaty ahead of the 2020 Review Conference
<a href="#">S/PV.8743</a> 11 March 2020	Peace and security in Africa	Countering terrorism and extremism in Africa
<a href="#">S/PV.8756</a> 10 September 2020	Children and armed conflict	Attacks against schools as a grave violation of children’s rights

<sup>a</sup> The 8699th meeting was resumed on 10 and 13 January 2020 (see [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#)).



Table 11  
New topics introduced in connection with existing items at open videoconferences, 2020

<i>Videoconference record and date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Topic</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/340</a> 21 April 2020	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	Protection of civilians from conflict-induced hunger
<a href="#">S/2020/418</a> 15 May 2020	Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2017/507</a> )	Ensuring transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the work of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/663</a> 2 July 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Implications of COVID-19
<a href="#">S/2020/674</a> 7 July 2020	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Peace operations and human rights
<a href="#">S/2020/727</a> 17 July 2020	Women and peace and security	Conflict-related sexual violence
<a href="#">S/2020/751</a> 24 July 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Climate and security
<a href="#">S/2020/799</a> 12 August 2020	Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	Pandemics and the challenges of sustaining peace
<a href="#">S/2020/893</a> 8 September 2020	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	Role of the International Organisation of La Francophonie
<a href="#">S/2020/929</a> 17 September 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Humanitarian effects of environmental degradation and peace and security
<a href="#">S/2020/953</a> 24 September 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Global governance after COVID-19
<a href="#">S/2020/1037</a> 20 October 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Comprehensive review of the situation in the Persian Gulf region
<a href="#">S/2020/1090</a> 3 November 2020	Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	Contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity
<a href="#">S/2020/1286</a> 21 December 2020	The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security	Strengthening the cooperation between the Security Council and the International Court of Justice

## B. Matters of which the Security Council is seized (rules 10 and 11)

During the period under review, pursuant to rule 11 of the provisional rules of procedure and the note by the President dated 30 August 2017,<sup>106</sup> the Secretary-General continued to communicate each week to the members on the Council a summary statement of matters of which the Council was seized and of the stage reached in their consideration.<sup>107</sup> The

practice of including an agenda item in the summary statement upon its adoption at a formal meeting of the Council remained unchanged. As explained above, however, since videoconferences were not considered formal meetings of the Council, the Secretary-General did not include in his weekly summary statement of matters of which the Council was seized those matters that were discussed in the context of open videoconferences.

In accordance with the note by the President dated 30 August 2017, the preliminary annual summary statement of matters of which the Council is seized

<sup>106</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, paras. 13 and 14.

<sup>107</sup> See, for example, [S/2020/10/Add.1](#) and [S/2020/10/Add.2](#).

issued by the Secretary-General in January each year, identifies the items that have not been considered by the Council during the preceding three calendar years and which are therefore subject to deletion. An item is deleted unless a Member State notifies the President of the Council, by the end of February, of its request that the item be retained on the list, in which case the item will remain on the list for an additional year. If no Member State requests the item's retention on the list, the first summary statement issued in March of that year reflects its deletion.<sup>108</sup>

During the period under review, in accordance with rule 11 and the note by the President dated 30 August 2017, the Council continued the practice of reviewing the summary statement at the beginning of each year in order to determine whether the Council had concluded its consideration of any items.<sup>109</sup> In 2020, of the 13 items identified for deletion in January, none were deleted and all were retained for one additional year at the request of Member States, as shown in table 12.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>108</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, paras. 15 and 16.

<sup>109</sup> See [S/2020/10](#).

<sup>110</sup> See [S/2020/10/Add.9](#).

Table 12  
Items proposed for deletion from the summary statement, 2020

<i>Item</i>	<i>Date of first and last consideration</i>	<i>Status in March 2020</i>
The India-Pakistan question	6 January 1948; 5 November 1965	Retained
The Hyderabad question	16 September 1948; 24 May 1949	Retained
Letter dated 20 February 1958 from the representative of the Sudan addressed to the Secretary-General	21 February 1958; 21 February 1958	Retained
Letter dated 11 July 1960 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba addressed to the President of the Security Council	18 July 1960; 5 January 1961	Retained
Letter dated 31 December 1960 from the Minister for External Affairs of Cuba addressed to the President of the Security Council	4 January 1961; 5 January 1961	Retained
The situation in the India/Pakistan subcontinent	4 December 1971; 27 December 1971	Retained
Letter dated 3 December 1971 from the Permanent Representatives of Algeria, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	9 December 1971; 9 December 1971	Retained
Complaint by Cuba	17 September 1973; 18 September 1973	Retained
The situation between Iran and Iraq	26 September 1980; 31 January 1991	Retained
Letter dated 1 October 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	2 October 1985; 4 October 1985	Retained
Letter dated 19 April 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	21 April 1988; 25 April 1988	Retained
Letter dated 2 February 1990 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	9 February 1990; 9 February 1990	Retained
The situation in Georgia	8 October 1992; 15 June 2009	Retained

*Items considered at Security Council meetings*

The Council remained seized of 69 items during the review period.<sup>111</sup> Out of the 69 items, the Council considered 29 items at its formal meetings, of which 18 were country- or region-specific and 11 were thematic. Council members also considered 35 items in the context of open videoconferences, of which 20 were country- or region-specific and 15 were thematic.<sup>112</sup> Council members considered a total of 42 items at meetings and videoconferences held in 2020, compared

with a total of 49 in 2019. Out of the 42 items, 23 addressed country-specific or regional situations and 19 addressed thematic or other issues.<sup>113</sup> In accordance with the letter from the President of the Council dated 2 April 2020, which provided that there was “no agreement to consider the discussions of the Council held on the virtual platform as formal meetings”, the consideration of items in videoconferences was not reflected in the summary statement of items of which the Council was seized nor in the annual communication to the General Assembly pursuant to Article 12 of the Charter.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>111</sup> See [S/2020/10](#).

<sup>112</sup> The total figure of 15 thematic items excludes the item entitled “Non-proliferation/Democratic People’s Republic of Korea” since it was not considered in an open videoconference in 2020 and resolution [2515 \(2020\)](#) under the item was not announced at an open videoconference owing to technical difficulties. For more information, see part I, sect. 32.B. Following established practice to hold private meetings under the item entitled “Briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice”, the Council members heard the annual briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice on 28 October 2020 in a closed videoconference.

Table 13 provides an overview of the items on the agenda of the Council and the items considered at formal meetings of the Council and discussed at open videoconferences in 2020.

<sup>113</sup> In 2020, the Council considered one item, entitled “Election of five members of the International Court of Justice”, that had not been on the list of items of which the Council was seized ([S/PV.8773](#)).

<sup>114</sup> See [S/2020/273](#). For further details, see sect. III.A above and part IV, sect. I.C.

Table 13

**Items on the agenda of the Council and their consideration at formal meetings and discussion at open videoconferences, 2020**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Considered at a formal meeting</i>	<i>Discussed at an open videoconference</i>
<b>Country-specific and regional situations</b>		
<b>Africa</b>		
Central African region	No	Yes
Letter dated 20 February 1958 from the representative of the Sudan addressed to the Secretary-General	No	No
Letter dated 1 October 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	No	No
Letter dated 19 April 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	No	No
Peace and security in Africa	Yes	Yes
Peace consolidation in West Africa	Yes	Yes
Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Yes	Yes
The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Yes	Yes
The situation concerning Western Sahara	No	Yes
The situation in Burundi	No	No
The situation in Côte d’Ivoire	No	No
The situation in the Great Lakes region	Yes	Yes

**Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2020**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Considered at a formal meeting</i>	<i>Discussed at an open videoconference</i>
The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Yes	No
The situation in Liberia	No	No
The situation in Libya	Yes	Yes
The situation in Mali	Yes	Yes
The situation in Somalia	Yes	Yes
The situation in the Central African Republic	Yes	Yes
<b>Americas</b>		
Letter dated 11 July 1960 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba addressed to the President of the Security Council	No	No
Letter dated 31 December 1960 from the Minister for External Affairs of Cuba addressed to the President of the Security Council	No	No
Complaint by Cuba	No	No
Letter dated 2 February 1990 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	No	No
Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2016/53</a> )	Yes	Yes
The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	No	Yes
The question concerning Haiti	Yes	Yes
<b>Asia</b>		
The situation in Afghanistan	Yes	Yes
The situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	No	No
The Hyderabad question	No	No
The India-Pakistan question	No	No
The situation in the India/Pakistan subcontinent	No	No
The situation in Myanmar	No	No
<b>Europe</b>		
The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina	No	Yes
The situation in Cyprus	Yes	No
The situation in Georgia	No	No
Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2014/136</a> )	No	No
Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2014/264</a> )	Yes	No
Security Council resolutions <a href="#">1160 (1998)</a> , <a href="#">1199 (1998)</a> , <a href="#">1203 (1998)</a> , <a href="#">1239 (1999)</a> and <a href="#">1244 (1999)</a>	No	Yes

**Part II. Provisional rules of procedure and  
related procedural developments**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Considered at a formal meeting</i>	<i>Discussed at an open videoconference</i>
Letter dated 13 March 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2018/218</a> )	No	No
<b>Middle East</b>		
Letter dated 3 December 1971 from the Permanent Representatives of Algeria, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/10409</a> )	No	No
The situation between Iran and Iraq	No	No
The situation concerning Iraq	Yes	Yes
The situation between Iraq and Kuwait	No	No
The situation in the Middle East	Yes	Yes
The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question	Yes	Yes
<b>Total, country-specific and regional situations</b>	<b>18 items</b>	<b>20 items</b>
<b>Thematic and other issues</b>		
Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe	Yes	No
Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council	No	Yes
Briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice	No	No
Briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator	No	No
Briefing by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	No	Yes
Children and armed conflict	Yes	Yes
Consideration of the draft report of the Security Council to the General Assembly	Yes	No
Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	Yes	Yes
General issues relating to sanctions	No	No
Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2017/507</a> )	No	Yes
International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals	Yes	Yes
Maintenance of international peace and security	Yes	Yes
Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1353 (2001)</a> , annex II, sections A and B	Yes	No
Non-proliferation	Yes	Yes
Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea	No	No <sup>a</sup>
Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction	No	No
Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	Yes	Yes
The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security	No	Yes

<i>Item</i>	<i>Considered at a formal meeting</i>	<i>Discussed at an open videoconference</i>
Protection of civilians in armed conflict	No	Yes
Security Council mission	No	No
Small arms	Yes	No
Threats to international peace and security	No	Yes
Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts	Yes	Yes
United Nations peacekeeping operations	No	Yes
Women and peace and security	No	Yes
<b>Total, thematic and other issues</b>	<b>11 items</b>	<b>15 items</b>
<b>Total number of items on the agenda<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>69 items</b>	<b>69 items</b>
<b>Total number of items considered</b>	<b>29 items</b>	<b>35 items</b>

<sup>a</sup> Owing to technical difficulties, instead of an open videoconference to announce the vote on resolution [2515 \(2020\)](#) the videoconference was closed.

<sup>b</sup> In 2020, the Council considered one item, entitled “Election of five members of the International Court of Justice”, that had not been on the list of items of which the Council was seized ([S/PV.8773](#)).

### C. Discussions concerning the agenda

During the period under review, Council members discussed the agenda and matters of which the Council was seized in several meetings and videoconferences.

At the 8699th meeting of the Council, held on 9, 10 and 13 January under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and the sub-item entitled “Upholding the United Nations Charter”, the representative of Eritrea said that with regard to the Council’s agenda, there was a tendency towards the entrenchment of situations in which Chapter VII had been invoked. Although the Council may have explicitly concluded its consideration of an item and removed it from the list of matters of which the Council was seized, it had done so with great infrequency and, in some instances, matters had remained on the Council’s agenda for extended periods, which led to a lack of clarity in assessing both the purpose and the end point of Council responses to threats to peace.<sup>115</sup> At an open videoconference<sup>116</sup> held on 27 April in connection with the same item and focused on youth and peace and security, the delegation of Canada expressed strong support for the inclusion of youth and peace and security as a standing item on the agenda of the Council. In addition, the representative of Belgium noted his Government’s

commitment to putting the topic of climate and security on the Council’s agenda, underlining the particular vulnerability of younger demographics to the climate crisis.

The agenda of the Council was discussed in more detail at open videoconferences in connection with the items entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#))”<sup>117</sup> (see cases 2 and 3).

#### Case 2 Maintenance of international peace and security

On 24 July, at the initiative of Germany, which held the presidency for the month,<sup>118</sup> Council members held an open videoconference<sup>119</sup> in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, focusing on climate and security. At the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas, the Director of the Centre national d’études stratégiques et de sécurité of the Niger and the Director of Sustainable Pacific Consultancy, Niue. All Council members spoke during

<sup>117</sup> See [S/2020/751](#) and [S/2020/418](#).

<sup>118</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 18 July 2020 ([S/2020/725](#)). For more information on the discussion, see part V, sect. I.B, case 4.

<sup>119</sup> See [S/2020/751](#).

<sup>115</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>116</sup> See [S/2020/346](#).



the videoconference.<sup>120</sup> The representatives of Belize, Denmark, Fiji, Ireland, Kenya, Nauru and the European Union also made statements. In addition, 29 delegations from non-Council members submitted their statements in writing.<sup>121</sup>

During the discussion, some Council members advocated for climate and security to feature regularly on the agenda of the Council.<sup>122</sup> The representative of the Dominican Republic underlined the need for the creation of the necessary mandate to ensure that the topic of the effects of climate change on international peace and security figured regularly on the Council's agenda. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Development Cooperation of Belgium said that, while some did not think that climate change belonged on the Council's agenda, the Council should have a broader role in addressing climate-related security risks, as articulated by Article 1 of the Charter. He expressed support for mechanisms to provide better information and reporting to the Council, as well as the mainstreaming of climate-related security risks into relevant Council action. The Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia of the United Kingdom emphasized that his delegation had kept the issue of climate security high on the Council's agenda since it was first brought to the Council in 2007. Above all, the Council needed an evidence-based approach to climate security threats by which it could tailor solutions to the fragile and conflict-affected States on its agenda.

The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, pointing out that a number of situations on the Council's agenda provided clear evidence that the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events had a tangible impact on security, said that the Council had unfortunately, because of a lack of collective political will, not been able to include climate and security considerations in numerous resolutions. She further encouraged the integration of climate security assessments in all mandated reports of

situations on the Council's agenda and advocated for the appointment of a special representative on climate and security to coordinate response efforts across all pillars of the United Nations system, as well as to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations so as to promote comprehensive action.

In their written contributions, some delegations of non-Council members echoed the call for meetings on climate and security to be held on a regular basis.<sup>123</sup> The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Ireland, advocating for the Council to play its part by addressing the peace and security challenges of climate change, welcomed the announcement of the establishment of an informal group of experts of the Council on climate and security. The delegation of Czechia expressed strong support for the inclusion of debates related to the implications of climate change for international peace and security on the regular agenda of the Council. The delegation of Cyprus considered that the Council had a significant contribution to make, in particular with regard to the prevention of conflicts that could be anticipated as a result of climate change and that the Council could already start to consider the impact of climate change on the conflicts on its agenda. The representative of the United Arab Emirates added that the Council would benefit from enhanced and standardized analysis of the security implications of climate change in situations on the Council's agenda. The representative of Liechtenstein called on the Council to strengthen its engagement on the climate and security nexus through regular briefings and, in the interim, make more systematic references to the impact of global warming on Council situations. In a similar vein, the representative of Portugal expressed his delegation's belief that the time was ripe for the Council to deal with the climate and security nexus in a more systematic way.

Other participants, however, cautioned against adding climate security to the Council's agenda<sup>124</sup> and suggested that the Council approach the issue on a case-by-case basis.<sup>125</sup> The representative of South Africa stated that introducing climate change as a thematic issue on the agenda of the Council would risk diffusing the importance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which held the primary mandate and capabilities to galvanize

<sup>120</sup> The following 11 Council members submitted written statements: Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, United Kingdom and Viet Nam. Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam were represented at the ministerial level.

<sup>121</sup> Brazil, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czechia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tuvalu and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>122</sup> Belgium, Viet Nam, United Kingdom, Dominican Republic, France and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

<sup>123</sup> Fiji, Cyprus, Czechia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Switzerland and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>124</sup> South Africa, Brazil and India.

<sup>125</sup> China and Mexico.

that type of action by the international community and enjoyed universal membership, and detract attention and resources from its work. He noted that there were reasonable questions about when and on what scientific basis the Council would invoke climate change as a contributing factor to a specific conflict situation and where precisely the Council drew the line with respect to incorporating environmental issues into its agenda. The representative of Brazil expressed his country's opinion that while remaining sensitive to the impact of climate change on the most vulnerable countries and considering ways through which development issues could be better integrated into peace efforts, the international community must avoid taking steps that could lead to the "securitization of the climate change agenda" and therefore should proceed with utmost caution before branding emerging concerns as outright threats to international peace and security. Maintaining that the Council was mandated to deal with concrete, immediate threats to international peace and security, the representative of Brazil added that the Council should abstain from adopting blanket statements and instead assess threats to international peace and security on a case-by-case basis. Similarly, the delegation of India emphasized that climate change was a multidimensional issue and therefore viewing it through the narrow prism of security was akin to oversimplifying the issue and taking it out of context. India encouraged the international community to be cautious about securitizing climate change and to strengthen instead the existing mechanisms, not redress the issue through punitive measures administered by the Council. The representative of China stated that the Council, as the organ handling international peace and security, should act in line with the mandates of the relevant resolutions, analyse security challenges and the security implications of climate change for the countries concerned and discuss and handle relevant issues on a country-specific basis. The delegation of Mexico submitted that just as the response to climate change must be guided by the best available scientific knowledge, the Council must have the best analyses, on a case-by-case basis and in specific situations that fell within its competence, which was how the Council's decision-making could be efficient and effective while taking into account the reality on the ground.

### **Case 3 Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)**

On 15 May, at the joint initiative of Estonia, which held the presidency for the month, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, whose representative held

the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions,<sup>126</sup> the Council held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)", focusing on the issue of ensuring transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the working methods of the Council.<sup>127</sup>

During the discussion, the representative of the Russian Federation stressed the importance of the Council sticking to its priorities and focusing on major issues of great urgency representing threats to international peace and security. He further appealed for the Council agenda not to be "overloaded and abused" with the consideration of thematic subjects on the agenda of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council or other United Nations bodies. The representative of China stated that the Council should concentrate on regional and international hotspot issues, promote the political settlement of disputes and continue to keep Africa as its priority. He added that on thematic issues that went beyond its mandate, the Council should work in close coordination with other United Nations bodies, such as the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The representative of Cuba cautioned against the "selective manipulation" of the Security Council's working methods and practices, particularly with regard to introducing issues that were not part of its agenda, and suggested that the Council align its functions with the mandate conferred upon it by the Charter of the United Nations. In that connection, she suggested that the Council should focus on addressing the most urgent problems representing threats to international peace and security and stop interference in matters beyond its purview, in particular those concerning the mandate of the Assembly.

The delegation of Canada maintained that the COVID-19 pandemic carried significant economic repercussions and would have long-lasting impacts on peace and security. This demanded that the Council focus more on conflict prevention and economic security. The delegation of Cyprus called for regular dialogue between Member States on the Council's agenda and the President of the Council, which should provide affected States with information regarding the work of the Council that directly affected them. The representative of Turkey considered better incorporation of conflict prevention into the Council's

<sup>126</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/374).

<sup>127</sup> See S/2020/418. For more information on the videoconference, see case 1 above.

agenda as an improvement to the Council's working methods. He added that there was broad consensus among Member States on the need to enhance efforts for prevention, including through mediation efforts. The representative of the United Kingdom stated that

Council members should continue to subject the Council's programme of work to critical analysis and be prepared to bring new issues to the Council, noting that the COVID-19 crisis meant that the Council's work on prevention was more important than ever.

## IV. Representation and credentials

### Note

Section IV covers the practice of the Council concerning representation and the credentials of its members, in relation to rules 13 to 17 of the provisional rules of procedure.

#### Rule 13

*Each member of the Security Council shall be represented at the meetings of the Security Council by an accredited representative. The credentials of a representative on the Security Council shall be communicated to the Secretary-General not less than twenty-four hours before he takes his seat on the Security Council. The credentials shall be issued either by the Head of the State or of the Government concerned or by its Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Head of Government or Minister of Foreign Affairs of each member of the Security Council shall be entitled to sit on the Security Council without submitting credentials.*

#### Rule 14

*Any Member of the United Nations not a member of the Security Council and any State not a Member of the United Nations, if invited to participate in a meeting or meetings of the Security Council, shall submit credentials for the representative appointed by it for this purpose. The credentials of such a representative shall be communicated to the Secretary-General not less than twenty-four hours before the first meeting which he is invited to attend.*

#### Rule 15

*The credentials of representatives on the Security Council and of any representative appointed in accordance with rule 14 shall be examined by the Secretary-General who shall submit a report to the Security Council for approval.*

#### Rule 16

*Pending the approval of the credentials of a representative on the Security Council in accordance with rule 15, such representative shall be seated provisionally with the same rights as other representatives.*

#### Rule 17

*Any representative on the Security Council, to whose credentials objection has been made within the Security Council, shall continue to sit with the same rights as other representatives until the Security Council has decided the matter.*

During the period under review, in accordance with rule 13 of the provisional rules of procedure, the credentials of the representatives of the members of the Council were communicated to the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General subsequently submitted his report to the Council pursuant to rule 15. Such reports were transmitted to the Council when there were changes in the representation of the members of the Council,<sup>128</sup> as well as when representatives of the newly elected members of the Council were designated prior to the beginning of each term.<sup>129</sup> No discussions regarding the interpretation and application of rules 13 to 17 arose during the period under review.

Rule 13 was referenced in two communications in connection with the applicability of the provisional rules of procedure to videoconferences, which were held in lieu of in-person meetings as part of the working methods of the Council during the COVID-19 pandemic. As indicated in the letters dated 2 April and 7 May 2020 from the President of the Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Council, it was established that the Council would conduct its work "in the spirit" of the provisional rules of procedure, which included ensuring that all Council members participating in a virtual discussion were represented by appropriately credentialed delegates, pursuant to rule 13.<sup>130</sup>

<sup>128</sup> See, for example, S/2020/88, S/2020/177, S/2020/290, S/2020/510, S/2020/812, S/2020/1186, S/2020/1196, S/2020/1223, S/2020/1230, S/2020/1239 and S/2020/1331.

<sup>129</sup> For the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the credentials of the representatives and deputies and alternate representatives of members of the Council elected for the periods of 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022, see S/2019/1023, S/2020/89 and S/2020/1318.

<sup>130</sup> See S/2020/273 and S/2020/372.

## V. Presidency

### Note

Section V covers the practice of the Council concerning the monthly rotation of the presidency, the role of the President and the temporary cession of the chair by the President during the consideration of a particular question with which the Member State he or she represents is directly connected, in relation to rules 18 to 20 of the provisional rules of procedure.

#### Rule 18

*The presidency of the Security Council shall be held in turn by the members of the Security Council in the English alphabetical order of their names. Each President shall hold office for one calendar month.*

#### Rule 19

*The President shall preside over the meetings of the Security Council and, under the authority of the Security Council, shall represent it in its capacity as an organ of the United Nations.*

#### Rule 20

*Whenever the President of the Security Council deems that for the proper fulfilment of the responsibilities of the presidency he should not preside over the Council during the consideration of a particular question with which the member he represents is directly connected, he shall indicate his decision to the Council. The presidential chair shall then devolve, for the purpose of the consideration of that question, on the representative of the member next in English alphabetical order; it being understood that the provisions of this rule shall apply to the representatives on the Security Council called upon successively to preside. This rule shall not affect the representative capacity of the President as stated in rule 19, or his duties under rule 7.*

This section comprises two subsections, namely: A. The role of the President of the Security Council (rules 18 and 19); and B. Discussions concerning the presidency of the Security Council. In 2020, there were no instances of the application of rule 20.

### A. Role of the President of the Security Council (rules 18 and 19)

During the period under review, in accordance with rule 18 of the provisional rules of procedure, the presidency of the Council was held in turn for one

calendar month by the members of the Council in English alphabetical order. In addition to continuing to preside over meetings of the Council, informal consultations of the whole and informal interactive dialogues, the President of the Council also presided over videoconferences held in lieu of in-person meetings. In accordance with rule 18 and the note by the President dated 30 August 2017,<sup>131</sup> the President continued to perform several other functions under the authority of the Council, including: (a) briefing non-members of the Council and the media on the monthly programme of work at the beginning of the month and holding “wrap-up” sessions with non-Council members and briefings with the media at the end of the presidency; (b) representing the Council and delivering statements on its behalf, including the presentation of the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly;<sup>132</sup> (c) holding monthly meetings with the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly; and (d) delivering statements or elements to the press following informal consultations of the whole and closed videoconferences and whenever Council members reached an agreement on a text.<sup>133</sup>

In 2020, 11 out of the 12 presidencies held wrap-up sessions, the majority of which were conducted by videoconference and in accordance with the note by the President dated 27 December 2019 (S/2019/994) under the “Toledo-style” format whereby members of the Council presented the activity of the Council for the month jointly and in an interactive manner.<sup>134</sup> Council members also continued to submit, in their national capacities, monthly assessments

<sup>131</sup> S/2017/507.

<sup>132</sup> At its 8746th meeting, on 14 July (see S/PV.8746), the Council issued a note by the President (see S/2020/666) adopting its report to the General Assembly covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019 (see A/74/2). The report was introduced to the Assembly at a virtual informal meeting of the plenary of its seventy-fourth session on 31 August 2020 by the President of the Council for the month of August (Indonesia). See also part IV, sect. I.F.

<sup>133</sup> Council presidencies referred to the practice of delivering press statements and elements to the press in their respective monthly assessments (see, for example, S/2020/344, S/2020/558, S/2020/789, S/2020/1045, S/2020/1102, S/2020/1142 and S/2021/9).

<sup>134</sup> See, for example, the letter dated 27 October 2020 from the representative of Indonesia to the President of the Council transmitting the monthly assessment of its presidency in August 2020, with reference to the wrap-up session held by videoconference (S/2020/1045).

providing an overview of the work of the Council during their presidencies.<sup>135</sup>

In 2020, 10 out of 12 Council presidencies circulated among Council members at the beginning of the month “monthly commitments” on working methods of the Council, which consisted of a list of commitments to enhance the implementation of the note by the President dated 30 August 2017<sup>136</sup> as well as the eight notes by the President dated 27 December 2019<sup>137</sup> as a means of ensuring transparency, interactivity and efficiency in the work of the Council.<sup>138</sup> The measures featured in the monthly commitments included, for example, reminding briefers and members and non-members of the Council to limit their statements to the time limits prescribed in the note by the President dated 30 August 2017; encouraging the participation of civil society and women briefers and the Council’s engagement with concerned Member States and other principal organs of the United Nations; and encouraging interactivity in informal consultations of the whole and closed videoconferences and facilitating agreement on press statements and press elements at their conclusion.

The presidency also assumed several responsibilities on behalf of Council members as part of the working methods adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic. In a letter dated 2 April 2020 from the President of the Council addressed to the permanent representatives of the members of the Council, it was agreed that, on the first day of the month, the presidency would issue and circulate an “informal plan” of videoconferences to the wider membership of the United Nations and publish it on the websites of the Council and

its delegation.<sup>139</sup> The day before a videoconference, the presidency would share with the wider membership, through email, a message from the President of the Council in which the videoconference would be announced, with the message also being made available in the programme of work on the website of the Council.<sup>140</sup> In a letter from the President of the Council dated 7 May 2020, it was further agreed that the presidency would inform the public of the daily programme of the Council through social media on the day of the event, prior to the meeting.<sup>141</sup> In addition, both letters established that, to the extent possible and in agreement with Council members, the presidency would deliver any agreed elements to the press after closed videoconferences through the United Nations webcast.<sup>142</sup>

Following previous practice, and in accordance with the note by the President dated 30 August 2017, the introduction to the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly for 2019 was prepared under the coordination of the President of the Council for the month of September 2019 (Russian Federation).<sup>143</sup>

In 2020, during their respective presidencies, Council members continued to take the initiative of bringing to the attention of the Council emerging and evolving issues related to international peace and security by organizing Council meetings or open videoconferences, under thematic items, sometimes adding new sub-items or proposing new topics.<sup>144</sup> In most cases, Council presidencies transmitted concept

<sup>135</sup> In 2020, Council members submitted 10 monthly assessments: [S/2020/258](#), [S/2020/1142](#), [S/2020/344](#), [S/2020/558](#), [S/2020/1102](#), [S/2020/789](#), [S/2021/9](#), [S/2020/1045](#), [S/2020/1333](#) and [S/2021/203](#) (in chronological order).

<sup>136</sup> [S/2017/507](#), annex.

<sup>137</sup> [S/2019/990](#) to [S/2019/997](#).

<sup>138</sup> See, for example, the letter dated 10 November 2020 from the representative of Estonia to the President of the Council describing working methods encouraged during the presidencies of Estonia, France and Germany in May, June and July 2020 ([S/2020/1102](#)) and the letter dated 26 February 2021 from the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the President of the Council referring to the working method commitments of the African members of the Council and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines implemented during the presidencies of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa during their presidencies in September, November and December 2020 ([S/2021/203](#)).

<sup>139</sup> See [S/2020/273](#). See also [S/2020/372](#) in connection with the circulation and publication of the “informal programme of work” during the presidency of Estonia in May 2020.

<sup>140</sup> See [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>141</sup> See [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>142</sup> See [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>143</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, para. 127. In accordance with the note by the President, as the President of the Council in July 2019 (Peru) ended its tenure on the Council that year, the task of coordinating the introduction devolved on the Council member next in English alphabetical order who would not be leaving the Council that year (Russian Federation). For more information, see part IV, sect. I.F. See also [S/PV.8746](#).

<sup>144</sup> For more information on referrals by Member States pursuant to Article 35 of the Charter, see part VI, sect. I.A.



papers in order to guide the discussion.<sup>145</sup> Some of them also circulated summaries of the meetings.<sup>146</sup> In a letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Council, the representatives of Estonia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines jointly transmitted a concept note for an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President (S/2017/507)”, which was organized during the presidency of Estonia on 15 May.<sup>147</sup> While not formal meetings of the Council, Council presidencies also circulated concept notes in their national capacity to guide the discussion during open videoconferences.<sup>148</sup> On occasion, some Council members circulated summaries of Arria-formula meetings they hosted or co-hosted during their presidencies, again also in their national capacities.<sup>149</sup>

During the period under review, the role of the presidency was mentioned in several communications to the Council from members and non-members of the Council. In a letter dated 11 February 2020 addressed to the President of the Council, the representative of Finland transmitted the report of the seventeenth annual workshop for the newly elected members of the Council, which was held on 7 and 8 November 2019. According to the report, workshop participants discussed the role of the presidency in ensuring a balance between transparency and efficiency,

promoting interactivity, time management and the preparation of monthly assessments.<sup>150</sup> Similarly, in a letter dated 3 March 2020 addressed to the President of the Council, the representatives of Kuwait and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, as the outgoing and incoming Chairs of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, jointly transmitted a report<sup>151</sup> on the informal retreat held from 17 to 19 January 2020 on the working methods of the Council. As indicated in the report, Council members discussed the significance of the role of the presidency in ensuring the implementation of the working methods of the Council, in particular with respect to the conduct of meetings, including adherence to prescribed time limits by speakers, the preparation of the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly, engagement with other principal organs of the United Nations and the conduct of wrap-up sessions.

## B. Discussions concerning the presidency of the Council

In 2020, aspects of the presidency of the Council were discussed during Council meetings and open videoconferences. During an open videoconference<sup>152</sup> held on 25 August 2020 in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”, Council members discussed the future course of action by the President of the Council pursuant to the letter from the United States of 20 August 2020,<sup>153</sup> in which the United States notified the Council that the Islamic Republic of Iran was in significant non-performance of its commitment under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action of 2015. During the videoconference,<sup>154</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation stated that an overwhelming majority of Council members had explicitly stated in their responses to the letter of the United States that the letter could not be considered as a notification under paragraph 11 of resolution 2231 (2015) and that it did not trigger the corresponding “snapback” procedure, since the United States had ceased its participation in the Plan of Action. He therefore requested the President of the Council to inform Council members about the results of his bilateral consultations with Council members on the issue and to

<sup>145</sup> See, for example, the letter dated 31 December 2019 from the representative of Viet Nam to the Secretary-General (S/2020/1) transmitting a concept note on the sub-item of “Upholding the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security” prior to the 8699th meeting of the Council, on 9 January 2020 (S/PV.8699); the letter dated 22 June 2020 from the representative of Germany to the Secretary-General (S/2020/571) transmitting a concept note on the theme “Pandemics and security” prior to the open videoconference held on 2 July 2020 (S/2020/663); and the letter dated 1 September 2020 from the representative of the Niger to the Secretary-General (S/2020/883) transmitting a concept note on the theme “Global governance after COVID-19” prior to the open videoconference held on 24 September 2020 (S/2020/953).

<sup>146</sup> See, for example, the letter dated 24 August 2020 from the Chargé d’affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Germany to the President of the Council (S/2020/830) transmitting a summary of the videoconference held on 24 July 2020 on the theme “Climate and security” (S/2020/751); and the letter dated 29 December 2020 from the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the Secretary-General (S/2020/1328) transmitting a summary of the videoconference held on 3 November 2020 on the theme “Contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity” (S/2020/1090).

<sup>147</sup> See S/2020/374.

<sup>148</sup> See, for example, S/2020/389 and S/2020/783.

<sup>149</sup> See S/2020/458 and S/2020/643.

<sup>150</sup> See S/2020/116.

<sup>151</sup> See S/2020/172.

<sup>152</sup> See S/2020/837.

<sup>153</sup> See also the letter dated 20 August 2020 from the representative of the United States to the President of the Council (S/2020/815). For more information on the discussion regarding the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), see part I, sect. 32.A, and part V, sect. II.

<sup>154</sup> See S/2020/837.



clarify whether he intended to follow the procedures foreseen in paragraph 11 of resolution 2231 (2015). The representative of China urged the President of the Council not to take any action pursuant to the letter of the United States, adding that the Council should fully respect the views of the international community and the overwhelming majority of Council members, uphold its credibility and authority and fulfil its responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. The representative of Estonia stated that, since there was no agreement among the participants of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action regarding the status of the United States as a participant in the agreement, his delegation supported the Council's presidency in considering the notification as ineffective for the purposes of the "snapback". The representative of Germany expressed support for the President's view that the purported United States notification was, in legal terms, null and void. Responding to questions and comments from Council members, the representative of Indonesia, in his capacity as President of the Council, stated that, given that there was no consensus in the Council on the issue, the President was not in the position to take further action.

At the open videoconference<sup>155</sup> held on 21 October in connection with the item entitled "Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)", the representative of Germany considered that any picture of the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia remained incomplete without the briefing by the European Union Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues and expressed regret that the briefing had been blocked by the President of the Council.

The role of the presidency of the Council was also referred to during the 8764th meeting of the Council under the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East" (see case 6) and in greater detail during the open videoconference, held in connection with the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)" (see case 4).

#### **Case 4 Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)**

On 15 May, at the initiative of Estonia, which held the presidency for the month, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, whose representative held the Chair of the Informal Working Group on

Documentation and Other Procedural Questions,<sup>156</sup> Council members held an open videoconference<sup>157</sup> on the working methods of the Council in connection with the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)", focusing on the issue of ensuring transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the work of the Council. In their statements, members and non-members of the Council shared their views regarding the role of the presidency of the Council in ensuring the transparency, efficiency and interactivity in the Council's work and facilitating the implementation of the working methods adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In her briefing, the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions stated that, since its last in-person meeting, held on 12 March, the Council had needed to adapt its working methods so as to maintain a state of readiness to convene and take decisions under unprecedented extraordinary circumstances and highlighted the specific aspects of measures adopted under the presidencies of China, the Dominican Republic and Estonia. In its statement, the delegation of Mexico expressed appreciation for the measures adopted under the presidencies of China, the Dominican Republic and Estonia to adapt the working methods of the Council to the new circumstances imposed by the pandemic and thereby largely maintain the Council's level of effectiveness, efficiency and transparency. The delegation further expressed the hope that the lessons learned would drive future discussions on the required changes to working methods. Similarly, speaking on behalf of the Group of Like-Minded States on Targeted Sanctions, the delegation of Chile noted that the three presidencies had recognized the need to maintain the working methods achieved prior to the pandemic, which had made it possible to implement a set of measures designed to ensure that the Council held as many meetings as possible in a transparent and participatory manner.

Regarding transparency, the representatives of Austria and Kuwait commended the three presidencies for circulating letters to keep the wider membership informed on the Council's working methods. Speaking on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, the representative of Switzerland welcomed the fact that all meetings taking place in lieu of briefings in the open Chamber were being webcast in their entirety, together with the

<sup>155</sup> See S/2020/1040.

<sup>156</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/374).

<sup>157</sup> See S/2020/418. For more information on the videoconference, see case 1 above.

circulation by the presidency of written briefings and statements by Council and non-Council members, where applicable, as documents of the Council. The delegation of Norway, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, commended the presidency of Estonia for using new and innovative digital solutions to make the open meetings publicly accessible, enabling better inclusion of women and civil society organizations and allowing Member States to deliver statements in Arria-formula meetings. The delegation of Ireland expressed gratitude to the recent presidencies for their efforts to increase the openness of the Council's work during the pandemic, including by seeking to adopt press elements after each closed videoconference.

More generally, the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions recognized the growing practice of written monthly commitments through which Council presidencies promoted the implementation of the note by the President of 30 August 2017<sup>158</sup> and the eight notes by the President dated 27 December 2019.<sup>159</sup> In that regard, multiple delegations underscored in their statements the important role of the presidency in ensuring transparency in the Council's work, including through the use of monthly briefings on the informal programme of work and wrap-up sessions to the wider membership of the United Nations.<sup>160,161</sup> The delegation of Egypt stated that periodic briefings should be given to the wider membership on the monthly programme of work and that their input should be taken into account when formulating it. Speaking on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Council, the representative of Viet Nam considered that presidencies, including those held by elected members, continued to engage closely with the wider membership, civil society representatives, the press and other stakeholders at various opportunities, including briefings on the monthly programme of work and wrap-up sessions.

Specifically on wrap-up sessions, the representative of Switzerland, on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, recalled that those events had been organized by 11 out of the previous 12 Council presidencies and had

overall been increasingly interactive. Nevertheless, the representatives of El Salvador and Singapore highlighted the need for the monthly briefings and wrap-up sessions to be more interactive and include greater analysis. The representative of Liechtenstein suggested that the interactivity of wrap-up sessions could be enhanced by inviting questions to be submitted in advance by the membership, which would result in having opening remarks addressing those questions rather than offering an overview of the past month. Speaking on behalf of 24 former elected members of the Council, the representative of New Zealand added that all Council members should be encouraged to participate actively in wrap-up sessions and should strive to be as candid as possible and proposed that organizers should seek questions ahead of time to better shape discussions. Furthermore, between the start of the presidency and wrap-up sessions, Council members should consider other ways throughout the month to keep the membership updated on the Council's work and products under consideration. He further encouraged the continued publication of the President's addendum in addition to the informal programme of work. Moreover, when there was no agreement on public remarks, he considered that Council Presidents should be empowered to address the media, in a manner that was respectful to other colleagues.

The representative of China encouraged presidencies to seek the views of concerned Member States and regional organizations before Council meetings and to maintain close coordination with the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and the Secretary-General. Moreover, he encouraged presidencies to better coordinate with each other to enhance integrity and synergy and avoid duplication. The delegation of Cyprus called for regular dialogue between Member States on the Council's agenda and the President of the Council, which should provide affected States with information regarding the work of the Council that directly affected them, instead of relying solely on the good will of individual members or the penholder.

Expressing hope that greater strides would be made to improve the timeliness and analysis of the Council's annual report to the General Assembly, the delegation of Norway further urged each Council presidency to submit their monthly assessments for inclusion in the report and to consider other ways for the circulation of the assessments when consensus was not possible.<sup>162</sup> The representative of El Salvador called for the continued issuance, in a timely manner,

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<sup>158</sup> S/2017/507.

<sup>159</sup> S/2019/990 to S/2019/997.

<sup>160</sup> See S/2020/418.

<sup>161</sup> Viet Nam (on behalf of the elected members of the Council), Australia, El Salvador, Guatemala, India, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Singapore and Switzerland (on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group).

<sup>162</sup> Norway spoke on behalf of the Nordic countries.

of monthly assessments, which should include, in addition to a summary of events, a situational analysis on current and future threats to international peace and

security. Several speakers called for more analytical content of the annual report to the Assembly.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>163</sup> Brazil, Cuba, Ireland, Lebanon, Mexico and Nigeria.

## VI. Secretariat

### Note

Section VI covers the practice of the Council concerning the functions and powers of the Secretary-General in connection with meetings of the Council, in relation to rules 21 to 26 of its provisional rules of procedure.<sup>164</sup>

#### Rule 21

*The Secretary-General shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the Security Council. The Secretary-General may authorize a deputy to act in his place at meetings of the Security Council.*

#### Rule 22

*The Secretary-General, or his deputy acting on his behalf, may make either oral or written statements to the Security Council concerning any question under consideration by it.*

#### Rule 23

*The Secretary-General may be appointed by the Security Council, in accordance with rule 28, as rapporteur for a specified question.*

#### Rule 24

*The Secretary-General shall provide the staff required by the Security Council. This staff shall form a part of the Secretariat.*

#### Rule 25

*The Secretary-General shall give to representatives on the Security Council notice of meetings of the Security Council and of its commissions and committees.*

#### Rule 26

*The Secretary-General shall be responsible for the preparation of documents required by the Security Council and shall, except in urgent circumstances,*

*distribute them at least forty-eight hours in advance of the meeting at which they are to be considered.*

During the period under review and in accordance with previous practice, the Secretary-General and senior officials of the Secretariat continued to attend Council meetings and provide oral briefings and written reports to the Council as requested. The Council continued to request briefings by senior officials from the Secretariat.

In addition, in 2020 the Secretariat played a key role in supporting the implementation of the working methods adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the holding of videoconferences, carrying out the written voting procedure and, as of 14 July 2020, the resumption of in-person meetings in accordance with the necessary health and safety guidelines.<sup>165</sup>

The various functions of the Secretariat were addressed in several open videoconferences. At an open videoconference<sup>166</sup> held on 6 May in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, focusing on youth and peace and security, the delegation of Norway noted that there was more consistent reporting to the Council on youth-specific issues since the adoption of resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018). In that regard, the delegation of Norway suggested mandating the Secretariat to report regularly on the youth and peace and security agenda. Similarly, the delegation of Fiji suggested that the Secretariat provide a detailed analysis of how the security impacts of climate change were affecting young people, especially women and girls, around the world, in particular in countries where United Nations political missions and peace operations were deployed.

At an open videoconference<sup>167</sup> held on 15 May in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of 30 August 2017 (S/2017/507)”, the representative of the United Kingdom expressed support for the holding of informal horizon-scanning briefings by the Secretariat. The representative of Malaysia considered that the Council

<sup>164</sup> For specific instances in which the Secretary-General was requested or authorized by the Council to carry out other functions in accordance with Article 98, see part VI.

<sup>165</sup> For more information on the working methods of the Council adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, see sect. I above.

<sup>166</sup> See S/2020/346.

<sup>167</sup> See S/2020/418.

should request more early warning and situational awareness briefings from the Secretariat to ensure that emerging threats and issues were addressed swiftly. Referring to the importance of private discussions among Council members as opposed to public meetings, the representative of France considered that closed conversations between Council members and the Secretariat on the implementation of Council mandates were more productive than public statements on national positions. The representative of Slovakia maintained that reporting cycles for reports of the Secretary-General should be adjusted to reflect more genuinely the situation on the ground.

Speaking on behalf of the elected members of the Council, the representative of Viet Nam underscored the importance of early engagement in the work of the Council for incoming elected members, including briefings by the Secretariat conducted earlier in the preparation for membership. He further welcomed the fact that, based on a note by the President dated 27 December 2019,<sup>168</sup> incoming members were able to receive all Council communications for a period of five months before their membership and urged that, during the observation period, incoming members be able to observe the Council's work in various settings, including in consultations and negotiations on Council documents. With respect to the working methods of the Council adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, several delegations<sup>169</sup> commended the efforts of Council members and the Secretariat to adapt those methods to the new circumstances.

At an open videoconference<sup>170</sup> held on 29 July in connection with the item entitled "The situation in the

<sup>168</sup> See [S/2019/993](#).

<sup>169</sup> See [S/2020/418](#) (United Kingdom, India and Lebanon).

<sup>170</sup> See [S/2020/758](#).

Middle East", focusing on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, the representative of China questioned the effectiveness of humanitarian exemptions to unilateral sanctions imposed against the Syrian Arab Republic and requested a comprehensive report by the Secretariat on that issue. The representative of the Russian Federation expressed a desire to receive more information on the repositioning of the United Nations humanitarian deliveries to the north-west of the country in accordance with the new format of the work under the cross-border mechanism. Moreover, he expressed regret that his delegation's request for an additional briefer from the Secretariat on the possible environmental and humanitarian implications of an oil spill in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic was not treated appropriately, despite the obvious relevance of the topic to the discussion.

At an open videoconference<sup>171</sup> held on 12 August in connection with the item entitled "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace", focusing on pandemics and the challenges of sustaining peace, the representative of the Russian Federation proposed that the Secretariat prepare a policy brief on the impact of sanctions on the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, which could include an assessment of the negative consequences of coercive measures for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The representative of Ecuador called for compliance with the global ceasefire to facilitate humanitarian access and as a first step towards sustainable peace, as proposed by the Secretary-General. In reference to resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), she also submitted that it would be useful for the Council and the Secretariat to be regularly informed on where the resolution was being implemented and in which areas greater support was needed to ensure its effective implementation.

<sup>171</sup> See [S/2020/799](#).

## VII. Conduct of business

### Note

Section VII covers the practice of the Council concerning the conduct of business at its meetings, in relation to rules 27, 29, 30 and 33 of its provisional rules of procedure.

#### Rule 27

*The President shall call upon representatives in the order in which they signify their desire to speak.*

#### Rule 29

*The President may accord precedence to any rapporteur appointed by the Security Council.*

*The Chairman of a commission or committee, or the rapporteur appointed by the commission or committee to present its report, may be accorded precedence for the purpose of explaining the report.*

#### Rule 30

*If a representative raises a point of order, the President shall immediately state his ruling. If it is challenged, the President shall submit his ruling to the*



*Security Council for immediate decision and it shall stand unless overruled.*

*Rule 33*

*The following motions shall have precedence in the order named over all principal motions and draft resolutions relative to the subject before the meeting:*

1. *To suspend the meeting;*
2. *To adjourn the meeting;*
3. *To adjourn the meeting to a certain day or hour;*
4. *To refer any matter to a committee, to the Secretary-General or to a rapporteur;*
5. *To postpone discussion of the question to a certain day or indefinitely;* or
6. *To introduce an amendment.*

*Any motion for the suspension or for the simple adjournment of the meeting shall be decided without debate.*

In 2020, no explicit reference was made to rules 27, 29 and 30 in the meetings of the Council. As part of the working methods of the Council adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the letters from the President of the Council dated 2 April and 7 May 2020 addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Council provided that the presidencies of the Council intended to work “in the spirit of the Council’s provisional rules of procedure” including those under chapter VI, entitled “Conduct of business”.<sup>172</sup>

During the period under review, the President of the Council continued to request speakers to limit their statements in Council meetings to four minutes or to five minutes in accordance with the note by the President dated 30 August 2017.<sup>173</sup> For example, on 13 February, at the 8723rd meeting<sup>174</sup> of the Council, before giving the floor to non-Council members, the President reminded all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes and noted that the red light on the collar of the microphone would begin to flash after four minutes had elapsed. The President added that delegations with longer statements were kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a summarized version when speaking in

the Security Council Chamber.<sup>175</sup> Following previous practice, during the period under review joint statements were delivered by Council members<sup>176</sup> and non-Council members invited to participate in Council meetings and videoconferences.<sup>177</sup> Furthermore, as part

<sup>175</sup> Ibid. For other examples, see [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#), [S/PV.8706](#) and [S/PV.8723 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>176</sup> In 2020, in a number of instances, the representatives of Niger, Tunisia and South Africa delivered joint statements on behalf of the three African members of the Council (referred to as “A3”), and on others they did so together with Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (referred to as “A3+1”) (see, for example, [S/PV.8731](#) and [S/2020/336](#)). Similarly, the representatives of Indonesia and Viet Nam occasionally delivered joint statements as the two States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the Council (see, for example, [S/PV.8767](#) and [S/2020/568](#)). At an open videoconference held on 15 May in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#))”, the representative of Viet Nam delivered a joint statement on behalf of the elected members of the Council ([S/2020/418](#)). In several instances, Council members also delivered joint statements as co-penholders on a particular issue (see, for example, [S/PV.8700](#), [S/PV.8748](#) and [S/2020/1257](#)).

<sup>177</sup> For example, at the 8699th meeting, held on 9 January under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, the representative of the Philippines delivered a joint statement on behalf of the 10 member States of ASEAN; the representative of Norway spoke on behalf of the Nordic countries; the representative of Ukraine spoke also on behalf of Canada, Germany and Sweden; and the representative of Azerbaijan delivered a statement on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see [S/PV.8699](#) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#)); and at the 8706th meeting, held on 21 January under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”, the representative of Portugal spoke on behalf of the States members of the European Union, the representative of Azerbaijan spoke on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the representative of Bangladesh spoke on behalf of the States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the representative of the Sudan spoke on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see [S/PV.8706 \(Resumption 1\)](#)). Non-Council members also submitted joint statements in accordance with the working methods of the Council adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, at the open videoconference held on 15 May in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#))”, the delegation of Chile submitted a statement on behalf of the Group of Like-Minded States on Targeted Sanctions; the representative of New Zealand submitted a statement on behalf of 24 countries that had served as elected members of the Council between 2011 and 2019; the delegation of Norway submitted a statement on behalf of the Nordic countries; and the representative of Switzerland submitted a statement on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (see [S/2020/418](#)).

<sup>172</sup> See [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>173</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, para. 22. See, for example, [S/PV.8699](#), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#), [S/PV.8706](#), [S/PV.8723](#) and [S/PV.8723 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>174</sup> See [S/PV.8723](#).

of the working methods agreed upon by Council members for the month of April 2020, briefers were asked by the presidency of the Council to share their statements in advance to allow for more interactive and focused interventions by Council members. Moreover, briefers were also encouraged to be succinct and to limit their remarks to seven minutes.<sup>178</sup>

In accordance with the note by the President dated 30 August 2017, as a general practice the speaking order for meetings of the Council is established by a draw. In addition, the President of the Council delivers his or her national statement last of all Council members.<sup>179</sup> However, in certain cases, the speaking order is established by the use of a sign-up sheet, and the President of the Council may make his or her national statement before the other members take the floor.<sup>180</sup> In certain cases, the President of the Council may adjust the list of speakers and inscribe first the delegation(s) responsible for the drafting process to allow them to make an introductory or explanatory presentation.<sup>181</sup> When an unscheduled or emergency meeting is convened, the President may adjust the list of speakers so that the delegation that requested the meeting can speak before other Council members in order to present the rationale for convening the meeting.<sup>182</sup> The President of the Council may also inscribe first the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies of the Council when they present their work, as was the case on several occasions during the period

under review.<sup>183</sup> In the letters from the President of the Council dated 2 April and 7 May 2020, it was established that, following general practice, the order of speakers of Council members in videoconferences during the COVID-19 pandemic would also be established by a draw.<sup>184</sup>

According to established practice, the list of speakers was adjusted according to protocol when high-level officials were representing Council members at a meeting.<sup>185</sup> In 2020, non-members of the Council having a direct interest in the matter under consideration spoke on occasion before Council members, consistent with prior practice and the note by the President dated 30 August 2017.<sup>186</sup>

Besides the use of videoconferences in lieu of in-person Council meetings, the Council continued to use videoconferencing technology to facilitate

<sup>178</sup> See [S/2020/273](#).

<sup>179</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, paras. 24–25.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.* For example, at the 8743rd meeting, held on 11 March under the item entitled “Peace and security in Africa”, the representative of China (President of the Council) took the floor after the briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations and the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the United Nations Development Programme Administrator, and delivered his national statement before the other Council members took the floor (see [S/PV.8743](#)).

<sup>181</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, para. 26. For example, at the 8750th meeting, held on 28 July under the item entitled “The situation in the Central African Republic”, the representative of France, as penholder of resolution [2536 \(2020\)](#), which was adopted at the meeting, took the floor first after the vote to provide explanatory remarks (see [S/PV.8750](#)).

<sup>182</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, para. 26. For example, at the open videoconference held on 20 May in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela”, the representative of the Russian Federation, having requested an urgent meeting of the Council, delivered a statement before the other Council members (see [S/2020/435](#)).

<sup>183</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, para. 27. For example, at the 8735th meeting, held on 27 February under the item entitled “The situation in Somalia”, the representative of Belgium (President of the Council) spoke before the other Council members and briefed the Council in his capacity as Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolution [751 \(1992\)](#) concerning Somalia (see [S/PV.8735](#)).

<sup>184</sup> [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#).

<sup>185</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, paras. 29–30. For example, at the open videoconference held on 21 April in connection with the item entitled “Protection of civilians in armed conflict”, the Dominican Republic (President of the Council), represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs, took the floor after the briefers but before the other Council members (see [S/2020/340](#)); and at the open videoconference held on 6 August in connection with the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts”, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia (President of the Council), the Secretary of State to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia and the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam took the floor after the briefers but before the other Council members (see [S/2020/791](#)). For more information on high-level meetings, see sect. II.A above.

<sup>186</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, para. 33. For example, at the 8706th meeting, held on 21 January under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question,” the representative of Israel, who was invited under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, and the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine, who was invited in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and previous practice, both took the floor before Council members in accordance with established practice in connection with the item (see [S/PV.8706](#)). The practice of rule 37 invitees taking the floor ahead of Council members was also continued in connection with the items entitled “The situation in Afghanistan” (see, for example, [S/2020/891](#)) and “Security Council resolutions [1160 \(1998\)](#), [1199 \(1998\)](#), [1203 \(1998\)](#), [1239 \(1999\)](#) and [1244 \(1999\)](#)” (see, for example, [S/2020/339](#)).



participation at Council meetings, a practice that had become common in recent years.<sup>187</sup> In 2020, Council

members were briefed by speakers participating by videoconference in 31 out of 81 meetings of the Council (38.3 per cent).

<sup>187</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, para. 60.

## VIII. Participation

### Note

Section VIII covers the practice of the Council concerning the extension of invitations to non-members of the Council to participate in meetings of the Council. Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter of the United Nations and rules 37 and 39 of the provisional rules of procedure describe circumstances in which invitations can be extended to non-members of the Council to participate, without a vote, when the Council so decides.

#### Article 31

*Any Member of the United Nations which is not a member of the Security Council may participate, without vote, in the discussion of any question brought before the Security Council whenever the latter considers that the interests of that Member are specially affected.*

#### Article 32

*Any Member of the United Nations which is not a member of the Security Council or any state which is not a Member of the United Nations, if it is a party to a dispute under consideration by the Security Council, shall be invited to participate, without vote, in the discussion relating to the dispute. The Security Council shall lay down such conditions as it deems just for the participation of a state which is not a Member of the United Nations.*

#### Rule 37

*Any Member of the United Nations which is not a member of the Security Council may be invited, as the result of a decision of the Security Council, to participate, without vote, in the discussion of any question brought before the Security Council when the Security Council considers that the interests of that Member are specially affected, or when a Member brings a matter to the attention of the Security Council in accordance with Article 35 (1) of the Charter.*

#### Rule 39

*The Security Council may invite members of the Secretariat or other persons, whom it considers competent for the purpose, to supply it with*

*information or to give other assistance in examining matters within its competence.*

During the period under review, the Council continued to invite non-members of the Council to participate in its meetings. As explained in section I above, however, participation of non-Council members was heavily restricted because of the technical limitations related to open videoconferences and the health and safety guidelines implemented for the holding of in-person meetings. This notwithstanding, the invitations were extended by the President of the Council at the beginning of or during Council meetings, either under the “relevant provisions” of the Charter without an explicit reference to a specific Article or rule of the provisional rules of procedure, or under rule 37 or rule 39. Specifically, Member States continued to be invited under rule 37, while representatives of the Secretariat, other United Nations organs, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, regional and other intergovernmental organizations, or other invitees, including representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society, were invited under rule 39. While Member States requested invitations in letters addressed to the President of the Council, in most cases these were not circulated as documents of the Council. In accordance with the working methods of the Council adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, non-members of the Council were also invited to participate in videoconferences of the Council “within the principles of rules 37 and 39” if there were no objections from Council members.<sup>188</sup>

During the period under review, in accordance with the notes by the President dated 30 August 2017 and 27 December 2019 respectively, the Council invited the newly elected members to observe all meetings of the Council and informal consultations of the whole, including consultations on Council outcome documents from 1 October 2020, for the three months immediately preceding their term of membership. This included open and closed videoconferences.<sup>189</sup>

<sup>188</sup> See [S/2020/273](#). For more information on the working methods of the Council during the COVID-19 pandemic, see sect. I above.

<sup>189</sup> See [S/2017/507](#), annex, para. 140, and [S/2019/993](#).

The present section is divided into four subsections, namely: A. Invitations extended under rule 37; B. Invitations extended under rule 39; C. Invitations not expressly extended under rule 37 or rule 39; and D. Discussions relating to participation.

### A. Invitations extended under rule 37

In accordance with the relevant Articles of the Charter and the provisional rules of procedure, all States, whether Members of the United Nations or not, can be invited to participate in Council meetings when: (a) the interests of a Member State are “specially affected” (Article 31 of the Charter and rule 37); (b) a Member State or a non-Member State is a party to a dispute under consideration by the Council (Article 32 of the Charter); and (c) a Member State of the United Nations brings a matter to the attention of the Council in accordance with Article 35 (1) of the Charter (rule 37).<sup>190</sup> Non-Council members were also invited to participate in videoconferences of the Council initially in March 2020 when the interests of that Member were “specially affected” and there were “no objections from any Council member”, and subsequently from April 2020 “within the principles of rules 37 and 39” if there were no objections from Council members.<sup>191</sup>

Despite the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic on the participation of non-Council members, in 2020 there were no changes to the procedure for extending invitations to Member

<sup>190</sup> For more information on the referral of a dispute or situation to the Council by States, see sect. II.A above and part VI, sect. I.A.

<sup>191</sup> See [S/2020/253](#), [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#).

States to participate in the meetings of the Council. There were also no instances when a request from a Member State to participate in a Council meeting was put to a vote at a meeting.

### B. Invitations extended under rule 39

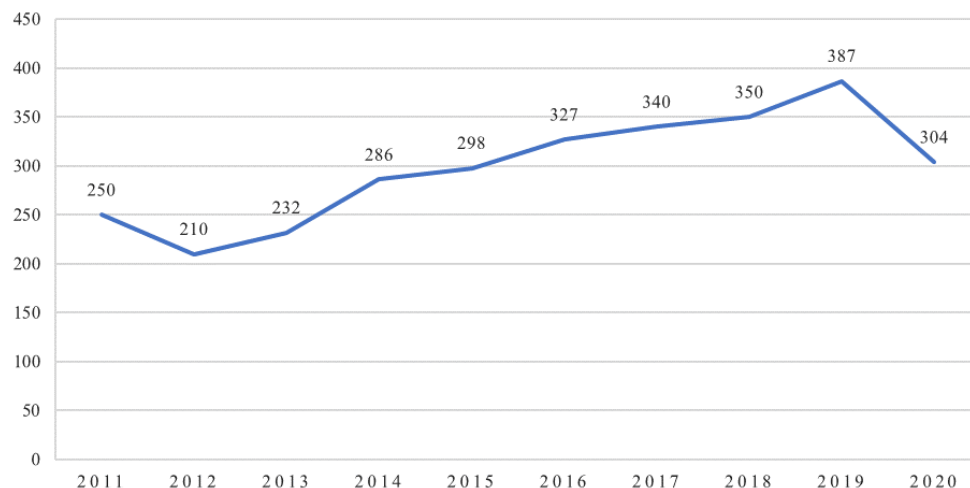
In accordance with rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure, members of the Secretariat or other persons may be invited to supply the Council with information or give other assistance in examining matters within its competence.

Following previous practice, an invitation under rule 39 was extended to a representative of a Member State, on an exceptional basis, only if his or her participation was in a role other than that of representative of a State, for example, as Chair of one of its country-specific configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission.<sup>192</sup>

In 2020, a total of 304 invitations were extended under rule 39 in comparison with 387 in 2019 and 350 in 2018 (see figure IV).

<sup>192</sup> For example, at the 8724th meeting, held on 14 February under the item entitled “The situation in Guinea-Bissau”, the representative of Brazil was invited under rule 39 in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (see [S/PV.8724](#)); and at the 8728th meeting, held on 20 February under the item entitled “The situation in the Central African Republic”, the representative of Morocco was invited under rule 39 in his capacity as Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (see [S/PV.8728](#)).

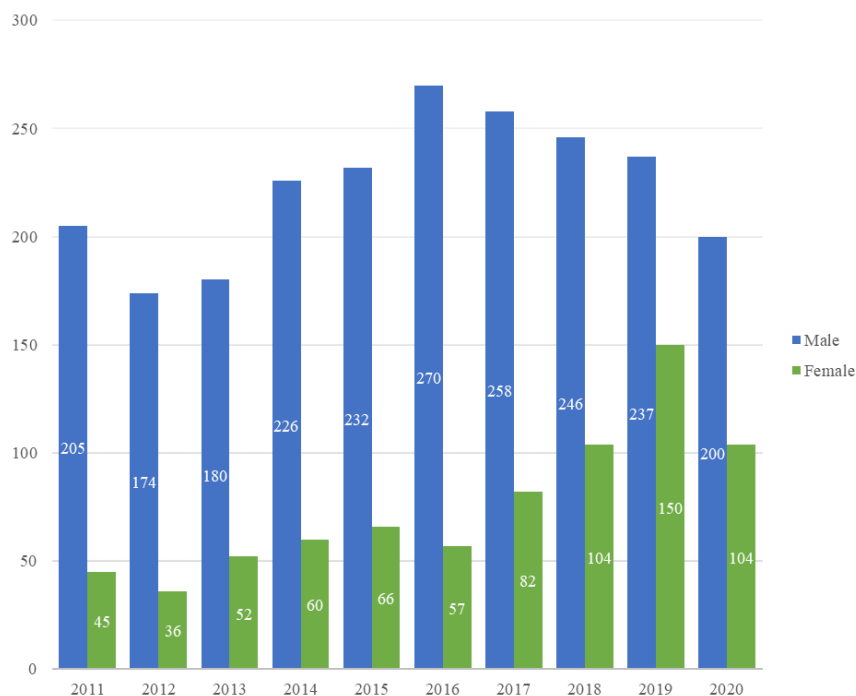
Figure IV  
Invitations under rule 39, 2011–2020



Of the 304 invitees under rule 39, 100 invitations were made in Council meetings, 195 in open videoconferences and 9 in closed videoconferences. Of the total number of invitees under rule 39, 200 were men and 104 were women. As shown in figure V, in recent years prior to 2020, the number of female

speakers invited to Council meetings under rule 39 had been increasing, but during the period under review, consistent with the overall decrease of rule 39 invitees compared with previous years, the percentage of women invited under rule 39 decreased from 38.7 per cent in 2019 to 34.2 per cent in 2020.

Figure V  
Invitations under rule 39, 2011–2020



For the purposes of this part of the *Repertoire*, invitations extended under rule 39 are classified according to four main categories, namely:<sup>193</sup> (a) officials of the United Nations system;<sup>194</sup> (b) invitees from international organizations other than the United Nations;<sup>195</sup> (c) officials representing

regional intergovernmental organizations;<sup>196</sup> and (d) representatives of other entities such as non-governmental and civil society organizations.<sup>197</sup> During the period under review, invitations under rule 39 were most often extended to officials of the United Nations system and representatives of other entities, such as regional organizations. Non-governmental organizations and civil society were invited less frequently, as shown in figure VI.

<sup>193</sup> In previous supplements, separate categories were used for invitees of the Secretariat and Council subsidiary bodies and those representing other United Nations organs, subsidiary bodies or agencies. For the sake of simplicity, these two categories are now subsumed under the category “United Nations system”.

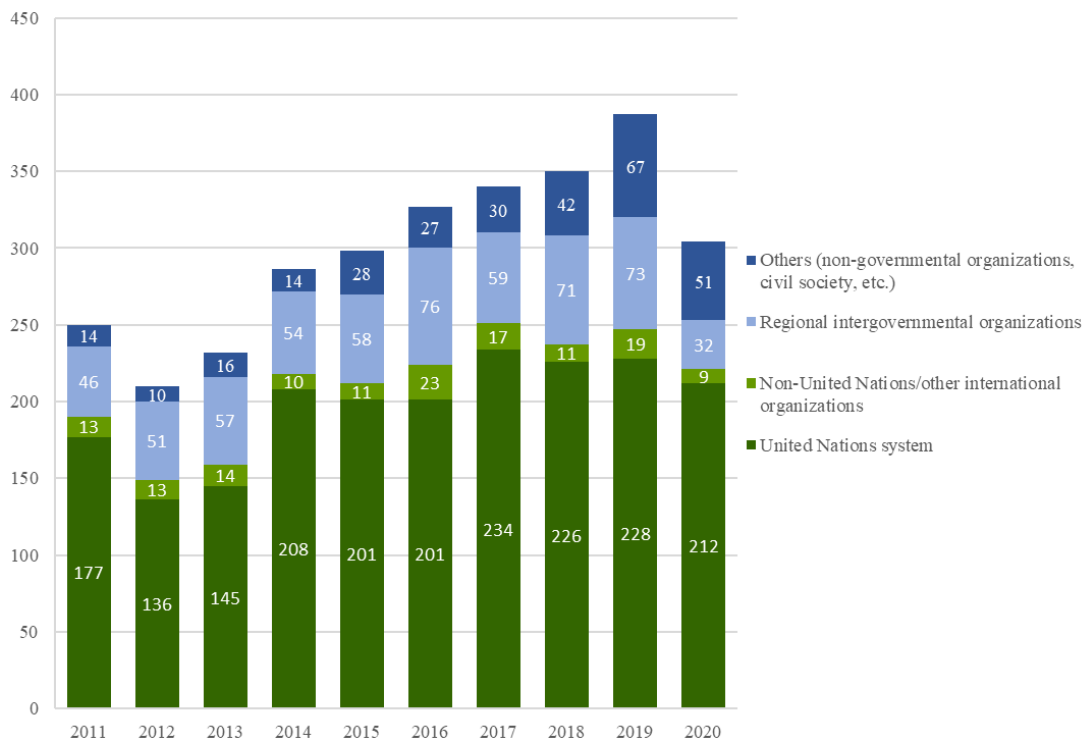
<sup>194</sup> For example, at the 8706th meeting, held on 21 January, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs was invited under rule 39 (see [S/PV.8706](#)).

<sup>195</sup> For example, at the 8723rd meeting, held on 13 February, the Permanent Observer and Head of Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross to the United Nations was invited under rule 39 (see [S/PV.8723](#)).

<sup>196</sup> For example, at the 8771st meeting, held on 19 October, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union was invited under rule 39 (see [S/PV.8771](#)).

<sup>197</sup> For example, at the 8753rd meeting, held on 28 July, the Chairwoman of the Arab Human Rights Foundation was invited under rule 39 (see [S/PV.8753](#)).

Figure VI  
Breakdown of rule 39 invitations by category, 2011–2020



### C. Invitations not expressly extended under rule 37 or rule 39

During the period under review, the Council extended several invitations not expressly under rule 37 or rule 39 (see table 14).

Invitations to representatives of the Holy See and the State of Palestine to participate in meetings of the Council were routinely extended “in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard”, without specification of any rules.

Table 14  
Invitations not expressly extended under rule 37 or rule 39, 2020

Invitee	Meeting or videoconference record and date	Item
State of Palestine	<a href="#">S/PV.8706</a> , 21 January 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question
	<a href="#">S/PV.8717</a> , 11 February 2020	
	<a href="#">S/2020/341</a> , 23 April 2020	
	<a href="#">S/2020/596</a> , 24 June 2020	
	<a href="#">S/2020/736</a> , 21 July 2020	
	<a href="#">S/2020/1055</a> , 26 October 2020	
	<a href="#">S/PV.8699</a> , 9 January 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security
Holy See	<a href="#">S/PV.8706</a> , 21 January 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

## D. Discussions relating to participation

During the period under review, when non-members of the Council were invited to participate in a meeting, Council members generally spoke before Member States invited under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure and before those not expressly invited under any rule, except on some occasions when parties directly involved in the matter under consideration took the floor before Council members.<sup>198</sup> The practice of the Council with regard to invitees under rule 39 was less consistent and the order of speakers depended on whether or not they were participating in the meeting or videoconference to brief the Council.

In 2020, matters concerning participation in Council meetings and videoconferences were raised on several occasions. At an open videoconference<sup>199</sup> held on 21 October in connection with the item entitled “Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)”, the representative of Belgium expressed regret that it was not possible for the European Union Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues to give a complementary briefing to the one provided by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo. Echoing that view, the representative of France stated that the dispute between Serbia and Kosovo was a European security issue, which fully justified the role of the European Union in that matter. The representative of Germany considered that any picture of the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia remained incomplete without the briefing by the European Union Special Representative and expressed regret that the briefing had been blocked by the President of the Council.

At an open videoconference<sup>200</sup> held on 27 April in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, focusing on youth and peace and security, the delegation of Norway, on behalf of the Nordic countries, welcomed the participation of the young civil society briefers. The delegation underlined in its statement the importance of the voices of civil society and youth-led organizations, which continued to bring vital input into the work and considerations of the Council, even amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The delegation of Tunisia

and the representative of Switzerland further called on the Council to strengthen the role of youth and integrate a youth and peace and security analysis into the Council’s items by inviting more young briefers.

During an open videoconference<sup>201</sup> held on 15 December in connection with the item entitled “Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan”, the representative of the United Kingdom stated that it was a “great shame” that the representative of South Sudan did not make a request under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure to be in the Council as it discussed the plight facing millions of his compatriots.

Participation in Council meetings was discussed in more detail during the annual open debate on the working methods of the Council, an open videoconference held in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of 30 August 2017 (S/2017/507)” (see case 5) and during the 8764th meeting of the Council, held under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East” (see case 6).

### Case 5 Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)

On 15 May, at the initiative of Estonia, which held the presidency for the month, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, whose representative held the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions,<sup>202</sup> Council members held an open videoconference on the working methods of the Council in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”, focusing on the issue of ensuring transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the work of the Council.<sup>203</sup>

In their statements, Council members and other delegations discussed the importance of transparency and inclusivity in the work of the Council, in particular through the participation of the wider United Nations membership, representatives of civil society and other stakeholders in Council meetings. In her statement, the representative of the Philippines noted that the increased participation of non-Council members sent the important message that the Council recognized

<sup>198</sup> For more information on the order of speaking see sect. VII above.

<sup>199</sup> See S/2020/1040.

<sup>200</sup> See S/2020/346.

<sup>201</sup> See S/2020/1237.

<sup>202</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/374).

<sup>203</sup> See S/2020/418. For more information on the videoconference, see case 1 above.

their contribution and promoted inclusiveness, which put unilateralism “in check”. The representative of Cuba stated that any State directly involved or particularly affected by a matter under discussion should be allowed to participate in deliberations and decision-making of the Council on matters directly concerning it, as established by Article 31 of the Charter. The delegation of Cyprus questioned the rationale for host countries not being able to participate in Council meetings with troop-contributing countries. The delegation of Guatemala stated that interactions with troop-contributing countries clearly increased the capacity of the Council to make appropriate, effective and timely decisions to fulfil its responsibilities.

Several delegations stressed the importance of civil society participation in Council activities to provide first-hand experience on the issues on the Council’s agenda and inform Council decision-making.<sup>204</sup> Some delegations specifically underlined the need for more women civil society briefers in Council meetings.<sup>205</sup> The delegation of Canada maintained that women should not be relegated to participating in informal briefings and side events. The representative of the United Kingdom stated that engaging with a diverse set of briefers was an important element of transparency and that the Council needed to do better with handling the risk of reprisals against civil society members who participated in Council meetings.

Both members and non-members of the Council acknowledged the importance of open debates in enhancing inclusivity and transparency in the work of the Council.<sup>206</sup> Speaking on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, the representative of Switzerland recalled that the *raison d’être* of open debates was to give the opportunity to the wider membership to inform Council deliberations rather than to merely accompany the adoption of pre-defined Council outcomes. Encouraging the full and active participation of all interested Member States in the context of the working

methods adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the delegation of Canada and the representative of El Salvador proposed that open debates be accessible in all official languages.

The impact of the working methods of the Council adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic on the participation of briefers and non-Council members was addressed in several statements. A number of delegations welcomed the efforts made by Council members to facilitate the participation of non-Council members in open videoconferences.<sup>207</sup> The representative of Austria and the delegation of Ireland noted the positive aspects of the use of videoconference technology, in particular for speakers who would not otherwise be able to travel to New York. The delegation of Norway stated that the practice of inviting civil society and United Nations briefers should be maintained throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, especially since the situation in relevant countries could change profoundly and rapidly. The representative of Liechtenstein considered that the use of Arria-formula videoconferences should be opened up for increased participation by briefers from civil society, in particular those who could have difficulty in accessing the Council during normal times, including women, young people and persons with disabilities.

Some delegations highlighted the obstacles to the participation of non-Council members in Council videoconferences. The representative of Austria noted that the participation of the wider membership in open videoconferences, in accordance with rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, was possible only in written form, thus compounding the lack of interaction between Council members and the wider membership. The delegation of Ireland noted that it was still not possible for non-members of the Council to deliver oral statements at videoconferences and welcomed the presidency’s clarification that if it became technically feasible, non-members of the Council could be able to do so. The representative of Cuba added that the new working methods were not sufficient, because they did not allow for the participation of a State non-member of the Council in a closed videoconference when a topic affecting it specifically was being discussed, as established by rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council. The delegation of Brazil stated that it was paramount to allow non-members of the Council to participate in Council discussions whenever their interests were especially affected. The

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<sup>204</sup> United Kingdom, Viet Nam (on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Council), Australia, Austria, Canada, El Salvador, Italy, New Zealand (on behalf of 24 countries that had served as elected Council members between 2011 and 2019), Liechtenstein, Malta, Norway (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Philippines and Turkey.

<sup>205</sup> Australia, Canada, Italy, New Zealand (on behalf of 24 countries that had served as elected Council members between 2011 and 2019) and Norway (on behalf of the Nordic countries).

<sup>206</sup> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Bahrain, El Salvador, Guatemala and Morocco.

<sup>207</sup> Australia, Ireland, Republic of Korea and Switzerland (on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group).



representative of El Salvador commended the efforts made to keep the open debate format active despite the challenges posed by the pandemic and expressed hope that participation could be extended in the short-term beyond the inclusion of written statements as documents of the Council and that participants could have their statements heard in all the United Nations official languages. She considered that the practice could be carried over to other Council meetings that took place in more private environments, such as informal interactive dialogues. Speaking on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, the representative of Switzerland expressed concern that civil society representatives, in particular women, had had little opportunity to brief the Council since the beginning of the practice of holding virtual meetings.

### Case 6

#### The situation in the Middle East

At its 8764th meeting,<sup>208</sup> held on 5 October under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”, the Council discussed the implementation of resolution 2118 (2013) on the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. The representative of the United Kingdom, together with the representatives of Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany and the United States, raised an objection to the proposal by the Russian Federation, which held the presidency for the month, to invite José Bustani, former Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), to participate in the meeting under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure. The representative of the United Kingdom noted that the purpose of the meeting was for the Council to review the implementation of resolution 2118 (2013) and the decision of 27 September 2013 by the Executive Council of OPCW. Agreeing that the presidency of the Council should have the space to propose briefers, he stated that they must be relevant to and knowledgeable of the topic under discussion. According to the representative of the United Kingdom, given Mr. Bustani’s departure from OPCW many years before it considered the Syrian chemical weapons file, he was not in a position to provide relevant knowledge or information on the implementation of resolution 2118 (2013).

The President of the Council responded that in the history of the Council, a briever, in particular one proposed by the presidency of the Council, was rarely rejected and that even though certain briefers proposed by presidencies had many issues, the competence of

those briefers had not been challenged. The representative of China stated that Mr. Bustani was well suited to be a briever and would bring unique value to the meeting. Moreover, at previous Council meetings, Council members did not try to block or raise objections to invitations under rule 39 even though some briefers had not been nearly as professional or representative as Mr. Bustani.

While agreeing about the need to hold a procedural vote to determine whether the Council could extend an invitation to Mr. Bustani under rule 39, Council members expressed divergent views on the terms of the motion. The President of the Council proposed that Council vote on a motion to oppose Mr. Bustani briefing the meeting. By contrast, the representative of the United Kingdom stated that the Council should vote on a motion to support the proposal of the Russian Federation to invite the briever.

The President of the Council noted that rule 39 said nothing about the procedure as to whom the Council invited or how, or on which of the questions should be dealt with first. The representative of France stated that rule 39 was “absolutely crystal clear” and that if one wished to invite an additional briever without agreement, the Council would vote on that proposal, which needed nine votes to be accepted, and recalled that all permanent members were in agreement on that.

Underlining his authority as the President of the Council to read the rules of procedure and lead the proceedings in such a way as was deemed necessary, the President of the Council put to the vote the question of whether the Council agreed to invite Mr. Bustani to provide a briefing. The Council failed to adopt the proposal to extend the invitation to Mr. Bustani under rule 39 for lack of the required number of affirmative votes.<sup>209</sup>

Having adopted the provisional agenda for the meeting, the Council proceeded with its consideration of the item on the agenda. During the subsequent discussion, the President, speaking in his national capacity, said that he would read out the statement of Mr. Bustani, which had been “blocked”, as part of his own statement as the representative of the Russian Federation.<sup>210</sup>

<sup>208</sup> See [S/PV.8764](#).

<sup>209</sup> The proposal received three votes in favour (China, Russian Federation, South Africa), six against (Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States) and six abstentions (Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, Viet Nam).

<sup>210</sup> See [S/PV.8764](#).

## IX. Decision-making and voting

### Note

Section IX covers the practice of the Council with regard to decision-making, including voting. Article 27 of the Charter and rule 40 of the provisional rules of procedure govern the voting in the Council. They provide that decisions on procedural matters require an affirmative vote of 9 of the 15 Council members, while decisions on substantive matters require an affirmative vote of nine Council members, including all of the permanent members.

This section also covers rules 31, 32, 34 to 36 and 38 of the provisional rules of procedure, which govern the conduct of business with regard to voting on draft resolutions, amendments and substantive motions.

### Article 27

1. Each member of the Security Council shall have one vote.

2. Decisions of the Security Council on procedural matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members.

3. Decisions of the Security Council on all other matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members; provided that, in decisions under Chapter VI, and under paragraph 3 of Article 52, a party to a dispute shall abstain from voting.

### Rule 31

*Proposed resolutions, amendments and substantive motions shall normally be placed before the representatives in writing.*

### Rule 32

*Principal motions and draft resolutions shall have precedence in the order of their submission.*

*Parts of a motion or of a draft resolution shall be voted on separately at the request of any representative, unless the original mover objects.*

### Rule 34

*It shall not be necessary for any motion or draft resolution proposed by a representative on the Security Council to be seconded before being put to a vote.*

### Rule 35

*A motion or draft resolution can at any time be withdrawn so long as no vote has been taken with respect to it.*

*If the motion or draft resolution has been seconded, the representative on the Security Council who has seconded it may require that it be put to the vote as his motion or draft resolution with the same right of precedence as if the original mover had not withdrawn it.*

### Rule 36

*If two or more amendments to a motion or draft resolution are proposed, the President shall rule on the order in which they are to be voted upon. Ordinarily, the Security Council shall first vote on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed until all amendments have been put to the vote, but when an amendment adds to or deletes from the text of a motion or draft resolution, that amendment shall be voted on first.*

### Rule 38

*Any Member of the United Nations invited in accordance with the preceding rule, or in application of Article 32 of the Charter, to participate in the discussions of the Security Council may submit proposals and draft resolutions. These proposals and draft resolutions may be put to a vote only at the request of a representative on the Security Council.*

### Rule 40

*Voting in the Security Council shall be in accordance with the relevant Articles of the Charter and of the Statute of the International Court of Justice.*

This section comprises five subsections, namely: A. Decisions of the Council; B. Penholdership and sponsorship in accordance with rule 38; C. Decision-making by voting; D. Decision-making without a vote; and E. Discussions concerning the decision-making process.

In 2020, rule 31 of the provisional rules of procedure was routinely applied in Council meetings, in particular in connection with the written voting procedure agreed upon to allow for voting despite the inability of Council members to meet in person during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were several instances of submission of competing draft resolutions, which

were voted on in their order of submission pursuant to rule 32, as described in subsection A below. That notwithstanding, there were no instances of explicit invocation of rules 32 or 34.

Rule 36 was explicitly referred to once during the period under review. At the 8700th meeting, held on 10 January under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”, the President of the Council invoked rule 36 and put to a vote an oral amendment submitted by the Russian Federation to a draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany. The proposed amendment failed to obtain the required number of votes and the Council proceeded to vote on and adopt the draft resolution as originally proposed.<sup>211</sup>

### A. Decisions of the Council

At its meetings during the period under review, the Council continued to adopt resolutions and issue statements by the President, in addition to making procedural decisions. Decisions of the Council also took the form of notes by the President and letters from the President, which were not adopted at meetings and were issued as documents of the Council. In 2020, the Council also adopted resolutions and presidential statements in accordance with the written procedures

established in the letters dated 27 March and 7 May 2020 from the President of the Council to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Council.<sup>212</sup>

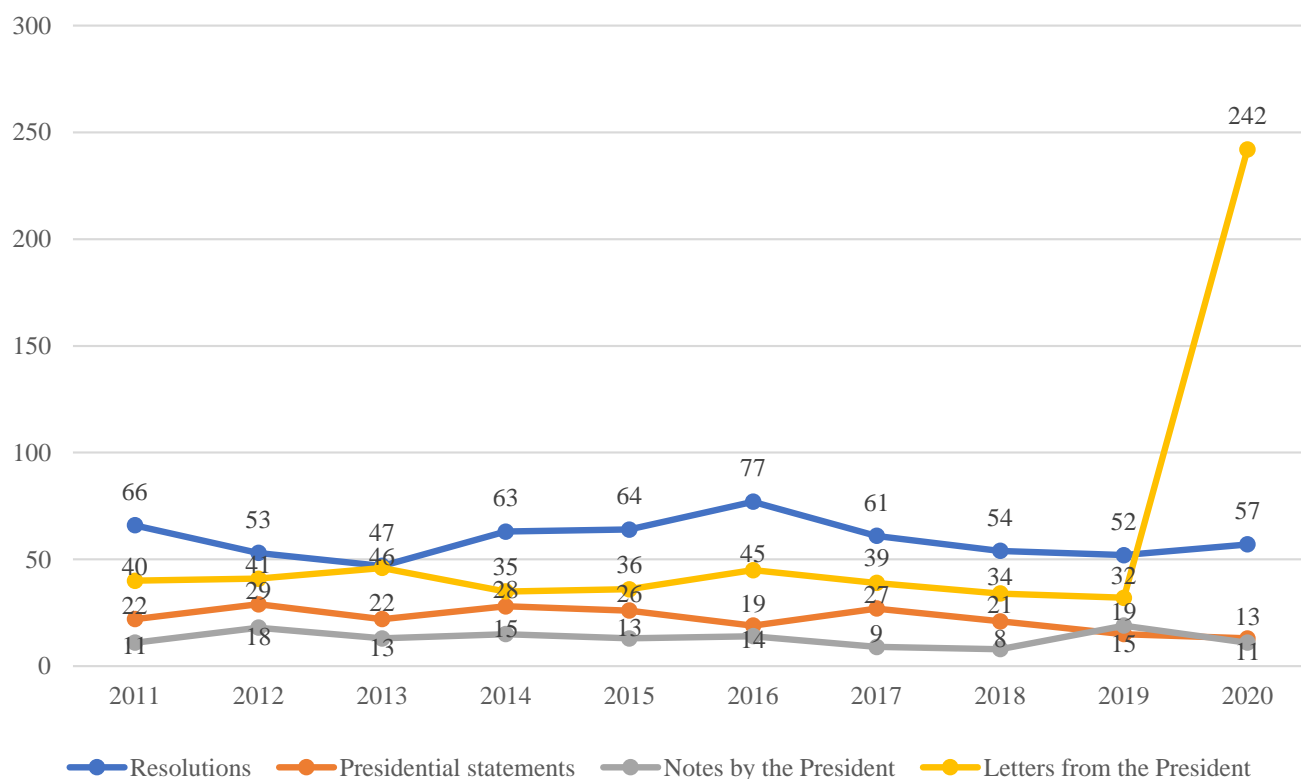
In 2020, the Council adopted 57 resolutions and issued 13 presidential statements. Of the 57 resolutions adopted, 23 (40.4 per cent) were adopted in a meeting of the Council and 34 (59.6 per cent) were adopted through the written procedure agreed upon to be followed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the 13 presidential statements, nine (69.2 per cent) were issued at a meeting of the Council and four (30.8 per cent) were issued through the agreed written procedure. In addition, the Council issued 11 notes by the President and 242 letters from the President. The very significant increase in letters from the President in 2020 compared with previous years was due to the working methods agreed to and developed during the COVID-19 pandemic to: (a) record in a letter from the President the specific working methods applicable each month; (b) compile in letters from the President the statements and interventions made by briefers, Council members and non-Council members during open videoconferences; and (c) record the various steps of the written procedure for the adoption of resolutions agreed upon by Council members during the COVID-19 pandemic. Out of the 242 letters from the President, 118 (48.8 per cent) were letters compiling the interventions of the briefers and of all Council and non-Council members who requested the inclusion of their statements in the document, and 81 (33.5 per cent) were letters recording the various steps of the written procedure for the adoption of resolutions.<sup>213</sup> Figure VII shows the total number of resolutions adopted and presidential statements, notes and letters from the President issued during the past decade (2011–2020).

<sup>211</sup> See [S/PV.8700](#). The result of the voting on the proposed oral amendment was as follows: *for*: China, Russian Federation, Viet Nam; *against*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States; *abstaining*: Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia. The result of the voting on the draft resolution ([S/2020/24](#)) was as follows: *for*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, Viet Nam; *abstaining*: China, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States. The draft resolution was adopted as resolution [2504 \(2020\)](#). During the 8700th meeting, the Russian Federation withdrew its draft resolution contained in document [S/2020/25](#) (see [S/PV.8700](#)). For more information on the draft resolution, see part I, sect. 20.

<sup>212</sup> See [S/2020/253](#) and [S/2020/372](#). For more information on the written procedures for the adoption of resolutions and presidential statements, see sect. I.D above.

<sup>213</sup> See [S/2020/253](#), [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#).

Figure VII  
Resolutions adopted and statements and notes by and letters from the President issued, 2011–2020



*Multiple decisions in one meeting*

During 2020, the Council continued the standard practice of adopting a single decision in a meeting and there was no instance where more than one draft resolution was put to a vote at a single meeting. This notwithstanding, as described in section I.D above, amendments to a draft resolution were voted on concurrently in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”. In accordance with the written voting procedure, within 12 hours of the conclusion of the voting on a draft resolution, the President convened a videoconference to announce the outcome of the vote.<sup>214</sup> In several instances, announcements of the outcome of the vote for more than one decision were made in a single videoconference.

**B. Penholdership and sponsorship in accordance with rule 38**

A draft resolution may be submitted by any member of the Council. The note by the President dated 30 August 2017 provides that the members of the Council support, where appropriate, the informal arrangement whereby one or more Council members, as

penholder(s), initiate and chair the informal drafting process. In accordance with the note, any member of the Council may be a penholder and more than one Council member may act as co-penholders, when it is deemed to add value, taking into account as appropriate the expertise and/or contributions of Council members on the subject. In the note, Council members reaffirmed that all members of the Council should be allowed to participate fully in the preparation of, inter alia, resolutions, presidential statements and press statements of the Council and the drafting of all documents such as resolutions and presidential statements and press statements should be carried out in an inclusive manner that would allow participation of all members of the Council. The members of the Council also encouraged the penholder or co-penholders, depending on the subject as well as the urgency of the situation on the ground, to provide reasonably sufficient time for consideration by all Council members when draft resolutions, presidential statements and press statements of the Council are placed under a silence procedure.<sup>215</sup>

Pursuant to rule 38 of the provisional rules of procedure, any Member of the United Nations invited in accordance with rule 37 or in application of Article 32 of the Charter to participate in the discussions of the

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> S/2017/507, annex, paras. 78–80 and 82.

Council may also submit proposals and draft resolutions, but proposals and draft resolutions may be put to a vote only at the request of a Council member. The Member States that submit a draft resolution become sponsors of the draft resolution. A draft resolution is described as a presidential text if all the Council members agree to be co-sponsors. In 2020, one presidential text was submitted, compared with none in 2019.<sup>216</sup> At an open videoconference<sup>217</sup> convened on

29 June in connection with the item entitled “Peace and security in Africa”, focusing on the question of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, the representative of Egypt submitted a draft resolution under rule 38 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council for deliberation by the Council that was “consistent with the outcomes of the African Union Bureau meeting”.<sup>218</sup>

During the period under review, the Council considered a total of 64 draft resolutions, four of which were sponsored by non-members of the Council as shown in table 15.

<sup>216</sup> Resolution 2538 (2020). For more information on past practice concerning presidential texts, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2016–2017 to 2019*.

<sup>217</sup> See S/2020/636.

<sup>218</sup> See S/2020/617.

Table 15  
Draft resolutions co-sponsored by non-members of the Council, 2020

Draft resolution	Item	Meeting or videoconference record and date	Resolution	Council member sponsors	Non-Council member co-sponsors
S/2020/240	United Nations peacekeeping operations	S/2020/249 30 March 2020	Resolution 2518 (2020)	8 Council members (China, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Niger, Russian Federation, South Africa, Tunisia, Viet Nam)	36 Member States <sup>a</sup>
S/2020/680	Maintenance of international peace and security	S/PV.8748 14 July 2020	Resolution 2535 (2020)	13 Council members (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	71 Member States <sup>b</sup>
S/2020/838	United Nations peacekeeping operations	S/2020/851 28 August 2020	Resolution 2538 (2020)	All Council members	82 Member States <sup>c</sup>
S/2020/957	Maintenance of international peace and security	S/PV.8763 2 October 2020	Resolution 2546 (2020)	4 Council members (Belgium, Estonia, Germany, France)	23 Member States <sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Cyprus, Djibouti, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Greece, Guinea, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey, United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay.

<sup>b</sup> Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay.

<sup>c</sup> Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay.

<sup>d</sup> Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

### C. Decision-making by voting

According to Article 27 (2) and (3) of the Charter, decisions of the Council on procedural matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine Council members. On all other matters, that is, substantive or non-procedural matters, an affirmative vote of nine Council members is required, including the concurring votes of the permanent members.

The result of a vote in the Council often does not in itself indicate whether the Council considers the matter voted upon to be procedural or substantive. For example, whether a vote is procedural or not cannot be determined when a proposal is: (a) adopted by a unanimous vote; (b) adopted by an affirmative vote of all permanent members; or (c) not adopted having failed to obtain the nine affirmative votes required. When a proposal is adopted having obtained nine or more affirmative votes with one or more permanent members casting a negative vote, that indicates that the

vote is considered procedural. Conversely, if the proposal is not adopted, the matter voted upon is considered to be substantive. On certain occasions, in its early years, the Council found it necessary to decide, by vote, the question of whether the matter under consideration was procedural within the meaning of Article 27 (2). That procedure is known as the “preliminary question”, after the language used in the San Francisco Statement on Voting Procedure. In recent years, however, including during the period under review, there have been no instances of the Council deciding to examine the preliminary question. Furthermore, procedural motions, such as the adoption of the agenda, the extension of invitations to participate in meetings and the suspension or adjournment of a meeting, have generally been decided upon by the Council without a vote. When such motions were voted upon, the vote was considered procedural. In 2020, the Council voted on procedural matters on one occasion (see table 16).

Table 16

#### Case in which the vote indicated the procedural character of the matter, 2020

<i>Item</i>	<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Subject of proposal</i>	<i>Vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>	<i>Permanent members casting a negative vote</i>
The situation in the Middle East	<a href="#">S/PV.8764</a> 5 October 2020	Invitation to participate in the proceeding under rule 39 <sup>a</sup>	3-6-6	France, United Kingdom, United States

<sup>a</sup> For more information on the adoption of the agenda, see sections III.A and III.C above.

#### *Adoption of resolutions*

During the period under review, the majority of resolutions adopted by the Council (44 out of 57, or

77.2 per cent) were adopted unanimously. A total of 13 resolutions were adopted without a unanimous vote (see table 17).

Table 17

#### Resolutions adopted without a unanimous vote, 2020

<i>Resolution</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Meeting or videoconference record and date</i>	<i>Votes in favour</i>	<i>Votes against</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
<a href="#">2504 (2020)</a>	The situation in the Middle East <sup>a</sup>	<a href="#">S/PV.8700</a> 10 January 2020	11 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, Viet Nam)	None	4 (China, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States)
<a href="#">2507 (2020)</a>	The situation in the Central African Republic <sup>b</sup>	<a href="#">S/PV.8712</a> 31 January 2020	13 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	2 (China, Russian Federation)



<i>Resolution</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Meeting or videoconference record and date</i>	<i>Votes in favour</i>	<i>Votes against</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
2509 (2020)	The situation in Libya <sup>c</sup>	<a href="#">S/PV.8719</a> 11 February 2020	14 (Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	1 (Russian Federation)
2510 (2020)	The situation in Libya <sup>c</sup>	<a href="#">S/PV.8722</a> 12 February 2020	14 (Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	1 (Russian Federation)
2511 (2020)	The situation in the Middle East <sup>a</sup>	<a href="#">S/PV.8732</a> 25 February 2020	13 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	2 (China, Russian Federation)
2521 (2020)	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan <sup>d</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/462</a> <a href="#">S/2020/469</a> 29 May 2020	12 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	3 (China, Russian Federation, South Africa)
2529 (2020)	International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals <sup>e</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/590</a> <a href="#">S/2020/602</a> 25 June 2020	14 (Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	1 (Russian Federation)
2533 (2020)	The situation in the Middle East <sup>a</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/698</a> <a href="#">S/2020/702</a> 11 July 2020	12 (Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	3 (China, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation)
2542 (2020)	The situation in Libya <sup>c</sup>	<a href="#">S/PV.8758</a> 15 September 2020	13 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	2 (China, Russian Federation)
2547 (2020)	The question concerning Haiti <sup>f</sup>	<a href="#">S/PV.8768</a> 15 October 2020	13 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	2 (China, Russian Federation)
2548 (2020)	The situation concerning Western Sahara <sup>g</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/1063</a> <a href="#">S/2020/1075</a> 30 October 2020	13 (Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	2 (Russian Federation, South Africa)
2551 (2020)	The situation in Somalia <sup>h</sup>	<a href="#">S/PV.8775</a> 12 November 2020	13 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	2 (China, Russian Federation)

## Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2020

<i>Resolution</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Meeting or videoconference record and date</i>	<i>Votes in favour</i>	<i>Votes against</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
2556 (2020)	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo <sup>i</sup>	S/2020/1253 S/2020/1265 18 December 2020	14 (Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	None	1 (Russian Federation)

<sup>a</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 20.

<sup>b</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 5.

<sup>c</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 11.

<sup>d</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 8.

<sup>e</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 24.

<sup>f</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 13.

<sup>g</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 1.

<sup>h</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 2.

<sup>i</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 4.

### *Draft resolutions not adopted*

In accordance with Article 27 (3) of the Charter, a draft resolution on non-procedural matters is not adopted when it fails to obtain the nine affirmative votes required, or when a negative vote is cast by a permanent member. During the period under review,

there were four instances in which a draft resolution was not adopted because it failed to obtain the nine affirmative votes required and three instances when a draft resolution was not adopted owing to a negative vote cast by a permanent member (see table 18).

Table 18

### **Draft resolutions not adopted owing to the negative vote of a permanent member or for lack of the requisite number of votes, 2020**

<i>Draft resolution</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Votes in favour</i>	<i>Votes against</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
S/2020/654	The situation in the Middle East <sup>a</sup>	S/2020/661 7 July 2020	13 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	2 (China, Russian Federation)	None
S/2020/658	The situation in the Middle East <sup>a</sup>	S/2020/671 8 July 2020	4 (China, Russian Federation, South Africa, Viet Nam)	7 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States)	4 (Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia)
S/2020/667	The situation in the Middle East <sup>a</sup>	S/2020/693 10 July 2020	13 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam)	2 (China and Russian Federation)	None

<i>Draft resolution</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Votes in favour</i>	<i>Votes against</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/683</a>	The situation in the Middle East <sup>a</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/694</a> 10 July 2020	4 (China, Russian Federation, South Africa, Viet Nam)	7 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States)	4 (Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia)
<a href="#">S/2020/797</a>	Non-proliferation <sup>b</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/805</a> 14 August 2020	2 (Dominican Republic, United States)	2 (China, Russian Federation)	11 (Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, Viet Nam)
<a href="#">S/2020/852</a>	Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts <sup>c</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/870</a> 31 August 2020	14 (Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, Viet Nam)	1 (United States)	None
<a href="#">S/2020/1054</a>	Women and peace and security <sup>d</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/1076</a> 30 October 2020	5 (China, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa, Viet Nam)	None	10 (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States)

<sup>a</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 20.

<sup>b</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 32.A.

<sup>c</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 29.

<sup>d</sup> For more information on the discussion, see part I, sect. 28.

## D. Decision-making without a vote

A procedural or substantive motion may be adopted in the Council without a vote or by consensus. In 2020, there were no instances of a resolution being adopted without a vote. A total of 23 resolutions were adopted by a show of hands and 34 resolutions were adopted in accordance with the written procedure agreed upon by Council members during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>219</sup>

Statements by the President on behalf of the Council continued to be adopted by consensus. A total of 13 statements by the President were adopted during the period under review.<sup>220</sup> In line with past practice, 13 of the presidential statements were adopted in meetings of the Council, while 4 presidential statements were adopted in accordance with the written no-objection procedure established in the letters from the President dated 2 April and 7 May 2020 and were

<sup>219</sup> See [S/2020/253](#). For more information on the written procedure for the adoption of resolutions during the COVID-19 pandemic, see sect. I.D above.

<sup>220</sup> For a complete list of presidential statements adopted during the period under review, see part I, chap. II, of the report of the Council to the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly ([A/75/2](#)).

subsequently read out by the President of the Council during open videoconferences.<sup>221</sup>

Following past practice, during the period under review, notes and letters by the President of the Council were adopted by consensus and issued as documents of the Council. In 2020, the Council issued 11 notes and 242 letters by the President.<sup>222</sup> As indicated in subsection A above, the majority of the letters from the President (199 out of 242, or 82.2 per cent) were used to circulate compilations of interventions in open videoconferences and the initiation and outcome of the written voting procedure for the adoption of resolutions.

Notes and letters by the President are rarely adopted during Council meetings. During the period under review, one note by the President, namely, the note concerning the adoption of the draft annual report of the Council to the General Assembly for the period from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019, was adopted during a meeting of the Council, in line with past practice.<sup>223</sup>

## E. Discussions concerning the decision-making process

During the period under review, in a letter dated 30 March 2020 addressed to the President of the Council, the representative of Switzerland, writing on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, welcomed the active discussions within the Council and proactive efforts, including by the Council's presidency, to adapt the working methods to the extraordinary circumstances, notably with a procedure for voting on draft resolutions in the absence of a physical meeting.<sup>224</sup>

Furthermore, Council members and the wider membership discussed issues pertaining to the decision-making of the Council in connection with the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the

President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)" (see case 7) and under the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security" (see case 8).

### Case 7 Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)

On 15 May, at the initiative of Estonia, which held the presidency for the month, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, whose representative held the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions,<sup>225</sup> Council members held an open videoconference<sup>226</sup> in connection with the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)", focusing on the issue of ensuring transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the work of the Council. In their statements, Council members and other delegations focused on the need for transparency and inclusivity in the decision-making process of the Council, the use of the veto and the written procedure for the adoption of resolutions established during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Several members and non-members of the Council highlighted the importance of transparency and inclusivity in the Council's decision-making, particularly vis-à-vis the wider membership of the United Nations. The delegation of Argentina stated that, without affecting the effectiveness of decision-making, the Council could and must be more transparent and democratic in its relationship with the wider membership. The delegation of Australia highlighted the importance of transparency in improving decision-making and perhaps even implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Council's work. The representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia expressed the view that the participation of Member States in the decision-making process of the Council remained low owing to the Council's working methods and the lack of transparency under the pretence of effective, efficient and rapid decision-making. Citing Article 31 of the Charter, the delegation of Brazil and the representative of Cuba stressed the need to include all States involved in the work of the Council, as appropriate. The representative of Lebanon underlined that the Council could improve the efficiency of its work by enhancing meaningful communication and the involvement of concerned countries in the decision-making process,

<sup>221</sup> See S/2020/273 and S/2020/372.

<sup>222</sup> For a complete list of notes by the President of the Council issued in 2020, see part I, chap. XIII, of the report of the Council to the seventy-fifth session of the Assembly (A/75/2) and [www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/notes-president-2020](http://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/notes-president-2020). For a complete list of letters from the President of the Council issued in 2020, see part I, chap. III, of the report of the Council to the Assembly (A/75/2) and [www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/letters-exchanged-between-secretary-general-and-president-security-council-2020](http://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/letters-exchanged-between-secretary-general-and-president-security-council-2020).

<sup>223</sup> S/2020/666, adopted at the 8746th meeting (see S/PV.8746). For more information, see part IV, sect. I.F.

<sup>224</sup> See S/2020/252.

<sup>225</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/374).

<sup>226</sup> See S/2020/418. For more information on the videoconference, see case 1 above.

while the representative of Costa Rica stressed that co-penholdership, consultations and information-sharing would improve decision-making and make for a democratic Council. The delegation of Egypt stated that draft resolutions and presidential statements should be shared with the wider membership to give them the opportunity to share their views and proposals. The representative of the Philippines emphasized the need for greater participation of regional organizations in the Council's decision-making processes. While noting the importance of transparency and inclusivity in the decision-making process of the Council, the representative of Japan recalled that the prime objective was to enhance the Council's capacity to take the best action in the most efficient and timely manner to maintain and restore international peace and security.

Multiple delegations stressed the need for burden-sharing and an equitable distribution of responsibility for the drafting of Council decisions and outcomes among all Council members.<sup>227</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation noted that three permanent members of the Council remained the sole penholders on most of the country-specific dossiers on the Council's agenda and expressed willingness to support all Council members to adopt the draft presidential note on penholdership submitted by his delegation. The delegation of Brazil underlined that a fair and adequate distribution of penholderships, as well as co-penholderships, among permanent and elected members of the Council, would help to foster greater levels of transparency and accountability. The delegation of the United Arab Emirates indicated that achieving a more balanced division of labour for penholdership was not simply a question of inclusiveness, but could contribute to a more effective Council. The delegation of Ireland noted that burden-sharing and equitable distribution of work could be done through a transparent process for the allocation of penholderships that took the expertise of elected members into account.

Several delegations called for the inclusion of the chairs of sanctions committees in the drafting of

Council decisions.<sup>228</sup> The representative of Liechtenstein called for the finalization of the outstanding presidential note on penholdership. The representative of Costa Rica underlined the need to integrate countries with knowledge and experience of a particular topic, or countries that chaired a subsidiary body, in the negotiation and drafting process. Speaking on behalf of the elected members of the Council, the representative of Viet Nam called for the further implementation of the agreed presidential note on the selection of the chairs of subsidiary bodies and renewed discussions on the note on co-penholdership. Furthermore, the delegation of the United Arab Emirates urged that the chairs of sanctions committees be consulted in drafting Council outcomes if they were not serving as co-penholders.

With regard to the use of the veto, the representatives of New Zealand and the Philippines noted that the matter was intrinsically connected to the Council's working methods and was an important area to reform. The delegation of Argentina said that the use of the veto limited the Council's action, with a considerable impact on the agility of the Council's work both in normal times and in the unprecedented circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several delegations expressed their support for the initiative of France and Mexico for the voluntary and collective suspension of the use of the veto of permanent members in cases involving mass atrocities and the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, which provided that Council members should refrain from voting against credible Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.<sup>229</sup> The representative of Liechtenstein remained convinced that the use of a veto should automatically result in the convening of the General Assembly to discuss the matter. The representative of Cuba expressed support for the elimination of the veto to limit exclusionary practices and ensure genuine participation and democratization in the Council's work and decision-making.

Most Council members welcomed the adoption of new working methods by the Council during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the written procedure for the adoption of decisions. Several delegations stressed the need for the Council to maintain transparency in the decision-making process under

<sup>227</sup> Russian Federation, Viet Nam (on behalf of the elected members of the Council), Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Ireland, Italy, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Mexico, New Zealand (on behalf of 24 countries that had served as elected Council members between 2011 and 2019), Nigeria, Norway (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Republic of Korea, Singapore, Switzerland (on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group), Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>228</sup> Brazil, Costa Rica, New Zealand (on behalf of 24 countries that had served as elected Council members between 2011 and 2019) and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>229</sup> Canada, Ecuador, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Singapore, Norway (on behalf of the Nordic countries) and Switzerland (on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group).

those extraordinary circumstances.<sup>230</sup> The delegation of Chile highlighted the Council's achievement in going beyond the conventional working methods and utilizing new technologies to facilitate decision-making during the global pandemic.

**Case 8**  
**Maintenance of international peace and security**

At its 8699th meeting, held on 9 January at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency for the month,<sup>231</sup> the Council held an open debate under the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security" and the sub-item entitled "Upholding the United Nations Charter", marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations. During the open debate, a number of speakers<sup>232</sup> discussed the use of a veto by the permanent members of the Council in the context of the purposes and principles of the Charter. The representative of Lithuania affirmed that inaction on the part of the Council and the international community, directly or indirectly, encouraged aggression and the use of force and threatened the entire multilateral system, based on international law. She added that restraining the use of the veto would make the Council's responses to ongoing crises more coherent and reliable and expressed her country's strong support for the initiative to limit the use of the veto in cases involving mass atrocities, genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity.<sup>233</sup> Similarly, several speakers expressed support for the initiative by France and Mexico to limit the use of the veto.<sup>234</sup> The representative of Estonia recalled that those with special tools and privileges granted by the Charter had a special responsibility, particularly with regard to the veto, and added that countries should refrain from voting against initiatives aimed at preventing or halting mass atrocities.<sup>235</sup> The representative of the United Kingdom noted the commitment not to vote against Council action to stop mass atrocities and crimes against humanity and added

that, despite the lack of agreement on the veto, Member States should also pursue other areas of Council reform. The representative of Ukraine said that, despite what the drafters of the Charter envisioned from Article 27, which showed the intention to remove the prospect of a Council member casting a vote in cases of conflict of interest, that integral part of the Charter was often overlooked.

Underlining that political divisions prevented the Council from taking the action necessary to address some of the worst crises, the representative of Liechtenstein pointed out that the use of the veto had significantly increased over the past decade, most significantly with respect to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. She added that the use of the veto had a paralysing effect on anticipatory obedience, with negative consequences on the ability of the Council to perform its tasks, and expressed supported for the "automatic convening" of the General Assembly, on behalf of the entire membership, whenever a veto was cast in the Council to discuss the matter.<sup>236</sup> The representative of Costa Rica expressed support for Liechtenstein's proposal and added that when a permanent member resorted to the veto or the threat of the veto, it publicly turned its back on the right of victims to justice and peace and undermined international efforts to combat impunity. He noted that if the Council was to discharge its crucial role of upholding respect for the Charter, it should borne in mind that the use of the veto, principally when atrocity crimes were involved, betrayed the trust of millions of people in the United Nations as their last source of hope.<sup>237</sup> The representative of Croatia stated that effective prevention was too often blocked by divisions in the Council and the use of the veto by its permanent members. The representative of Albania underlined that membership in the Council was a responsibility, not a privilege, and implied the exercise of that responsibility on behalf of all Members of the United Nations, in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter. She added that the use of the veto to protect narrow national interests in situations of mass atrocities was unacceptable. The representative of Egypt also pointed out the contradiction in the use of the Charter, for it afforded only five States the right of the veto, which created a fundamental imbalance in the effectiveness and credibility of the Council and the United Nations in many situations.<sup>238</sup>

<sup>230</sup> France, United Kingdom, Austria, Brazil, Chile, Fiji, Italy, Liechtenstein and Philippines.

<sup>231</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 31 December 2019 (S/2020/1).

<sup>232</sup> See S/PV.8699. The meeting was resumed on 10 and 13 January (S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1) and S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2)).

<sup>233</sup> See S/PV.8699.

<sup>234</sup> See S/PV.8699 (France, Belgium, Liechtenstein and Mexico); S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1) (Croatia); and S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2) (Djibouti and Austria).

<sup>235</sup> See S/PV.8699.

<sup>236</sup> For more information on that proposal, see part IV, sect. I.

<sup>237</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1).

<sup>238</sup> See S/PV.8699.



## X. Languages

### Note

Section X covers rules 41 to 47 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, which relate to the official and working languages of the Council, interpretation and the languages of meeting records and published resolutions and decisions.

#### Rule 41

*Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be both the official and the working languages of the Security Council.*

#### Rule 42

*Speeches made in any of the six languages of the Security Council shall be interpreted into the other five languages.*

#### Rule 43

*[Deleted]*

#### Rule 44

*Any representative may make a speech in a language other than the languages of the Security Council. In this case, he shall himself provide for interpretation into one of those languages. Interpretation into the other languages of the Security Council by the interpreters of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first such language.*

#### Rule 45

*Verbatim records of meetings of the Security Council shall be drawn up in the languages of the Council.*

#### Rule 46

*All resolutions and other documents shall be published in the languages of the Security Council.*

#### Rule 47

*Documents of the Security Council shall, if the Security Council so decides, be published in any language other than the languages of the Council.*

During the period under review, rules 41 to 47 were applied consistently in meetings of the Council. There were no meetings where speakers delivered their statements in a language other than the six official languages of the United Nations, as provided for in

rule 44. However, because of technical constraints, Council videoconferences held from 24 March to 31 August 2020 were conducted only in English.<sup>239</sup> On 31 August, Council members commenced the use of a remote interpretation platform for open videoconferences. The need to ensure multilingualism in the videoconferences was raised by Council members and non-Council members during their discussions and in communications of the Council.

### Discussions

At the open videoconference<sup>240</sup> held on 15 May in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”, several members and non-members of the Council stressed the need to ensure the availability of interpretation in all six official languages of the Council in videoconferences.<sup>241</sup> The representative of France stated that as the Council moved to videoconference meetings to adjust to the COVID-19 pandemic, the only victim in that process was multilingualism. He expressed the opinion that the language regime of the United Nations was established to enable the proper functioning of its deliberative bodies and that the legitimacy and efficiency of the Organization depended on respect for that core value. He added that, as French was also a working language of the United Nations, his delegation would conduct the presidency of the Council in June 2020 in that language. The representative of Canada stated that open debates should allow for the full and active participation of all interested Member States in the official language of their choice.

More generally, the representative of Bahrain underscored the need for Council documents in the six official languages to be made available promptly on the Council’s website. Similarly, the delegation of Egypt stated that it was important to ensure that the documents and reports submitted to the Council were made available to the wider membership and in all six official languages of the United Nations, unless they included information related to the national security of States that did not wish to make that information available to the public.

<sup>239</sup> See S/2020/273 and S/2020/372. Nonetheless, under the presidency of France in June 2020, members of the Council delivered statements in videoconferences in both English and French (see, for example, S/2020/514).

<sup>240</sup> See S/2020/418.

<sup>241</sup> France, United Kingdom, Austria, Canada, El Salvador, Lebanon and Switzerland (on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group).

At an open videoconference<sup>242</sup> held on 8 September in connection with the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations”, focusing on the role of the International Organization of la Francophonie, the Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie stated that linguistic diversity had been undermined in recent months and had contributed to creating inequities in the participation of various members of the Council, as well as stakeholders and members of the public that followed the Council’s work. He therefore welcomed the use, for the first time, of the Council’s new multilingual videoconferencing system, which allowed participants to have access to simultaneous interpretation of the six official languages of the United Nations, including French. He described it as a very important step towards ensuring that all delegations could participate from a distance in the work of the Council fully, equitably and effectively. The representatives of Belgium and the Niger also welcomed the availability of interpretation during the videoconference.

<sup>242</sup> S/2020/893.

## Communications

Given the limitations on the use of interpretation in the videoconferences of the Council, in a letter dated 2 September 2020 addressed to the representatives of the members of the Council,<sup>243</sup> the representative of the Niger, the President of the Council for the month, noted his intention to conduct the business of the Council and deliver the Niger’s national statements during that month in its official language, with the English versions of such statements being made available to Council members in advance. In that regard, the President encouraged the deployment of the interpretation platform to allow Council members to speak in their official languages during videoconferences as soon as possible. In a letter dated 2 November 2020,<sup>244</sup> the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the President of the Council for the month, noted that Council members had agreed that multilingualism would be prioritized in November 2020 for greater effectiveness and involvement at its meetings.

<sup>243</sup> S/2020/877.

<sup>244</sup> S/2020/1077.

## XI. Status of the provisional rules of procedure

### Note

Section XI covers the deliberations of the Council concerning its provisional rules of procedure. Article 30 of the Charter of the United Nations provides that the Council shall adopt its own rules of procedure. Since their adoption by the Council at its first meeting, held on 17 January 1946, the provisional rules of procedure have been amended 11 times, with the last amendment being adopted in 1982.<sup>245</sup> On 27 December 2019, the Council issued a note by the President providing that, in line with the efforts of the United Nations and its Member States to promote the advancement of women and greater gender inclusivity

<sup>245</sup> The provisional rules of procedure of the Council were amended five times during the Council’s first year, at its 31st, 41st, 42nd, 44th and 48th meetings, held on 9 April, 16 and 17 May and 6 and 24 June 1946; twice in its second year, at its 138th and 222nd meetings, on 4 June and 9 December 1947; and subsequently at its 468th meeting on 28 February 1950; 1463rd meeting, on 24 January 1969; 1761st meeting, on 17 January 1974; and 2410th meeting, on 21 December 1982. The provisional rules were issued under the symbols S/96 and S/96/Add.1, with subsequent versions being issued as revisions, the latest of which was issued under the symbol S/96/Rev.7.

and equality in their policies and practices, the members of the Council confirmed, as a matter of existing practice, that any reference to a male person in the Council’s provisional rules of procedure was deemed not to be limited to male persons and also constituted a reference to a female person, unless the context clearly indicated otherwise.<sup>246</sup>

### Article 30

*The Security Council shall adopt its own rules of procedure, including the method of selecting its President.*

During the period under review, the question of the status of the provisional rules of procedure, including in connection with Article 30 of the Charter, was raised at the open videoconference<sup>247</sup> held on 15 May in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”. The representative of Cuba, echoed by the delegation of Fiji, called for the adoption of the Council’s provisional rules of procedure, which, she noted, remained provisional to date. The delegation of India stated that while some

<sup>246</sup> S/2019/996.

<sup>247</sup> S/2020/418.

had argued that the provisional status of the rules enabled the Council to have greater flexibility and adopt new practices when the situation demanded, that approach specifically limited the role of the elected members, who were left to deal with procedural uncertainties.

As described in more detail in section I above, in the letters from the President of the Council dated 2 April and 7 May 2020<sup>248</sup> it was agreed that the

<sup>248</sup> See [S/2020/273](#) and [S/2020/372](#).

presidencies would work “in the spirit” of the Council’s provisional rules of procedure to ensure that Council members participating in a virtual Council discussion were represented by appropriately credentialed delegates, pursuant to rule 13 of the provisional rules of procedure; that the agenda was adopted at the outset of each videoconference, pursuant to rule 9; and that any other relevant rules were observed as a matter of practice, under Chapter VI of the provisional rules of procedure.

## Annex

### Videoconferences held by the members of the Council, 2020

<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference format/ record</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Other documents</i>
30 March 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Closed <sup>a</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/254</a>		
30 March 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question	Closed <sup>a</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/263</a>		
30 March 2020	Non-proliferation/Democratic People’s Republic of Korea	Closed/adoption <sup>a</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/270</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2515 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/246</a>
30 March 2020	The situation in Somalia	Closed/adoption <sup>a</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/266</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2516 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/247</a>
30 March 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Closed/adoption <sup>a</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/267</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2517 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/248</a>
30 March 2020	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Closed/adoption <sup>a</sup> <a href="#">S/2020/268</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2518 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/249</a>
31 March 2020	The situation in Afghanistan	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/274</a>		
7 April 2020	The situation in Mali	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/286</a>		
14 April 2020	Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2016/53</a> )	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/305</a>		
16 April 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/313</a>		
21 April 2020	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	Open <a href="#">S/2020/340</a>		
22 April 2020	The situation in the Great Lakes region	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/325</a>		

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference format/ record</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Other documents</i>
23 April 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question	Open <a href="#">S/2020/341</a>		
24 April 2020	Security Council resolutions <a href="#">1160 (1998)</a> , <a href="#">1199 (1998)</a> , <a href="#">1203 (1998)</a> , <a href="#">1239 (1999)</a> and <a href="#">1244 (1999)</a>	Open <a href="#">S/2020/339</a>		
24 April 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/336</a>		
27 April 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/346</a>		
28 April 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/351</a>		
29 April 2020	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	Open <a href="#">S/2020/340</a>	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/6</a>	
29 April 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/353</a>		
29 April 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/354</a>		
5 May 2020	The situation in Libya	Open <a href="#">S/2020/371</a>		
6 May 2020	The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Open <a href="#">S/2020/379</a>		
12 May 2020	The situation concerning Iraq	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/397</a>		
14 May 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/411</a>		
14 May 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/408</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2519 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/405</a>
15 May 2020	Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2017/507</a> )	Open <a href="#">S/2020/418</a>		
18 May 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/420</a>		
19 May 2020	The situation in Libya	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/421</a>		
19 May 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/427</a>		
20 May 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/430</a>		
20 May 2020	The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	Open <a href="#">S/2020/435</a>		
21 May 2020	The situation in Somalia	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/436</a>		

<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference format/ record</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Other documents</i>
27 May 2020	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	Open <a href="#">S/2020/465</a>		
28 May 2020	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/489</a>		
29 May 2020	The situation in Somalia	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/466</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/459</a>
29 May 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/469</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2521 (2020)</a> 12-0-3	<a href="#">S/2020/462</a>
29 May 2020	The situation concerning Iraq	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/467</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2522 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/460</a>
29 May 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and the South Sudan	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/468</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2523 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/461</a>
3 June 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/496</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/494</a>
3 June 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/497</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2525 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/495</a>
4 June 2020	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Open <a href="#">S/2020/514</a>		
5 June 2020	Peace and security in Africa	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/515</a>		
5 June 2020	The situation in Libya	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/509</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2526 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/504</a>
8 June 2020	International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals	Open <a href="#">S/2020/527</a>		
9 June 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open <a href="#">S/2020/528</a>		
9 June 2020	The situation in Somalia	Open <a href="#">S/2020/529</a>		
10 June 2020	Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1353 (2001)</a> , annex II, sections A and B – United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali	Closed		
10 June 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open <a href="#">S/2020/538</a>		
11 June 2020	The situation in Mali	Open <a href="#">S/2020/541</a>		
12 June 2020	Central African region	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/542</a>		

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference format/ record</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Other documents</i>
15 June 2020	Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1353 (2001)</a> , annex II, sections A and B – United Nations Disengagement Observer Force	Closed		
15 June 2020	Threats to international peace and security	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/547</a>		
16 June 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/551</a>		
18 June 2020	Briefing by the High Commissioner for Refugees	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/560</a>		
19 June 2020	The question concerning Haiti	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/568</a>		
22 June 2020	The situation in the Central African Republic	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/572</a>		
22 June 2020	The situation in Somalia	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/573</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2527 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/569</a>
23 June 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/582</a>		
24 June 2020	Children and armed conflict	Open <a href="#">S/2020/594</a>		
24 June 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question	Open <a href="#">S/2020/596</a>		
25 June 2020	The situation in Afghanistan	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/597</a>		
25 June 2020	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/598</a>		
25 June 2020	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/601</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2528 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/589</a>
25 June 2020	International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/602</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2529 (2020)</a> 14-0-1	<a href="#">S/2020/590</a>
29 June 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/635</a>		
29 June 2020	Peace and security in Africa	Open <a href="#">S/2020/636</a>		
29 June 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/624</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2530 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/612</a>
29 June 2020	The situation in Mali	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/625</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/613</a>



<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference format/ record</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Other documents</i>
30 June 2020	Non-proliferation	Open <a href="#">S/2020/644</a>		
1 July 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/638</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2532 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/632</a>
2 July 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/663</a>		
7 July 2020	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Open <a href="#">S/2020/674</a>		
7 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/661</a>	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/654</a> not adopted 13-2-0	<a href="#">S/2020/657</a>
8 July 2020	The situation in Libya	Open <a href="#">S/2020/686</a>		
8 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/671</a>	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/658</a> not adopted 4-7-4	<a href="#">S/2020/664</a>
9 July 2020	Peace and security in West Africa	Open <a href="#">S/2020/706</a>		
10 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/693</a>	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/667</a> not adopted 13-2-0	<a href="#">S/2020/681</a>
10 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/694</a>	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/683</a> not adopted 4-7-4	<a href="#">S/2020/688</a>
11 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/702</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2533 (2020)</a> 12-0-3	<a href="#">S/2020/698</a>
15 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/721</a>		
16 July 2020	Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1353 (2001)</a> , annex II, sections A and B – United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus	Closed		
17 July 2020	Women and peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/727</a>		
21 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question	Open <a href="#">S/2020/736</a>		
23 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/743</a>		
24 July 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/751</a>		
29 July 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/758</a>		

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference format/ record</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Other documents</i>
6 August 2020	Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts	Open <a href="#">S/2020/791</a>		
10 August 2020	Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1353 (2001)</a> , annex II, sections A and B – United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon	Closed		
12 August 2020	Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	Open <a href="#">S/2020/799</a>		
14 August 2020	Non-proliferation	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/805</a>	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/797</a> not adopted 2-2-11	<a href="#">S/2020/803</a>
19 August 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/823</a>		
24 August 2020	Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts	Open <a href="#">S/2020/836</a>		
25 August 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/837</a>		
26 August 2020	The situation concerning Iraq	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/845</a>		
27 August 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/866</a>		
28 August 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/857</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2539 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/853</a>
28 August 2020	United Nations Peacekeeping operations	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/856</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2538 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/851</a>
28 August 2020	The situation in Somalia	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/858</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2540 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/854</a>
31 August 2020	The situation in Mali	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/867</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2541 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/859</a>
31 August 2020	Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/870</a>	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/852</a> not adopted 14-1-0	<a href="#">S/2020/865</a>
2 September 2020	The situation in Libya	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/879</a>		
3 September 2020	The situation in Afghanistan	Open <a href="#">S/2020/891</a>		
8 September 2020	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations	Open <a href="#">S/2020/893</a>		
9 September 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/897</a>		

<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference format/ record</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Other documents</i>
10 September 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/902</a>		
14 September 2020	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Open <a href="#">S/2020/911</a>		
15 September 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open <a href="#">S/2020/913</a>		
16 September 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/915</a>		
16 September 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/914</a>		
17 September 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/929</a>		
17 September 2020	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	Open <a href="#">S/2020/930</a>		
18 September 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/936</a>		
18 September 2020	Threats to international peace and security	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/920</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2544 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/917</a>
24 September 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/953</a>		
5 October 2020	The question concerning Haiti	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/979</a>		
6 October 2020	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/987</a>		
12 October 2020	Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1353 (2001)</a> , annex II, sections A and B – United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara	Closed		
14 October 2020	Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2016/53</a> )	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1023</a>		
20 October 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1037</a>		
21 October 2020	Security Council resolutions <a href="#">1160 (1998)</a> , <a href="#">1199 (1998)</a> , <a href="#">1203 (1998)</a> , <a href="#">1239 (1999)</a> and <a href="#">1244 (1999)</a>	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1040</a>		

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference format/ record</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Other documents</i>
26 October 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1055</a>		
27 October 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1049</a>		
28 October 2020	Briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice	Closed		
28 October 2020	The situation in Somalia	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1079</a>		
29 October 2020	Women and peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1084</a>		
30 October 2020	The situation concerning Western Sahara	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/1075</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2548 (2020)</a> 13-0-2	<a href="#">S/2020/1063</a>
30 October 2020	Women and peace and security	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/1076</a>	Draft resolution <a href="#">S/2020/1054</a> not adopted 5-0-10	<a href="#">S/2020/1066</a>
3 November 2020	Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1090</a>		
4 November 2020	Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1353 (2001)</a> , annex II, sections A and B – United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic	Closed		
4 November 2020	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1092</a>		
5 November 2020	The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1103</a>		
5 November 2020	The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/1087</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2549 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/1085</a>
5 November 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1088</a>		
10 November 2020	The situation in Libya	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1108</a>		
11 November 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1109</a>		
16 November 2020	Peace and security in Africa	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1126</a>		
18 November 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1128</a>		

<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference format/ record</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Other documents</i>
19 November 2020	The situation in Libya	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1129</a>		
23 November 2020	Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1143</a>		
23 November 2020	The situation in Somalia	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1136</a>		
24 November 2020	The situation concerning Iraq	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1144</a>		
25 November 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1147</a>		
2 December 2020	Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1353 (2001)</a> , annex II, sections A and B – United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Closed		
3 December 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1176</a>		
3 December 2020	Maintenance of international peace and security	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/1167</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/1166</a>
4 December 2020	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1179</a>	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/11</a> <a href="#">S/PRST/2020/12</a>	
4 December 2020	The situation in Somalia	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1173</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2554 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/1170</a>
8 December 2020	Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1353 (2001)</a> , annex II, sections A and B – United Nations Disengagement Observer Force	Closed		
8 December 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1183</a>		
9 December 2020	Central African region	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1188</a>		
10 December 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1192</a>		
10 December 2020	Threats to international peace and security	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1193</a>		
11 December 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1202</a>		

## Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2020

<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Videoconference format/ record</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Other documents</i>
11 December 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1235</a>		
14 December 2020	International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1236</a>		
15 December 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1237</a>		
16 December 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1257</a>		
16 December 2020	Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1258</a>		
17 December 2020	The situation in Afghanistan	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1274</a>		
18 December 2020	The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1286</a>		
18 December 2020	The situation in the Middle East	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/1263</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2555 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/1252</a>
18 December 2020	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of Congo	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/1265</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a> 14-0-1	<a href="#">S/2020/1253</a>
18 December 2020	Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/1266</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2557 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/1254</a>
21 December 2020	The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law: strengthening the cooperation between the Security Council and the International Court of Justice	Open	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/13</a>	
21 December 2020	The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question	Open/closed <a href="#">S/2020/1275</a>		
21 December 2020	Peacebuilding and sustaining peace	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/1273</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2558 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/1269</a>
22 December 2020	Non-proliferation	Open <a href="#">S/2020/1324</a>		
22 December 2020	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/1280</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2559 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/1276</a>
29 December 2020	Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts	Open/adoption <a href="#">S/2020/1311</a>	Resolution <a href="#">2560 (2020)</a> 15-0-0	<a href="#">S/2020/1305</a>

<sup>a</sup> Owing to technical difficulties, these videoconferences were closed instead of open.



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**Part III**  
**Purposes and principles of the Charter of  
the United Nations**

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## Introductory note

Part III covers the consideration by the Security Council of Articles contained in Chapter I of the Charter of the United Nations relating to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, namely Articles 1 (2), 2 (4), 2 (5) and 2 (7). Part III consists of four sections. Section I features material relating to the principle of self-determination of peoples under Article 1 (2) of the Charter. Section II covers material relevant to the prohibition of the use of force or the threat of the use of force as enshrined in Article 2 (4). Section III deals with the obligation of States to refrain from assisting a target of the Council's enforcement action as stipulated in Article 2 (5). Section IV highlights the Council's consideration of the principle of non-intervention by the United Nations in the internal affairs of States, as regulated by Article 2 (7).

In 2020, Council members and other participants in Council discussions deliberated on the principle of self-determination in both thematic and country-specific contexts. Of a thematic nature were the discussions at a meeting on the importance of respecting the Charter of the United Nations and at an open videoconference on strengthening cooperation between the Council and the International Court of Justice. Council members also discussed the principle of self-determination in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They also addressed the application and interpretation of Article 2 (4) in relation to the prohibition of the use or threat of use of force in the context of the above-mentioned discussions, as well as in relation to the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Council members discussed the obligation of States to refrain from giving assistance to any State or non-State actor against which the United Nations was taking preventive or enforcement action pursuant to Article 2 (5) in connection with the situations in Libya and Yemen. Furthermore, Council members reflected on the principles enshrined in Article 2 (7) during their consideration of the situation in the Middle East, as well as during the discussions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

During the period under review, the Council did not adopt any decision containing explicit references to Articles 1 (2), 2 (4), 2 (5) or 2 (7). Nonetheless, part III includes Council decisions featuring language relating to the principles enshrined in those Articles. In addition, it includes implicit invocations of Article 1 (2) and explicit invocations of Articles 2 (4) and 2 (7) found in the correspondence addressed to the Council during the period under review.

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## I. Principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples under Article 1, paragraph 2

*Article 1, paragraph 2*

*[The Purposes of the United Nations are:]*

*To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace.*

### Note

Section I concerns the practice of the Council regarding the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples as enshrined in Article 1 (2) of the Charter of the United Nations. Subsection A features decisions relevant to the principle enshrined in

Article 1 (2). Subsection B describes the references made to the principle of self-determination in Council discussions during the reporting period. Subsection C sets out instances in which the principle of self-determination was invoked in communications addressed to the Council.

### A. Decisions relating to Article 1 (2)

During the period under review, the Council did not explicitly invoke Article 1 (2) in its decisions. However, language found in one Council decision, adopted in connection with the envisaged referendum in Western Sahara, is of relevance for the interpretation and application of Article 1 (2) (see table 1).

Table 1  
**Decisions containing implicit references to Article 1 (2)**

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<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Provision</i>
<b>The situation concerning Western Sahara</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2548 (2020)</a> 30 October 2020	Reaffirming its commitment to assist the parties to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, based on compromise, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and noting the role and responsibilities of the parties in this respect (seventh preambular paragraph)  Calls upon the parties to resume negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General without preconditions and in good faith, taking into account the efforts made since 2006 and subsequent developments, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and notes the role and responsibilities of the parties in this respect (para. 4)

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### B. Discussion relating to Article 1 (2)

During the period under review, Article 1 (2) was not explicitly invoked in discussions at meetings of the Council or in open videoconferences. Nevertheless, the principle of self-determination was addressed by Council members in the context of both country-specific and thematic discussions, as elaborated below.

Council members and other entities discussed the principle of self-determination during an open debate on the importance of upholding the Charter of the United Nations, held in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” (case 1), and the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people at several meetings and

videoconferences held in 2020 in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question” (case 2).

Council members also referred to the principle of self-determination in connection with the situation concerning Western Sahara and the adoption of resolution [2548 \(2020\)](#) on 30 October.<sup>1</sup> In addition, during a videoconference held on 18 December in connection with the item entitled “The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security”, focused on strengthening the cooperation between the Council and

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<sup>1</sup> See [S/2020/1075](#) (Russian Federation, South Africa and Viet Nam).

the International Court of Justice,<sup>2</sup> the President of the Court underscored that the Court, in the 1971 advisory opinion on Namibia,<sup>3</sup> had clarified the applicability of the right to self-determination to the people of Namibia, which, together with the identification of the legal consequences that attached to resolution 276 (1970), had paved the way for concrete actions that later facilitated the access of Namibia to its independence. The representative of Tunisia noted the relevance of the Court against the backdrop of the wide range of subjects over which it had exercised jurisdiction and developed groundbreaking international jurisprudence, especially on the principles of self-determination of peoples and equal rights.<sup>4</sup>

### **Case 1 Maintenance of international peace and security**

On 9 January, at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>5</sup> the Council convened its 8699th meeting to discuss, under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, the importance of upholding the Charter of the United Nations. The meeting, which marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, extended over a period of three days, on 9, 10 and 13 January.<sup>6</sup> The Secretary-General, in his briefing to the Council, referred to the principles of non-intervention, self-determination and sovereign equality of Member States and said that they were not favours or concessions, but rather the foundation of international relations and core to peace and international law.<sup>7</sup>

Following the briefing, the representative of Tunisia said that the principles of the Charter, including the right to self-determination and the sovereign equality of States, continued to constitute the cornerstones governing international relations.

At the meeting, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Haiti stated that, to reach the objective of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, the founders of the Organization had defined a range of purposes and principles in Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter, which constituted a true legal basis for the multilateral system. The representative of Ethiopia said that the grand principles laid down by the founders of the United Nations remained pertinent and immutable and that its primary purposes, as defined in Article 1 of the Charter, remained as relevant as they had been in 1945. Echoing that view, the representative of Djibouti underscored that, in reviewing the Preamble to the Charter, as well as its purposes and principles as set out in Articles 1 and 2, one could not help but be struck by how the concerns that had motivated the Charter’s adoption remained salient.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, speakers discussed the application of the principle of self-determination to specific conflicts and situations. The representative of South Africa stated that the Charter provisions of the equality of nations, mutual respect and adherence to international law must be upheld to resolve disputes and prevent conflicts and warned against allowing competing political interests to undermine respect for international law and self-determination in cases such as those of Western Sahara and the occupied Palestinian territories.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the representative of Pakistan voiced concern regarding the events that had amplified the multiple and complex threats to peace and security in the Middle East, including the denial of self-determination to the Palestinian people. He also requested the Council and the Secretary-General to act decisively to prevent a disastrous war between Pakistan and India, to call for an end to the grave human rights violations in occupied Jammu and Kashmir and to enable the Kashmiri people to exercise the right to self-determination promised to them in the resolutions of the Council.

With regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the representative of Senegal recalled the words of his country’s President, Macky Sall, concerning the right of peoples to self-determination, renewing the call for reconciliation between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples and for the realization of the right of the Palestinian people to a viable State.<sup>10</sup> The observer for the State of Palestine underscored that the State of Palestine had pledged to respect the Charter and to act in accordance with its purposes and principles despite being unjustly denied full membership in the United

<sup>2</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#).

<sup>3</sup> *Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 (1970), Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 1971*, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#).

<sup>5</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 31 December 2019 ([S/2020/1](#)).

<sup>6</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#). Owing to the financial difficulties faced by the United Nations, the timing of meetings of the Council was restricted to 10 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–6 p.m., resulting in meetings being extended over several days.

<sup>7</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>8</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>9</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>10</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

Nations and deprived of one of the most fundamental principles of the Charter, namely that of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. He stressed the firm conviction of the people of the State of Palestine in the inevitability of the realization of their right to self-determination, in spite of the profound scope and scale of that injustice, and the firm conviction that upholding the Charter was vital for the fulfilment of that right and of all of their inalienable rights for the achievement of a just and peaceful solution. He also stressed that, when the right to self-determination was violated, when force was unlawfully used, when threats of annexation were routinely declared, and when all such actions had no consequences to hold the perpetrators accountable for their crimes, the international community had failed in its obligation to uphold the Charter.

The representative of Armenia recalled that the Charter rested upon the objective of developing friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the principles of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples.<sup>11</sup> He noted that the right to self-determination was a fundamental principle that had led to a significant increase in the membership of the United Nations since its foundation. In addition, he stressed that the right of people to freely determine their future was anchored in the purposes and principles of the Charter and that, in that context, the inalienable right of Nagorno-Karabakh to self-determination through the legally binding free expression of their will represented a fundamental principle and basic premise for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. He added that violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to self-determination, often represented the root causes of conflicts. The representative of Azerbaijan, referring to the statement by the representative of Armenia, said that speculations and claims with regard to the right of self-determination had nothing in common with that principle as set forth in the Charter.<sup>12</sup>

Participants at the meetings also addressed the principle of self-determination guiding international relations and the multilateral system, including the Council. The representative of Kenya, speaking on the issue of Non-Self-Governing Territories, noted that it would take political will, trust, courage, the embrace of differences and a change of mindset to ensure respect for the principles of international law, equal rights and self-determination of peoples.<sup>13</sup>

The representative of Slovenia underscored that the rights and obligations arising from the Charter were equal for all Members and that all States benefited from them. She added that all States were obliged to ensure respect for the Charter and that Articles 1 and 2 must be the basis for their behaviour in the international arena.<sup>14</sup>

The representative of Cuba emphasized that, in carrying out its functions in accordance with the powers conferred upon it by the Charter, the Council must do so in accordance with justice and principles. She added that the Council must exhaust all avenues to prevent attempts to violate the right of peoples to self-determination. The representative of Uruguay stressed the need to not lose sight of the principles of non-intervention and self-determination when dealing with internal conflicts. The representative of Azerbaijan, speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, highlighted the Movement's commitment to supporting and promoting the purposes and principles of the Charter, which extended to the right to self-determination of peoples under foreign occupation and colonial or alien domination.

The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela stressed that States were obliged to abide by the Charter in its entirety, and noted that there was consensus regarding certain principles, including the right to self-determination of peoples, which were essential for the maintenance of international peace and security.

## **Case 2**

### **The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

At its 8706th meeting, held on 21 and 22 January, the Council held its quarterly open debate under the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question".<sup>15</sup> During the meeting, several speakers<sup>16</sup> expressed support for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. The observer for the State of Palestine underscored that, despite the adversity and setbacks, the Palestinian people were steadfast in the pursuit of their rights, including to self-determination.<sup>17</sup>

The representative of the Niger urged the international community to continue its quest for a

<sup>11</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>12</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>13</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>14</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>15</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#) and [S/PV.8706 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>16</sup> Viet Nam (see [S/PV.8706](#)); and Malaysia, Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Nigeria, Sudan (on behalf of the Group of Arab States) and Sri Lanka (see [S/PV.8706 \(Resumption 1\)](#)).

<sup>17</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#).



solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that took into account the security aspirations of Israel and the legitimate and inalienable rights of Palestinians, including their right to self-determination. The representative of Tunisia stressed that Israel should be committed to ending its occupation and enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their legitimate rights, primary among them their right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent State. The representative of Bangladesh gave the assurance that her country would continue to firmly stand with its Palestinian brothers and sisters in their just and rightful struggle for self-determination, until the State of Palestine was established, and the representative of Cuba reaffirmed his country's unreserved support for a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that enabled the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination and to have an independent and sovereign State within the pre-1967 borders.<sup>18</sup> In his capacity as Chair of the Group of Arab States, the representative of the Sudan said that the Arab States hoped to see, during 2020, tangible progress towards realizing the legitimate national goals and aspirations of the Palestinian people to enjoy their fair rights, especially the right to self-determination, freedom and an independent sovereign Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital. The representative of the Dominican Republic emphasized that any participation by the Council must be framed by recognition and respect for mutual rights, including self-determination and independence, by non-interference and by the legacy of understandings reflected in previous agreements.<sup>19</sup>

On 11 February, the Council convened its 8717th meeting following the release by the United States of its "Peace to Prosperity" vision for Israelis and Palestinians on 28 January 2020.<sup>20</sup> In addressing the Council, the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, recalled the broad rejection of the Israeli-United States deal, which flagrantly violated international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative and annulled the legitimacy of the Palestinians' rights to self-determination, freedom and independence in their own State. The representative of Tunisia pointed out that the meeting was being held as the Arab-Israeli conflict was at a critical juncture and tensions were rising in the region. He underscored that the aim was to end the occupation and restore the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, most importantly their rights to self-determination and to establish their own independent State along the borders of 4 June 1967. The

representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, while acknowledging the ongoing efforts of the United States to reinvigorate the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, reiterated the commitment of her country to the international community's long-standing, principled support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including to self-determination, and for the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders. She stressed that that vision still reflected the will of the international community and ought to be the starting point. The representative of the Dominican Republic reiterated his country's position on the need to respect the sovereignty and self-determination of peoples and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirmed its full support for a two-State solution, as set out in the various United Nations resolutions. The representative of South Africa thanked Mr. Abbas for his statement, in which he had articulated the true aspirations and the voice of the people of occupied Palestine, a people who lived under occupation in an asymmetrical environment and, for decades, had fought for its right to self-determination and for the recognition of its basic human rights. The representative of the United Kingdom said that Palestinians deserved self-determination and freedom from occupation and that Israelis also deserved to live free of terrorist rocket fire and in a future characterized by fruitful cooperation with their neighbours in the region.

On 24 June, Council members held an open videoconference, during which they heard briefings by the Secretary-General, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.<sup>21</sup> Representatives of all Council members, as well as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine and the representative of Israel, delivered their statements during the videoconference, while the delegations of non-Council members and the European Union submitted their statements in writing.<sup>22</sup>

During his briefing, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process underscored that all those who believed in the legitimate right of both Palestinians and Israelis to self-determination, security and a brighter future must reject the annexation by the Government of Israel of the West Bank and consolidate efforts to preserve a sustainable two-State solution.<sup>23</sup> The Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa of the United Kingdom said that the

<sup>18</sup> See [S/PV.8706 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>19</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#).

<sup>20</sup> See [S/PV.8717](#).

<sup>21</sup> See [S/2020/596](#).

<sup>22</sup> The delegations of the following countries submitted written statements: Costa Rica, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and United Arab Emirates (on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation).

<sup>23</sup> See [S/2020/596](#).

two-State solution was the only way to preserve the Jewish, democratic identity of Israel and realize Palestinians' rights, including to self-determination. The Deputy Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa recalled the violence, riots and civil disobedience campaigns that had swept across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as Palestinians had engaged in their struggle for their inalienable rights to freedom and self-determination. Decades later, a lasting, just and peaceful resolution of the continued occupation remained as elusive as it had been in 1948, when the matter was first brought to the Council. He asked what message the Council was sending to those fighting for their inalienable rights to freedom, self-determination and sovereignty and to those who oppressed and denied those rights. The representative of the Niger regretted that, 27 years after the signing of the first peace agreement, the Palestinians were not closer to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine stressed that, as the seventy-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter was being celebrated, it was necessary to honour the purposes and principles of the United Nations, namely respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction, the suppression of acts of aggression and the prohibition of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. He said that annexation, whether partial or total, gradual or immediate, was the ultimate breach of the Charter and could not go unchallenged.

In written submissions, several delegations of non-Council members and other entities also addressed the question of self-determination of the Palestinian people. The delegation of Egypt considered it inconceivable that the Middle East region could enjoy any degree of stability so long as the Palestinian people were unable to exercise their legitimate rights, particularly the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State. It warned that, by annexing Palestinian territory, Israel would allow extremist voices to claim that negotiations had failed to secure even a modicum of the Palestinian people's rights, particularly their legitimate right to self-determination. It also reaffirmed the long-standing position of Egypt that the Palestinian people had the right to exercise self-determination by establishing their independent State on the basis of the borders of 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital. In the statement submitted by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, he noted that, while the United Nations had catalysed the decolonization of many nations, it must fulfil its responsibilities in realizing the inherent rights of the Palestinians to self-determination and the

establishment of an independent Palestinian State in all of Palestine, with Al-Quds al-Sharif as its capital. The delegation of the United Arab Emirates, on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, reiterated the position of the Organization that the annexation of Palestinian land would violate international law, the Charter and relevant United Nations resolutions. It also warned that the implementation of that illegal, unilateral plan would undermine the realization by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination and the decades-long efforts made by the international community to achieve a two-State solution based on the 4 June 1967 borders and the prospects for realizing a just, lasting and comprehensive peace. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterated his country's support for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State over all of its national territory and Jerusalem as its capital.

The representative of Israel underscored that, should his country decide to extend its sovereignty, it would be doing so with respect to areas over which it had always maintained a legitimate historical and legal claim. He pointed out that those who opposed his country's legal claims to that territory wrongly mischaracterized any potential decision by Israel to extend its sovereignty to that territory as so-called "annexation", and that such objections were the result of embracing a Palestinian false narrative, rather than of an assessment of the historical and legal facts. He stressed that the Palestine Liberation Organization had never been a State and had never been the sovereign in that territory.

### **C. Invocation of the principle enshrined in Article 1 (2) in communications**

During the period under review, four explicit references to Article 1 (2) were made in a letter from the representative of Azerbaijan to the Secretary-General,<sup>24</sup> including in the annex thereto, entitled "Report on the fundamental norm of the territorial integrity of States and the right to self-determination in the light of Armenia's revisionist claims", which contained updates to a report submitted in 2008. According to the annexed report, although the right to self-determination and the principle of equal rights and self-determination enshrined in Article 1 (2) had not been clearly expressed as a legal right, its inclusion in the Charter, particularly in the context of the statement of purposes of the United Nations, provided the opportunity for the subsequent interpretation of the principle. In the report, it was also indicated that practice since 1945 within the

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<sup>24</sup> S/2020/729.

United Nations, both in general and in specific cases, could be seen as having ultimately established the legal standing of the right in international law.

In 2020, the principle of self-determination was invoked in several communications addressed to or brought to the attention of the Council, including communications from Member States relating to Western Sahara,<sup>25</sup> the Middle East, including the Palestinian question,<sup>26</sup> Nagorno-Karabakh,<sup>27</sup> the India-Pakistan question,<sup>28</sup> the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela<sup>29</sup> and the situation in eastern Ukraine.<sup>30</sup> The reports of the Secretary-General to the Council regarding the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine,<sup>31</sup> the situation concerning Western

Sahara<sup>32</sup> and the implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>33</sup> also contained references to the principle of self-determination. References to referendums that may be of relevance for the interpretation and application of Article 1 (2) of the Charter were also found in communications from the representative of Ukraine with respect to the referendum and elections carried out by the Russian Federation on the status of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol<sup>34</sup> and from the representative of Azerbaijan regarding the elections and constitutional referendums organized in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan in 2006 and 2017<sup>35</sup> and in the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its thirteenth session regarding the political status of Bougainville.<sup>36</sup> References to self-determination were also made in the Chair's summary of the open Arria-formula meeting held on 21 May 2020 on the situation in Crimea, transmitted to the President of the Council in a letter dated 9 June 2020 from the representative of the Russian Federation.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>25</sup> See S/2020/66, S/2020/627, S/2020/892, S/2020/991, S/2020/992, S/2020/1048, S/2020/1112, S/2020/1123, S/2020/1132 and S/2020/1268.

<sup>26</sup> See S/2020/33, S/2020/102, S/2020/104, S/2020/126, S/2020/208, S/2020/271, S/2020/306, S/2020/584, S/2020/1057, S/2020/1121 and S/2020/1175.

<sup>27</sup> See S/2020/169, S/2020/175, S/2020/279, S/2020/301, S/2020/404, S/2020/729, S/2020/947, S/2020/1149, S/2020/1187 and S/2020/1191.

<sup>28</sup> See S/2020/194, S/2020/432, S/2020/771 and S/2020/1127.

<sup>29</sup> See S/2020/337 and S/2020/520.

<sup>30</sup> See S/2020/530 and S/2020/118.

<sup>31</sup> See S/2020/555, S/2020/834 and S/2020/1234.

<sup>32</sup> See S/2020/938.

<sup>33</sup> See S/2020/345.

<sup>34</sup> See S/2020/256 and S/2020/426.

<sup>35</sup> See S/2020/503.

<sup>36</sup> See S/2020/80.

<sup>37</sup> See S/2020/530.

## II. Prohibition of the threat or use of force under Article 2, paragraph 4

### *Article 2, paragraph 4*

*All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.*

### Note

Section II covers the practice of the Council concerning the principle of the prohibition of the threat or use of force under Article 2 (4) of the Charter of the United Nations. Subsection A includes implicit references to Article 2 (4) in decisions adopted by the Council. Subsection B highlights constitutional discussions relating to the threat or use of force. Subsection C features explicit references to the principle enshrined in Article 2 (4) in communications to the Council.

### A. Decisions relating to Article 2 (4)

During the period under review, the Council did not adopt any decision containing explicit references to Article 2 (4). In a number of its decisions, however, the Council underlined the principles of Article 2 (4) by: (a) reaffirming the prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations; (b) reiterating the importance of good-neighbourliness and non-interference by States in the internal affairs of others; (c) calling for the cessation of support by States to armed groups engaged in destabilizing national and regional peace and security; and (d) calling upon parties to withdraw all military forces from a disputed area or occupied territories. The four themes are covered below.

#### **Affirmation of the prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations**

In 2020, the Council stressed the prohibition of the threat or use of force against other Member States through several decisions, in particular concerning the future status of Abyei and the situation in the Middle East (see table 2).

Table 2

**Decisions affirming the prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations**

*Decision and date*

*Provision*

**Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan**

Resolution [2550 \(2020\)](#)  
12 November 2020

Reiterating that the territorial boundaries of States shall not be altered by force and that any territorial disputes shall be settled exclusively by peaceful means, affirming the priority it attaches to the full and urgent implementation of all outstanding issues from the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 9 January 2005, and underscoring that the future status of Abyei shall be resolved by negotiations between the parties in a manner consistent with the Agreement and not by the unilateral actions of either party (third preambular paragraph)

**The situation in the Middle East**

Resolution [2530 \(2020\)](#)  
29 June 2020

Stressing that both parties must abide by the terms of the disengagement of forces agreement of 31 May 1974 between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic and scrupulously observe the ceasefire (third preambular paragraph)

*See also resolution [2555 \(2020\)](#), third preambular paragraph*

Stresses the obligation on both parties to scrupulously and fully respect the terms of the disengagement of forces agreement of 31 May 1974, calls upon the parties to exercise maximum restraint and prevent any breaches of the ceasefire and the area of separation, encourages the parties to take full advantage of the liaison function of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force regularly to address issues of mutual concern, as appropriate, and to maintain their liaison with the Force to prevent any escalation of the situation across the ceasefire line, and underscores that there should be no military activity of any kind in the area of separation, including military operations by the Syrian Arab Armed Forces (para. 2)

*See also resolution [2555 \(2020\)](#), para. 2*

**Reiteration of the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-interference and regional cooperation among States**

During the period under review, the Council reiterated in several of its decisions the principles enshrined in Article 2 (4) of good-neighbourliness, non-interference and regional cooperation with regard to

the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, South Sudan and the Sudan (see table 3). Furthermore, the Council consistently reaffirmed, in several decisions concerning country-specific situations, its respect for or commitment to the sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity of States.

Table 3

**Decisions affirming the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-interference and regional cooperation among States**

*Decision and date*

*Provision*

**The situation in the Central African Republic**

Resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#)  
12 November 2020

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Central African Republic, and recalling the importance of the principles of non-interference, good-neighbourliness and regional cooperation (second preambular paragraph)

Decision and date

Provision

### The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Resolution [2528 \(2020\)](#)  
25 June 2020

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as all States in the region, and emphasizing the need to respect fully the principles of non-interference, good-neighbourliness and regional cooperation (second preambular paragraph)

*See also resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), third preambular paragraph*

### The situation in Libya

Resolution [2509 \(2020\)](#)  
11 February 2020

Calls for full compliance by all Member States with the arms embargo, further calls upon all Member States not to intervene in the conflict or take measures that exacerbate the conflict, and reiterates that individuals and entities determined by the Committee to have violated the provisions of resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#), including the arms embargo, or assisted others in doing so, are subject to designation (para. 6)

Resolution [2510 \(2020\)](#)  
12 February 2020

Recalling the commitment of the participants at the Berlin Conference to refrain from interference in the armed conflict or in the internal affairs of Libya and their call upon all international actors to do the same (fifth preambular paragraph)

*See also resolution [2542 \(2020\)](#), twenty-sixth preambular paragraph*

Resolution [2542 \(2020\)](#)  
15 September 2020

Calling for full compliance with the arms embargo by all Member States, in line with resolution [2441 \(2018\)](#) and all of its subsequent and previous resolutions on the embargo, and further calling upon all Member States not to intervene in the conflict or take measures that exacerbate the conflict (penultimate preambular paragraph)

### Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#)  
12 March 2020

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of South Sudan, and recalling the importance of the principles of non-interference, good-neighbourliness and regional cooperation (second preambular paragraph)

Resolution [2550 \(2020\)](#)  
12 November 2020

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Sudan and South Sudan and to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and recalling the importance of the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-interference and regional cooperation (second preambular paragraph)

#### **Calls for the cessation of support by States to armed groups engaged in destabilizing national and regional peace and security**

During the period under review, the Council adopted decisions in which it called upon States to refrain from or prevent the provision of any form of support or assistance to armed groups, including through the financing of their activities, in relation to the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo<sup>38</sup> and Libya.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 14.

<sup>39</sup> Resolutions [2509 \(2020\)](#), seventh and ninth preambular paragraphs and para. 6; [2510 \(2020\)](#), para. 10; and [2542 \(2020\)](#), twenty-seventh preambular paragraph and para. 7.

#### **Calls upon parties to withdraw all military forces from a disputed area or occupied territories**

During the period under review and consistent with past practice, the Council urged the Government of Israel to expedite the withdrawal of its army from northern Ghajar, located on the border between Israel and Lebanon.<sup>40</sup>

### **B. Discussion relating to Article 2 (4)**

During the period under review, Article 2 (4) of the Charter was explicitly invoked five times during four Council meetings.<sup>41</sup> Article 2 was also explicitly referred to

<sup>40</sup> Resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#), para. 18.

<sup>41</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#) (Secretary-General) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#) (Austria); [S/PV.8726](#) (Estonia); [S/PV.8731](#) (Somalia); and [S/PV.8735](#) (Somalia).



seven times during a Council meeting held in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, with a focus on the importance of upholding the Charter of the United Nations.<sup>42</sup> Those references concerned the principle enshrined in Article 2 (4) that Member States should refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State (see case 3).

In several other Council meetings, reference was made to language that may be considered of relevance for the application and interpretation of Article 2 (4).<sup>43</sup>

Article 2 (4) was explicitly invoked once<sup>44</sup> and Article 2 referred to once<sup>45</sup> during open videoconferences held in relation to the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. During several open videoconferences, Council members and other delegations and entities discussed issues relevant to the interpretation and application of Article 2 (4) in relation to the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question (see case 4), and the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (see case 5), as well as in relation to cooperation between the Council and the International Court of Justice (see case 6).

In addition to the cases mentioned above and featured in more detail below, language that may be considered of relevance for the application and interpretation of Article 2 (4) was used in open videoconferences in connection with the situations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic, regarding respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-interference in their

internal affairs.<sup>46</sup> With regard to thematic discussions, during an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts”, focused on the linkages between terrorism and organized crime, some Council members and other Member States advocated measures to counter terrorism and organized crime and the linkages between them, to be taken in conformity with the Charter, international law and respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the countries concerned.<sup>47</sup> In ministerial-level open videoconferences held in connection with the items entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, focused on the comprehensive review of the situation in the Persian Gulf region,<sup>48</sup> and “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, focused on the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity,<sup>49</sup> participants often referred to the principles of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of States, non-interference in States’ internal affairs and the prohibition of the threat or use of force.

### Case 3 Maintenance of international peace and security

At its 8699th meeting, convened on 9, 10 and 13 January at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>50</sup> the Council considered the sub-item entitled “Upholding the United Nations Charter”. The Secretary-General, in his briefing to the Council, underscored that non-intervention, the sovereign equality of States and clear rules governing the use of force, as set out in Article 2 (4), were not favours or concessions, but rather the foundation of international relations and core to peace and international law.<sup>51</sup> The Chair of the Elders, who also briefed the Council, stressed that cooperation by means of internationally agreed mechanisms was less costly and more reliable than unilateral force.

<sup>42</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#) (United Kingdom and Philippines), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Slovenia and Greece) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#) (Djibouti, Lebanon and Eritrea).

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, under the item entitled “The situation in Libya”, [S/PV.8710](#); under the item entitled “Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe”, [S/PV.8714](#); under the item “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”, [S/PV.8711](#); under the item entitled “Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)”, [S/PV.8726](#); under the item entitled “The situation concerning Iraq”, [S/PV.8739](#); and, under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”, [S/PV.8706](#), [S/PV.8708](#), [S/PV.8715](#) and [S/PV.8727](#).

<sup>44</sup> See [S/2020/430](#) (South Africa).

<sup>45</sup> See [S/2020/736](#) (Argentina).

<sup>46</sup> See, in connection with the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, [S/2020/379](#) and [S/2020/1103](#); in connection with the situation concerning Iraq, [S/2020/397](#), [S/2020/845](#) and [S/2020/1144](#); in connection with the situation in Libya, [S/2020/371](#), [S/2020/421](#), [S/2020/686](#) and [S/2020/879](#); and, in connection with the situation in the Middle East, [S/2020/353](#), [S/2020/420](#), [S/2020/551](#), [S/2020/743](#), [S/2020/823](#), [S/2020/936](#), [S/2020/1147](#) and [S/2020/1257](#).

<sup>47</sup> See [S/2020/791](#).

<sup>48</sup> See [S/2020/1037](#).

<sup>49</sup> See [S/2020/1090](#).

<sup>50</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 31 December 2019 ([S/2020/1](#)).

<sup>51</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).



Following the briefings, several speakers<sup>52</sup> emphasized the importance and impact of the principles enshrined in Article 2 (4) and the limits thereof. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam noted that power politics, the use or threat of use of force, coercion, interference or aggressive actions against sovereignty and territorial integrity of other States were escalating tensions in many regions and that recent events in the Middle East underscored the utmost importance of upholding the Charter and adhering to international law, especially the principles of non-use of force, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the peaceful settlement of disputes.<sup>53</sup> In addition, he emphasized that the principles of sovereign equality, respect for the political independence and territorial integrity of all States, restraint from the threat or use of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and the settlement of disputes by peaceful means had become the foundation of contemporary international law, guiding friendly relations and cooperation among nations. The Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines said that it was unacceptable for one State or a group of like-minded States to “drive a horse and chariot” through the bedrock principles of sovereignty, independence, the equality of States, non-interference, non-intervention and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The representative of Egypt stressed that States should cooperate in accordance with the principles of the Charter pertaining to good-neighbourliness, the peaceful settlement of disputes, mediation with sincere intentions and mediation encouraged by the international community in various disputes. The representative of Oman said that the Charter was the foundation of international relations, which must be based on mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, good-neighbourliness and cooperation towards common interests, as well as the mutual sharing of benefits among countries.<sup>54</sup> He cautioned that disregarding those principles or their non-implementation or selective implementation would lead to chaos and instability and threaten international peace and security. The representative of Lebanon said that his country saw the United Nations, as all small

States did, as the guarantee of its sovereignty and independence and viewed it as an embodiment of a rules-based system in which all enjoyed equal rights and the principle of sovereign equality, as Article 2 of the Charter promised.<sup>55</sup> With regard to State sovereignty, the representative of the United Kingdom noted that it could not be used as an excuse for failing to address conflicts or violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. He added that violence and conflict, and not attempts to help Member States to prevent them, was what threatened State sovereignty, drawing attention to Article 2 of the Charter, which made clear that nothing should upset the fundamental rights that the Charter set out.<sup>56</sup>

The representative of the Russian Federation expressed his country’s belief that any action that sought to interfere in the domestic affairs of States for the purpose of overthrowing their legitimate Governments was unacceptable. He also expressed his country’s opposition to the use of unilateral coercive measures in the absence of corresponding Council resolutions or in addition to measures taken by the Council, which undermined the role of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security and was incompatible with the Charter and the universally recognized principles of international law, including the peaceful settlement of disputes, the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in their internal affairs. The representative of Eritrea said that, despite the fact that in Article 2 of the Charter countries were called upon to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, wars were being waged in total disregard for the Charter and its principles and the sovereign rights of States enshrined in the Charter were wilfully ignored.<sup>57</sup>

Several speakers<sup>58</sup> also highlighted the need to refrain from the threat or use of force in international relations as stipulated in Article 2 (4) and, instead, to settle disputes by peaceful means. The Minister of State in the Federal Office of Germany recalled that the Charter represented new hope for the peoples of the world and that threats to peace and security were to be resolved thereafter through the force of the law rather

<sup>52</sup> China, Tunisia, Russian Federation, Ethiopia and Egypt (see [S/PV.8699](#)); Kuwait, Sri Lanka, Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries), Cambodia, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Oman, Greece, Myanmar and Iraq (see [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#)); and Plurinational State of Bolivia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Bahrain and Angola (see [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#)).

<sup>53</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>54</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>55</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>56</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>57</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>58</sup> Malaysia, Switzerland, Mongolia and Philippines (on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) (see [S/PV.8699](#)); Uruguay, Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries), Jordan, Oman, Myanmar and Iraq (see [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#)); and Brunei Darussalam and Senegal (see [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#)).

than the law of force.<sup>59</sup> The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste expressed his country's belief in the settlement of disputes through peaceful means, based on international laws and norms, and that unilateral coercive measures against any State undermined the spirit of the Charter and did not contribute to solutions. The representative of Peru underscored that one of the cornerstones of the international order was the prohibition of the use of force in any way that was inconsistent with the Charter, and expressed concern that some countries were positing arguments and interpretations that were ultimately alien to international law and undermined the collective security architecture.<sup>60</sup> The representative of Lebanon regretted that force, not the rule of law, was the guiding principle instead of the last resort.<sup>61</sup> The representative of Greece stated that her country's historical experience had made the Greek people staunch supporters of the peremptory rule of the Charter that prohibited the use or the threat of use of force and acts of aggression in international relations, a rule that underpinned the collective security system embedded in the Charter.<sup>62</sup> She also underlined the fundamental significance of respect for the rule of law and the public order of the oceans as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which contributed to the strengthening of peace and security, cooperation and good-neighbourly relations, stressing the need to abide by its provisions and to refrain from actions that were in violation of Article 2 of the Charter, which prohibited the threat or use of force. The representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia emphasized that the use of force should never be considered as an alternative and that all countries should exhaust all peaceful means of resolving disputes before employing the use of force as a last resort.<sup>63</sup> He also underscored that the effectiveness of United Nations efforts to safeguard and maintain international peace and security depended on Member States' respect for and compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, as well as the actions implemented through the Council, which must at all times promote dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes over the use or threat of use of force. The representative of Nicaragua affirmed that no State could resort to the use or threat of use of force in international relations and that such exceptionalist policies in violation of international law did not help to resolve conflicts peacefully but aggravated and

subjected the international situation to further stress.<sup>64</sup> He said that the vocation of peace and respect for the sovereign equality of States and non-aggression necessitated resolving inter-State disputes through the provisions of the Charter and international law.

In connection with Article 2 (4), several speakers discussed the principles enshrined in the Charter concerning the authorization of the use of force and the non-use of force except in self-defence. In that regard, the representative of South Africa noted that, since its inception, the Charter had played a significant role in regulating relations between Member States by forbidding the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and advocating the peaceful settlement of disputes. He expressed his country's view that, in order to uphold the original intention of the Charter, which ultimately was predicted on peace, even in the event that there was evidence of a real and credible threat, any recourse to the use of force based on self-defence should be brought to the Council for authorization. The representative of Liechtenstein underlined the need for a clear renewed commitment on the part of the membership to upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter in the light of the ongoing erosion of its key provisions, including those governing the use of force. She recalled that, in joining the United Nations, all Member States accepted that the use of force was illegal, except when authorized by the Council or carried out in self-defence. The representative of Argentina said that the Charter provided a delicate balance in authorizing the use of force and that the members of the Council had a fundamental responsibility that the other Member States had entrusted to them. He regretted that the actions of the organ had been frustrated on many very serious occasions. The representative of Mexico stated that the express prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations marked a "before" and an "after" in the history of diplomacy and international law and that virtually the entire potential of the United Nations to consolidate a world of development, harmony and social equality, in the exercise of all its powers and resources, depended on respecting that fragile and imperative principle. He reiterated his country's concern about the continued invoking of Article 51 of the Charter by some States to address threats to international peace and security by military means, especially against non-State actors, which ran the risk of de facto broadening the exceptions to the general prohibition on the use of force irregularly. Given the importance and seriousness of the issues

<sup>59</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>60</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>61</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>62</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>63</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>64</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

addressed in the notes sent to the Council under Article 51 and the lack of transparency with which they were processed, the representative said that it was necessary for the Council to review and modify its working methods to ensure full compliance with the Charter, especially when the immanent right of self-defence was invoked.

The representative of Austria underscored that all States must refrain from actions that were in violation of Article 2 (4) of the Charter, which prohibited the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.<sup>65</sup> Noting with concern the increasing number of cases where armed force was applied unilaterally and the inherent right of self-defence pursuant to Article 51 of the Charter was invoked, he said that those cases and the fact that other Member States did not publicly express their legal views on each and every case could not be interpreted as a new State practice or *opinio juris* that might lead to the erosion of Article 2 (4) of the Charter, which the International Law Commission had determined to be a peremptory norm, or *jus cogens*.

Several speakers also expressed concern at the repeated violations of the Charter and emphasized the need to respect and commit to the principles of non-intervention in the internal and external affairs of other countries and the prohibition of the threat or use of force. In this regard, the representative of Indonesia stressed that unilateral actions in violation of the Charter must be stopped; instead, dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes should be promoted.<sup>66</sup> The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, speaking on behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that, in order to protect multilateralism, unilateralist regimes must never be appeased. He stressed the need for political will, as well as an instrument that would safeguard the values, principles and multilateralism enshrined in the Charter, particularly non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries and the prohibition of the threat or use of force, as well as the rejection of all coercive unilateral measures, including sanctions. The representative of Cuba regretted that continued violations of the Charter and breaches of international law, including the use or threat of use of force against sovereign States, acts of aggression against the sovereignty of other nations and interference in the internal affairs of States, continued to occur on a daily basis.<sup>67</sup> She stated that her country rejected unconventional wars for purposes of hegemonic

domination, attempts to reimpose a unipolar order, targeted assassinations of foreign leaders, the plundering and theft of natural resources and the imposition of unilateral coercive measures. The representative of the United Arab Emirates noted that increasing instances of non-compliance with the provisions of the Charter over the past decades had led to more instability and chaos, particularly in the light of the ongoing violations by State and non-State actors of the principles of sovereignty and non-interference enshrined in the Charter. She stressed that it was therefore necessary for Member States to strengthen their commitment to the Charter and international law, which were the main guarantors of international peace and security, especially for small States that relied on the power of international law to protect their sovereignty and security. The representative of Georgia expressed concern that the main principles enshrined in the Charter, namely sovereign equality, the non-use of threat or force against the territorial integrity of States and non-interference in their internal affairs, were violated on a daily basis.

#### **Case 4** **The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

At its 8706th meeting, held on 21 and 22 January, the Council held its quarterly open debate under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”.<sup>68</sup> The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, who gave a briefing at the meeting, noted that, with the political process deadlocked, negative developments continued to undermine the prospects for a two-State solution and that the beginning of 2020 had witnessed the continued expansion of settlement activity and the threat of annexation of parts of the West Bank. She also reported on the first meeting, in January 2020, of an interministerial committee of the Government of Israel tasked with discussing annexation plans for the Jordan Valley. The Under-Secretary-General added that the annexation of some or all of Area C, if implemented, would deal a devastating blow to the potential for reviving negotiations, advancing regional peace and the essence of the two-State solution.<sup>69</sup> The observer for the State of Palestine said that annexation threats had grown louder in 2019 and denounced the growing expansionist appetite of Israeli officials as they continued to brag about their country’s illegal annexation of East Jerusalem and openly pursued

<sup>65</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2).

<sup>66</sup> See S/PV.8699.

<sup>67</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1).

<sup>68</sup> See S/PV.8706 and S/PV.8706 (Resumption 1).

<sup>69</sup> See S/PV.8706.

measures to alter the city's demographic composition, character and legal status unchallenged. He also said that all Israeli colonization in occupied Palestine, including East Jerusalem, must be condemned and that neither threats nor attempts at annexation should go unchallenged but must be immediately halted. The Charter must be upheld and the prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force must stand. The representative of Germany affirmed that annexations, which had been announced and were then part of the Israeli election campaign, were a violation of international law, as were changes to the status of Jerusalem. The representative of Estonia stressed that annexation would constitute a serious violation of international law and would harm prospects for moving forward with the peace process. The representative of Indonesia cautioned that, if the de facto annexation was not brought to an end, it would cause profound human suffering to the Palestinians and make peace and stability impossible to attain, and added that such unlawful acts must not go unnoticed. The Council must seriously address the issue and find a durable solution based on the Charter and in conformity with its resolutions, and it must not be silent in the face of continuous Israeli threats of formal annexation of the occupied territory. The representative of France affirmed that any annexation of territory constituted a serious violation of international law and could not go unanswered. In that regard, France had called upon the Israeli authorities to renounce any plan that was liable to create *faits accomplis* on the ground that would undermine the two-State solution. The representative of China underscored that the Palestinian issue could be resolved only by political means and that countering violence with violence or the threat of force would lead nowhere. He stated that China encouraged the relevant parties to meet each other halfway, stop military actions, cease incendiary rhetoric and refrain from taking unilateral measures that undermined trust. The representative of Egypt urged all parties to fully comply with the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law, particularly by refraining from the use of force, respecting the sovereignty of States and ceasing to interfere in their internal affairs under any pretext.<sup>70</sup>

The representative of Qatar similarly said that the settlements in occupied territories must end, the blockade on the Gaza Strip must be lifted and illegal practices in the occupied Palestinian territories must cease. She also stated that, in order to resolve the Palestinian question, the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories, including the occupied

Syrian Golan and Lebanese territories, must be stopped. The representative of the United Arab Emirates emphasized that the confiscation of land, attempts to desecrate holy sites in the city of Jerusalem and the ongoing unjust blockade on Gaza were illegal practices that hindered peace efforts and exacerbated the suffering of the Palestinian people.

The representative of Cuba stated that the unilateral decision by the United States to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, as well as its decision to recognize that country's sovereignty over the Syrian Golan, constituted flagrant violations of the Charter, international law and relevant Council resolutions. He stressed that it was the duty of all States, and especially the members of the Council, to defend multilateralism and the purposes and principles of the Charter, in particular respect for the sovereign equality of States and their political independence, territorial unity and integrity, the peaceful resolution of disputes and refraining from the threat or use of force in international relations.

On 20 May, Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the same item,<sup>71</sup> with representatives of all Council members delivering their statements. During the videoconference, the risk of annexation was further discussed. The Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, who gave a briefing, recalled the Secretary-General's warnings about the danger of unilateral action and stated that the continuing threat of annexation by Israel of parts of the West Bank would constitute a most serious violation of international law, deal a devastating blow to the two-State solution, close the door to a renewal of negotiations and threaten efforts to advance regional peace.

Following the briefing, the representative of South Africa recalled the collective set of norms and values that should govern the behaviour of Member States towards one another, the principles of which were described in Article 2 of the Charter, including Article 2 (4). He underscored that it was the obligation of the United Nations and the Council in particular to act against those who went against those norms and values. The representative said that it was perplexing that Israel was exploiting the situation during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic to further advance its de facto annexation of Palestinian land. He also said that the dangerous prospect of Israel continuing with its unilateral actions and the annexation of large parts of the occupied West Bank and the Jordan Valley not only showed belligerence but

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<sup>70</sup> See [S/PV.8706 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>71</sup> See [S/2020/430](#).



also threatened efforts to advance regional peace. The representative emphasized his country's position that any steps taken towards formalizing the annexation of illegally occupied land or territory should not go unchallenged and regretted that, to date, no action had been taken to stop the building of settlements on illegally occupied land, the confiscation and destruction of Palestinian land and property, the illegal blockade of Gaza or the annexation of territory illegally acquired through the use of force.

Several other speakers<sup>72</sup> expressed concerns over the prospect of annexation of parts of the occupied Palestinian territories in the West Bank, following the Israeli coalition agreement. The representative of France echoed the statement by his country's defence minister and reiterated that any annexation of any part of the West Bank, including only settlements, would represent a violation of international law, which prohibited the acquisition of territory by force. Similarly, the representative of Belgium voiced concern that if certain provisions of the coalition agreement were put into practice, they would constitute a clear breach of international law, including the Charter and the relevant Council resolutions. The representatives of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the United Kingdom expressed the view that annexation would constitute a serious and clear violation of international law.

The representative of Indonesia stressed that the illegal occupation by Israel of Palestinian land was the root cause of this protracted problem and that it was the solemn duty of the Council to act against the annexation plan, adding that the annexation constituted a flagrant violation of international law, including the Charter, the Fourth Geneva Convention and various United Nations resolutions. The representative of the Niger said that occupation by force and annexation of Palestinian land, as well as the continued colonization policy established by Israel as a system of administration of the Palestinian territories, was illegal. The representative of the Russian Federation expressed his country's rejection of the annexation of Palestinian territories, as well as of the continuation of settlement activities, the demolition and confiscation of Palestinian property, and violent clashes. The representative of Tunisia underscored that it was high time that the international community as a whole, and the Council in particular, assumed their responsibility to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to abide by its obligations under international law, put an end to its aggressive policies, cease all settlement activities and

refrain from attempts to implement its long-planned illegal de facto annexation of Palestinian land. He added that in the light of the speech of the Prime Minister of Israel asserting Israeli sovereignty over the Israeli colonies in Palestinian territories, starting on 1 July, and considering that the annexation of parts of those territories was a priority of his Government, the international community must react by upholding international law, including the relevant Council resolutions, especially resolution 2334 (2016), and strongly rejecting and preventing any such unilateral illegal move, which would undermine all efforts to revive the peace process.

On 26 June, Council members held a subsequent open videoconference on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, at the ministerial level. In several statements made during or submitted in connection with the videoconference,<sup>73</sup> United Nations officials and representatives of States and the European Union rejected or expressed concern about the prospect of the annexation or deemed formal annexation to be a violation of international law, including the Charter. The representative of France said that the threat declared by the Government of Israel to annex parts of the West Bank after 1 July would be a serious breach of international law, in flagrant violation of the principle of non-acquisition of territory by force, as enshrined in the Charter. The representative of the Niger emphasized that the occupation by force and seizure of Palestinian land, which were contrary to international law, should end. The Gaza Strip, the only territory spared, was under a blockade that had made it an uninhabitable place, and the assertion by Israel of sovereignty over the whole of Jerusalem was also a violation of international law. The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam called upon the parties concerned to refrain from any unilateral action that could complicate the situation or escalate ongoing tensions and to refrain from the use of force or any incitement to violence.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Regional Integration of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

<sup>73</sup> See [S/2020/596](#) (Secretary-General, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa of the United Kingdom, Deputy Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam and representatives of Belgium, France, Germany, Costa Rica, European Union and United Arab Emirates (speaking on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation)).

<sup>72</sup> Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

regretted that the core principles upon which the United Nations had been founded were gradually eroding, adding that the political independence and territorial integrity of all States must be safeguarded in the light of the urgent challenges of COVID-19 and the ever-growing climate crisis.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine pointed out that annexation, whether partial or total, gradual or immediate, was the ultimate breach of the Charter and could not go unchallenged. In contrast, the representative of Israel underscored that, should Israel decide to extend its sovereignty, it would be doing so with respect to areas over which it had always maintained a legitimate historical and legal claim. He added that those who opposed his country's legal claims to that territory wrongly mischaracterized any potential decision by Israel to extend its sovereignty to that territory as so-called "annexation" and stressed that the Palestine Liberation Organization had never been a State and had never been the sovereign in that territory.

In his statement submitted for the videoconference, the Vice-President of the European Commission recalled that a core legal provision of international law, including the Charter, was that the acquisition of territory by force was prohibited. Similarly, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in his written statement, indicated that the occupation and acquisition of territory by force were prohibited and inadmissible under international law, and added that this was a peremptory norm of international law, from which no derogation was permitted. He also stated that the annexation of parts of the occupied Palestinian territory would be a gross violation of the basic principles of international law and the Charter.

A further discussion took place under similar terms in the context of an open videoconference held on 21 July on the Palestinian question, against the backdrop of the potential annexation by Israel of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.<sup>74</sup> In his briefing, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process recalled that the region and the broader international community had continued to express their firm rejection of annexation in the preceding weeks, and reiterated the Secretary-General's call upon the Government of Israel to abandon plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.

Following the briefings, several representatives of Council members,<sup>75</sup> who delivered oral statements,

<sup>74</sup> See [S/2020/736](#).

<sup>75</sup> China, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

and delegations of Member States and other entities,<sup>76</sup> which submitted written statements, voiced their opposition to the Israeli plan to annex parts of occupied Palestinian territories and considered it a violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. In addition, the representative of France stated that it would be a flagrant violation of the international order, starting with the Charter, which enunciated the principle of refraining from the acquisition of territory by force. Similarly, the representative of Belgium emphasized that a unilateral decision formalizing an annexation, regardless of its size, would constitute a flagrant violation of international law, including the Charter, which strictly prohibited the acquisition of territory by force. He added that such an act would be considered null and void and could not change the status of the West Bank, which would remain occupied territory, nor would it change the obligations of Israel as an occupying Power under international humanitarian law. The representative of Tunisia recalled that, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter, the Council had reaffirmed, in its resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [476 \(1980\)](#) and [478 \(1980\)](#), the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. In its statement submitted for the videoconference, the delegation of Argentina urged the authorities of Israel to be guided by the general commitment of all Member States to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter. The delegation further noted that the Israeli settlements, as well as any pretence of annexing Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, had no legal validity and constituted a flagrant violation of international law. The delegation also noted that, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter, international law, human rights law and international humanitarian law as fundamental pillars of a rules-based international order, Argentina questioned any decision that deviated from fundamental principles, such as the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, as recalled in advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice. The representative of Cuba underlined the duty of all States, and particularly of members of the Council, to defend multilateralism and the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter, including respect for the sovereign equality of States and their political independence, territorial unity and integrity, and the

<sup>76</sup> Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries), Bangladesh, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Ireland, Jordan, Malaysia, Namibia, Norway, Peru, Qatar, Senegal (as Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People), Turkey, United Arab Emirates (on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation), European Union and League of Arab States.



peaceful resolution of conflicts and abstention from the use or threat of use of force in international relations. In his statement submitted for the videoconference, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that, as a peremptory norm of international law, the occupation and acquisition of territory by force was prohibited and inadmissible; therefore the annexation of even the smallest part of the occupied Palestinian territory would be a gross violation of the basic principles of international law and the Charter. The representative of Malaysia, in his written statement, expressed concern that Israel had continued to openly declare its intention to annex significant parts of the occupied Palestinian territory in the West Bank, and reiterated his country's position that annexation was unlawful, violated the Charter, the Geneva Conventions and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council, by which the acquisition of territory by war or force was inadmissible.

In his written statement, the Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People underscored that the prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force was absolute in the Charter and that any annexation, regardless of its scope, would constitute a grave breach of international law. The representative of the European Union recalled the statement by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 23 June 2020, in which he recalled that a core legal provision of international law, including the Charter, was the prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force.

### **Case 5** **The situation in the Bolivarian Republic** **of Venezuela**

On 20 May, Council members held an open videoconference on the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.<sup>77</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. Representatives of all Council members,<sup>78</sup> as well as the representatives of Colombia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, delivered their statements during the videoconference. The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs recalled the letter from the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the President of the

Council,<sup>79</sup> in which it was stated that, on 3 and 4 May 2020, armed groups of mercenaries and terrorists organized, trained, financed and protected by the Governments of Colombia and the United States illegally entered Venezuelan territory. She added that, according to the letter, the declared purpose was to perpetrate criminal acts against the Venezuelan people and carry out selective assassinations against high officials of the Government, including the President, Nicolás Maduro. In addition, the Under-Secretary-General said that the Governments of Colombia and the United States had rejected allegations by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela regarding their involvement.

While noting that the incident described in the letter from the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela raised many questions, the representative of Belgium also condemned the use or threat of use of force and stressed the importance of respecting each country's sovereignty.<sup>80</sup> The representative of France reaffirmed that the solution to the Venezuelan crisis could be found only in full compliance with international law and the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. He added that the use of force must be strongly condemned without exception. The representative of the Dominican Republic clarified his country's position not only in the particular case of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela but with respect to any other matter involving accusations of that magnitude, namely that his country rejected any use of force or threat thereof against the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of any country. While expressing deep concern over reports of armed incursions into the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the representative of Viet Nam affirmed his country's strong opposition to the use of force or threat of use of force against the sovereignty and independence of any State or interference of any form in its internal affairs, which violated the Charter of the United Nations and ran counter to international law. He called upon the parties related to the situation in the country to exercise self-restraint and refrain from the threat or use of force or actions that might escalate tension and destabilize the situation in the country, and emphasized the Council's responsibility to uphold the fundamental principles of the Charter and international law.

The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines pointed out that the attempted armed incursion into the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had only been the latest in a long series of unwarranted aggressions meted out against that sovereign nation

<sup>77</sup> See [S/2020/435](#).

<sup>78</sup> The statements delivered by the representatives of China and the Niger were not included in the compilation of written statements.

<sup>79</sup> [S/2020/399](#). See also subsect. C below.

<sup>80</sup> See [S/2020/435](#).

over the past two decades. She reiterated her country's position that the internal political dispute within the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela did not constitute a threat to international peace and security, noting that the situation in the country did not threaten the national security, territorial integrity or political independence of any external State party and that all acts of aggression, including unilateral economic coercion, carried out under those guises were unjustifiable and illegal. She underscored that those flagrant violations of international law undermined the internal political processes within the country.

The representative of the United States recalled that the President, Donald Trump, and the Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo, had made clear that the United States had not been involved in Operation Gideon and the alleged armed incursion of 3 and 4 May and reiterated that it had not entered the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, categorically rejecting any claims to the contrary. She added that the only nations that appeared to be violating the sovereignty of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela were Cuba and the Russian Federation, which, even without approval from the National Assembly, routinely sent military officers and mercenaries into the country. By contrast, the representative of the Russian Federation indicated that the situation was unfolding around the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and not inside the country, and stressed that the recent breaches of the country's sovereignty by foreign agents posed a direct threat to the country's peace, as well as to regional security and stability, adding that the situation was a clear violation of the Charter. He told Council members that in the first days of May an armed group of at least 60 people had entered the sovereign land of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela from the territory of neighbouring Colombia on two vessels. Forty-seven of them had been arrested, among them two citizens of the United States, who had confessed that their mission had been to train forces in neighbouring Colombia for military operations in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and to take control of an airport in order to secure the transportation of Mr. Maduro to the United States. He called it an act of aggression and appealed to all participants in the discussion to unequivocally condemn the invasion attempt on Venezuelan sovereign territory. He added that the delegation had prepared a draft Council statement to the press in which Council members, *inter alia*, had rejected the use or threat of use of force, as stipulated in the Charter, and called for the current situation in the country to be resolved through dialogue by Venezuelans, without interference, through peaceful and political means, in line with Chapter VI of the Charter, within the framework of its

national Constitution and in full respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

The representative of the United Kingdom communicated his country's rejection of the notion peddled by the Russian Federation that the incident was a United States and Colombia-supported attempt to assassinate Mr. Maduro and impose a substitute Government, as alleged in the letter from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the Council. He underscored that the discussion, however, gave the Council a useful precedent for scrutinizing such adventurism by others into sovereign territory in the future. The representative also stressed that opposition to any form of military intervention in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was a principle with which the United Kingdom firmly agreed.

The representative of Colombia rejected the false accusations purporting to implicate the Colombian authorities in the use of force contrary to international law, stressing that Colombia had never been an aggressor country.

The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela underscored that the acts of armed aggression against his country, the planning, training and financing of which had been proved to have been facilitated by the Governments of the United States and Colombia, were a manifest violation of the Charter, international law and multiple resolutions of the Council, which were legally binding on all Member States. His country urged the Council to fulfil the duties and responsibilities entrusted to it by the Charter in relation to the maintenance of international peace and security, requested the Council to determine the threat that the warmongering policies of the Governments of Colombia and the United States presented to the peace of his country and the region and to recognize the acts of aggression that had been committed against his country and demanded that the perpetrators immediately bring to an end their criminal practices, including the use or threat of use of force.

#### **Case 6** **The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security**

On 18 December, at the initiative of South Africa, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>81</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in

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<sup>81</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 11 December 2020 (S/2020/1194).

the maintenance of international peace and security”, focused on strengthening the cooperation between the Council and the International Court of Justice.<sup>82</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard a briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice. Representatives of all Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference, while the delegations of 11 non-Council members submitted their statements in writing.<sup>83</sup> During his briefing at the videoconference, the President of the Court focused on ways to strengthen the partnership between the Council and the Court to uphold the rule of law at the international level. In that regard, he recalled that, while the Council had only once exercised its powers under Article 36 (3) of the Charter of the United Nations to recommend that disputing parties settle their dispute through the Court and had also only once requested an advisory opinion from the Court under Article 96 of the Charter, the vitality of the relationship between the two institutions could not be evaluated by the quantity, but rather by the quality, of their collaboration. Focusing on the *Corfu Channel* case, the President of the Court pointed out that it had helped to avoid a dispute that could have degenerated into a full-blown war involving several protagonists. At the international level, the *Corfu Channel* case had also contributed to the rule of law, as it had provided the opportunity for the Court to reaffirm that the “policy of force” had no place whatsoever in the Charter era. The judgment by the Court on the *Corfu Channel* case had also clarified the scope of some of the most fundamental principles of the contemporary legal order, including reaffirming that, between independent States, respect for territorial sovereignty was an essential foundation of international relations.

Following the briefing, Council members expressed support for the principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-use of force or the threat of force in international relations.<sup>84</sup> In that regard, the representative of China stated that it was imperative to defend the purposes and principles of the Charter and firmly safeguard the central role of the United Nations in international affairs, uphold the cardinal principles of international law and the basic norms governing international relations, such as sovereign equality, non-interference in internal affairs, the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-use of force.<sup>85</sup> The representative of

Germany reiterated the words of the President of the Court of Justice that the policy of force had no place in the United Nations order. He also shared his country’s view that the application of the Charter needed to evolve over time to ensure continued authority and legitimacy, and stated that the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter, such as the call to maintain international peace and security and the prohibition of the use of force in international relations, were the timeless and enduring core of international law but that their application was subject to contemporary challenges. The representative of the Russian Federation highlighted the principle of commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes, stressing that a key element of that principle was each State’s freedom to choose its own peaceful means of settlement, including those set out in the Charter. He pointed out that the peaceful settlement of disputes was a prerequisite for the inviolability of another profound maxim of the Charter, namely the principle of the non-use of force. The representative of South Africa recalled that, since the establishment in The Hague in 1899 of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, which had provided for dispute settlement by arbitration, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, rather than by resorting to the use of force, had been one of the cornerstones of international law and diplomacy. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines underscored that the use of force, provocative rhetoric and other escalatory actions, such as unilateral coercive measures, should always be rejected in favour of rational and principled settlements of disputes and called upon parties to disputes to pursue dialogue and mediation, including through suitable regional mechanisms and without prejudice to their rights to seek a judicial settlement. The representative of Viet Nam said that it was his country’s consistent policy to support the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use of force or the threat of force, enhancing the role of international legal bodies in the promotion of friendly relations among nations and the maintenance of international peace and security.

Participants at the videoconference similarly emphasized the pre-eminence of the prohibition of the use of force in international relations as reflected in the Charter. In a statement submitted by the delegation of Austria on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Rule of Law,<sup>86</sup> the delegation reaffirmed the Group’s commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter, which had set out the three pillars on which the United Nations was built, namely peace and security, development and human rights. Furthermore, according to the statement, the Charter gave the same

<sup>82</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#).

<sup>83</sup> The following countries submitted written statements: Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Denmark, Japan, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Peru and Portugal.

<sup>84</sup> For further information on the Council’s decisions and discussion in relation to the peaceful settlement of disputes in 2020, see part VI.

<sup>85</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#).

<sup>86</sup> The Group comprises Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Cabo Verde, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Guatemala, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Mexico, the Philippines, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the European Union.

importance to universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms that it did to such fundamental principles of international law as the prohibition of the threat or use of force, the territorial integrity of States and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The representative of Liechtenstein cautioned that the authority of the Council as a whole was undermined significantly when its permanent members committed flagrant violations of international law, in particular the most serious forms of the illegal use of force against another State. His country was particularly concerned about recent trends regarding the application of international law with respect to the use of force, including Article 51 of the Charter. The representative also noted that the Council had the option to refer situations of manifest violations of the prohibition of the illegal use of force for investigation by the International Criminal Court, an additional tool for the Council to ensure the relevant parts of the Charter.

The delegation of Morocco underscored that the Charter conferred on the Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. To that end, the Council must ensure respect for the territorial integrity of States, the prohibition of the threat or use of force and the

promotion of the peaceful settlement of disputes. The representative of Myanmar highlighted the strengthening of the rule of law as one of the leading objectives of the United Nations since its inception. In that regard, he expressed his country's view that the promotion of the rule of law should be in accordance with such universally established principles and norms as respect for sovereign equality and territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, prohibition of the use or threat of use of force and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

### C. Invocation of the principle enshrined in Article 2 (4) in communications

During 2020, eight communications from Member States addressed to the Council included explicit references to Article 2 (4) of the Charter (see table 4). In addition, three communications from Member States addressed to the Secretary-General and circulated as documents of the Council contained explicit references to Article 2 (4).<sup>87</sup>

<sup>87</sup> See [S/2020/413](#), [S/2020/503](#) and [S/2020/729](#).

Table 4

#### Communications addressed to the Council containing explicit references to Article 2 (4) of the Charter

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Relevant extract</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/16</a>	Letter dated 7 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council	Such unbridled threats by the President of the United States indisputably constitute a gross violation of the peremptory norms of international law as well as the very fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly its Article 2 (4) that clearly prohibits the threat or use of force. Given the confrontational nature of these inflammatory statements and threats, as well as the broad and adverse ramifications of the military adventurism of the United States on regional and international peace and security, it is crystal clear that this country bears the full responsibility for all consequences.
<a href="#">S/2020/128</a>	Identical letters dated 19 February 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council	In full disregard for international law and in violation of Article 2 (4) of the Charter, which states that “all Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations”, the Russian Federation, as the power exercising effective control over the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia, has intensified steps towards their factual annexation, seeking full incorporation of these territories into its military, political and economic systems. As the

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Relevant extract</i>
		occupying power, the Russian Federation bears full responsibility for violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia.
<a href="#">S/2020/130</a>	Letter dated 19 February 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	<p>The systematic threat of the use of force on various grounds by the Governments of both the United States and Colombia proves the willingness of these Governments to put the peace of the Venezuelan nation at risk, as well as the infringement of their international obligations, in particular, those related to Article 2 (4) of the Charter, which establishes that:</p> <p>All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.</p>
<a href="#">S/2020/194</a>	Letter dated 10 March 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	No less than the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, himself asserted, on 20 January 2020, that “our [Indian] armed forces will not take more than 7 to 10 days to make Pakistan bite the dust”. This threat violates Article 2 (4) of the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibits “the threat or use of force”.
<a href="#">S/2020/277</a>	Letter dated 3 April 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	<p>The announcement of these operations on 1 April came one day after the Department of State of the United States of America published a “democratic transition framework for Venezuela”, with which it seeks to supplant our national Constitution, presenting the document as an order that must be accepted by the Venezuelan people and institutions in order to prevent the use of military force by the United States. This is a violation of Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations, which provides as follows:</p> <p>All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.</p>
<a href="#">S/2020/399</a>	Identical letters dated 13 May 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council	The use of mercenaries and non-State actors allows the Government of the United States to avoid its responsibility under Article 2 (4) of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as under the Geneva Conventions and the norms of international humanitarian law and human rights. Any armed action by one State against another must be authorized by the Security Council or comply with the provisions of Article 51 of the Charter, which refers to the inherent right of States to self-defence. Denying its responsibility, as it does in the case of Venezuela, the United States wrongly believes that it can continue to deceive the world with violent covert operations.



Symbol	Title	Relevant extract
<a href="#">S/2020/905</a>	Letter dated 15 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council	I am writing to inform you that, on 14 September 2020, the President of the United States of America, referring to “press reports”, made a baseless allegation against the Islamic Republic of Iran and threatened to use force against my country. Hours later, he repeated the same threat. Such a provocative statement constitutes a gross violation of the very fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly its Article 2 (4), which clearly prohibits the threat or use of force.
<a href="#">S/2020/989</a>	Letter dated 8 October 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	On 29 September 2020, the Prime Minister and Defence Minister of the Israeli regime threatened Iran with a “pre-emptive strike” and stated that “we are not ruling out a preliminary strike”. The aforesaid provocative statement is “inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations” and a blatant violation of Article 2 (4) of the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibits the threat or use of force.

### III. Obligation under Article 2, paragraph 5, to refrain from assisting the target of enforcement action

#### Article 2, paragraph 5

*All Members shall give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter, and shall refrain from giving assistance to any state against which the United Nations is taking preventive or enforcement action.*

#### Note

Section III covers the practice of the Council with regard to the principle enshrined in Article 2 (5) of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, the obligation of Member States to refrain from providing assistance to a State against which the United Nations has taken preventive or enforcement action.<sup>88</sup> Subsection A features implicit references made to Article 2 (5) in the decisions of the Council, and subsection B features discussions held by the Council which may be considered relevant to the interpretation of Article 2 (5). The correspondence addressed to the Council in 2020 did not contain any references to Article 2 (5).

<sup>88</sup> For the practice of the Council relating to assistance by Member States to United Nations enforcement action in accordance with the Charter, see part V, sect. II (Article 25), and part VII, sects. V and VI (Articles 43, 45 and 48).

#### A. Decisions relating to Article 2 (5)

During the period under review, the Council did not explicitly invoke Article 2 (5) in its decisions. The Council, however, included language which may be considered of relevance to the interpretation of Article 2 (5) in decisions concerning the situations in the Central African Republic,<sup>89</sup> Libya<sup>90</sup> and Somalia,<sup>91</sup> as well as in connection with countering terrorism and extremism in Africa.<sup>92</sup>

#### B. Discussion relating to Article 2 (5)

During 2020, Article 2 (5) was not explicitly invoked in discussions of the Council. However, implicit references which may be considered of relevance to the interpretation of Article 2 (5) were made in several meetings and open videoconferences held by the Council during the period under review. As discussed below, during meetings and open videoconferences held in connection with the item entitled “The situation in Libya”, Council members addressed the importance of non-interference by

<sup>89</sup> Resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#), para. 1.

<sup>90</sup> Resolutions [2509 \(2020\)](#), ninth preambular paragraph and para. 6; [2510 \(2020\)](#), para. 10; and [2542 \(2020\)](#), sixteenth preambular paragraph.

<sup>91</sup> Resolution [2551 \(2020\)](#), paras. 2 and 6.

<sup>92</sup> [S/PRST/2020/5](#), fifteenth paragraph.



external actors in the Libyan conflict, including refraining from providing support to the armed groups parties to the conflict (see case 7).

In addition, at the 8725th meeting, held on 18 February under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”,<sup>93</sup> several speakers expressed concern at the circumvention of the Council’s sanctions on Yemen by the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this regard, the representative of the United Kingdom expressed her country’s concern over the findings of the final report of the Panel of Experts on Yemen regarding weapons of Iranian origin in Yemen. The representative of the United States denounced the violation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the Council’s arms embargo by continuing to send advanced weapons to the Houthis. The representative of Yemen noted that the Iranian weapons seized by the United States Navy on 9 February 2020, which had been bound for the Houthi militias, constituted a flagrant violation of Council resolutions and provided irrefutable evidence of the close relationship between the mullah regime in Tehran and the Houthi militias. In subsequent meetings and open videoconferences, several speakers<sup>94</sup> denounced the continued provision by countries of weapons in the region and their fuelling of the war.

### Case 7

#### The situation in Libya

On 30 January, during the Council’s 8710th meeting, held under the item entitled “The situation in Libya”,<sup>95</sup> the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya took note of the agreement reached at the Berlin Conference on 19 January 2020 by the representatives of various countries concerned and regional organizations, some of which had directly or indirectly fuelled the conflict, to refrain from interference in the conflict in Libya and its internal affairs and to abide by the United Nations arms embargo. He expressed his deep worry about the military reinforcements received by both sides raising the spectre of a broader conflict engulfing the wider region. He added that the warring parties had continued to receive a sizeable amount of advanced equipment, in addition to fighters and advisers from foreign sponsors, in brazen violation of the arms embargo and the pledges made by representatives of those countries in

Berlin. The Special Representative reported a notable increase in heavy cargo flights, several per day, to Benina airport and Khadim airbase in eastern Libya delivering military equipment to the Libyan National Army, and also noted that, the day before the meeting, three boats had been in Tripoli and Misratah delivering new weapons in the west, while two cargo planes had landed at Khadim airbase in the east.

The representative of the United States noted the blatant violations of the United Nations arms embargo, including the deployment of foreign fighters and mercenaries and the delivery of weapons, ammunition and advanced systems to the parties from Member States, several of which had participated in the Berlin Conference. She added that the United States joined the United Nations in calling upon countries to live up to their Berlin commitments and demanded that Member States comply with their obligations to implement the United Nations arms embargo, which entailed an immediate and permanent halt of all deployments of personnel, fighters and military equipment to Libya. The representative of Belgium expressed her country’s hope that the Council’s repeated calls for non-interference by external actors, for intra-Libyan dialogue and for respect for the arms embargo would finally be put into practice, and emphasized that it was the responsibility of each State to ensure that its arms exports were not diverted to illicit destinations. The representative of South Africa expressed her country’s support for the call of the Secretary-General for strict adherence to the arms embargo to prevent further violent escalations, so as to enable all parties to agree to a ceasefire, adding that the arms embargo must be fully implemented without exception. She also expressed her country’s wish to remind the international community of its commitments to end military support to all parties to the conflict and to uphold the existing arms embargo as a foundation for political negotiations and the implementation of a ceasefire. The representative of France emphasized that the commitments made by international actors at the Berlin Conference must be honoured and followed by action and that the arms embargo must be respected. She emphasized that foreign interference and military support fuelled the conflict and must stop, referring in particular to Turkey, and stressed the need to eschew military force and proxy wars. The representative of the Niger said that Libya did not need more weapons and terrorists transferred to it, but peace.

The representative of Libya regretted that there were countries that supported the violations and crimes by the Haftar militias, noting proof thereof, including

<sup>93</sup> See [S/PV.8725](#).

<sup>94</sup> United Kingdom and United States (see [S/2020/411](#)); General Coordinator in Yemen of Médecins du Monde and United States (see [S/PV.8753](#)); and United States and Yemen (see [S/2020/1109](#)).

<sup>95</sup> See [S/PV.8710](#).

the reports of the Panel of Experts on Libya established pursuant to Council resolution 1973 (2011). He added that those reports had also confirmed the involvement of the United Arab Emirates on 11 separate occasions, including by providing armoured vehicles, air defence systems, drones and laser projectiles. He recalled information contained in the report of the Panel of Experts (S/2018/812) about the provision of equipment by Egyptian authorities and their participation in air strikes in eastern and western Libya. The representative noted the presence of armed groups in every city and every region of Libya in one form or another, and countries that provided them with financial support and weapons.

Council members held other open videoconferences in connection with the situation in Libya, during which the continued influx of weaponry, equipment and mercenaries on both sides was discussed. In that regard, Council members and other participants called for stopping the flow of weapons and military support from abroad in violation of the United Nations arms embargo.<sup>96</sup>

At a high-level open videoconference held on 8 July,<sup>97</sup> the Secretary-General pointed out that the conflict had entered a new phase in which foreign interference had reached unprecedented levels characterized by the delivery of sophisticated equipment and the number of mercenaries involved in the fighting. He expressed concern regarding the alarming military build-up around the city and the high level of direct foreign interference in the conflict, in violation of the United Nations arms embargo, Council resolutions and the commitments made by Member States in Berlin.

Following the briefing, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany stated that foreign interference remained the main driver of the conflict in Libya and that it must be brought to an end, which meant no more aeroplanes, no more tanks, no more trucks or cargo ships full of weapons and no more lies. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Abroad of the Niger said that external interference in Libya was known to be

accompanied by massive transfers of weapons of war and mercenaries and was a flagrant violation of resolutions 1970 (2011) and 2292 (2016), and called upon all participants in the Berlin process to honour their commitments by refraining from interfering in the internal affairs of Libya. The Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa recalled that at the Berlin Conference international partners had committed to respecting the arms embargo and refraining from interfering in the internal affairs of Libya, but the parties to the conflict and external players continued to violate the embargo through the influx of weapons and foreign fighters to Libya.

The Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa of the United Kingdom recalled the commitment made by the Berlin Conference participants to respect and implement the United Nations arms embargo, and their call upon all actors to refrain from activities that could exacerbate the conflict, including the financing of military capabilities and the recruitment of mercenaries. The representative of the Dominican Republic noted the constant violations of the embargo, which, together with the persistent interference of external actors, created the perfect storm for a perpetuation of the Libyan conflict. He reiterated the need for all Member States to strictly adhere to their commitments made to ceasing all forms of foreign military intervention in Libya and desisting from any destabilizing activities that exacerbated the conflict. The representative of Estonia said that the foreign interference in Libya was a blatant violation of the sanctions regime set up by the Council, and added that the continuous flow of arms, private military operatives, fighter jets, drones and other assets must stop.

The representative of the United States emphasized that there was no place for foreign mercenaries or proxy forces in Libya and that all external actors involved in the conflict should abide by the commitments that they had made in Berlin, immediately suspend military operations and halt the ongoing transfer of foreign military equipment and fighters to Libya.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece underscored that international legality was being violated in Libya through the provision of weapons, military means, mercenaries and ammunition. The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey indicated that the provision of brazen political and military support to Haftar in pursuit of subversive objectives against the legitimate Government was incompatible with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions and harmful to peace and stability in Libya and beyond.

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<sup>96</sup> See S/2020/421 (Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States and Libya) and S/2020/879 (Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of United Nations Support Mission in Libya, Estonia, Germany, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States).

<sup>97</sup> See S/2020/686.

The representative of Libya communicated his country's request to the President of the Council to hold a special and urgent meeting of the sanctions committee in the presence of representatives of all

States mentioned in the reports of the Panel of Experts on Libya accused of violating the arms embargo in support of the aggression.

#### IV. Non-intervention in the internal affairs of States by the United Nations under Article 2, paragraph 7

##### *Article 2, paragraph 7*

*Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.*

##### Note

Section IV concerns the practice of the Council in relation to the principle of non-intervention by the United Nations in the internal affairs of States enshrined in Article 2 (7) of the Charter of the United

Nations. Subsection A features references to that Article in the decisions of the Council. Subsection B covers the deliberations of the Council touching upon the principle enshrined in Article 2 (7). Subsection C features references to Article 2 (7) in the correspondence addressed to the Council.

##### A. Decisions relating to Article 2 (7)

In 2020, the Council did not explicitly refer to Article 2 (7) in any of its decisions. Nonetheless, language used in some Council decisions under country-specific and thematic items may be considered of relevance for the interpretation and application of Article 2 (7) (see table 5).

Table 5  
Decisions containing implicit references to Article 2 (7)

<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Provision</i>
<b>The situation in Afghanistan</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2543 (2020)</a> 15 September 2020	Also decides that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, within their mandate and in a manner consistent with Afghan sovereignty, leadership and ownership, will continue to lead and coordinate the international civilian efforts, in full cooperation with the Government of Afghanistan and in accordance with the relevant international communiqués, with a particular focus on the priorities laid out below (para. 6)
<b>The situation in Guinea-Bissau</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2512 (2020)</a> 28 February 2020	Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Guinea-Bissau, emphasizing that the Bissau-Guinean authorities have primary responsibility for the provision of stability and security throughout the country, and underscoring the importance of national ownership of the implementation of inclusive political, peace and security-related initiatives (second preambular paragraph)
	The United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau will continue to implement its transition plan for the gradual drawing down and transfer of tasks to the United Nations country team, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and other regional and international partners, towards mandate completion by 31 December 2020, bearing in mind the need for a flexible approach to ensure a seamless transfer of responsibilities, and cooperating closely with the Government of Guinea-Bissau to ensure national ownership of the process (para. 2 (b))

### **The situation in Libya**

Resolution [2510 \(2020\)](#)  
12 February 2020

Reaffirming its strong support for the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya, recalling that there can be no military solution in Libya, and underscoring the importance of the central role of the United Nations in facilitating a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned inclusive political process (third preambular paragraph)

Resolution [2542 \(2020\)](#)  
15 September 2020

Underscoring the importance of the central role of the United Nations in facilitating a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned inclusive political process and in achieving a lasting ceasefire (fifth preambular paragraph)

Decides to extend until 15 September 2021 the mandate of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, as an integrated special political mission, in full accordance with the principles of national ownership, to exercise mediation and through its good offices to: (para. 1)

### **Maintenance of international peace and security**

Resolution [2553 \(2020\)](#)  
3 December 2020

Recalling the sovereign right and the primary responsibility of the country concerned to determine the national approach and priorities of security sector reform and recognizing that it should be a nationally owned process that is rooted in the particular needs and conditions of, and at the request of and in close consultation with, the country in question, and encouraging the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in security sector reform and the development of expertise in the field of security sector reform at the national and local levels (seventh preambular paragraph)

Stressing the importance of national ownership and the role that coordination plays, as appropriate, between the different actors involved in supporting security sector reforms through bilateral and multilateral contributions, and emphasizing the role United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions can play in enhancing this coordination with a national vision and priorities, and taking into account the need to ensure transparency, inclusivity and accountability of support provided for security sector reform in line with national priorities (seventeenth preambular paragraph)

### **The situation in Mali**

Resolution [2541 \(2020\)](#)  
31 August 2020

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Mali, emphasizing that the Malian authorities have primary responsibility for the provision of stability and security throughout the territory of Mali, and underscoring the importance of achieving national ownership of peace- and security-related initiatives (second preambular paragraph)

### **The situation in the Middle East**

Resolution [2504 \(2020\)](#)  
10 January 2020

Reiterates that the situation will continue to deteriorate further in the absence of a political solution to the Syrian conflict, and recalls its demand for the full and immediate implementation of resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#) to facilitate a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political transition, in accordance with the Geneva communiqué as set forth in the statements of the International Syria Support Group, in order to end the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, and stresses again that the Syrian people will decide the future of the Syrian Arab Republic (para. 5)

Resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#)  
28 August 2020

Also urges all parties to ensure that the freedom of movement of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and its access to the Blue Line in all its parts is fully respected and unimpeded, in conformity with its mandate and its rules of engagement, including by avoiding any course of action which endangers United Nations personnel, condemns in the strongest terms all attempts to restrict the freedom of movement of the Force's personnel and all attacks on its personnel and equipment, calls upon the Government of Lebanon to facilitate the Force's prompt and full access to sites requested by the Force for the purpose of swift investigation, including all relevant locations north of the Blue Line related to the discovery of tunnels crossing the Blue Line which the Force reported as a violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#), in line with resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#), while respecting Lebanese sovereignty (para. 15)

Decision and date

Provision

### Peace consolidation in West Africa

[S/PRST/2020/2](#)  
11 February 2020

The Council recognizes that responsible and credible mediation by the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel requires, inter alia, national ownership, the consent of the parties to a particular dispute or conflict, and respect for national sovereignty, as set out in General Assembly resolution [70/304](#) (seventh paragraph)

*See also [S/PRST/2020/7](#), sixth paragraph*

### Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#)  
3 June 2020

Also decides that the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, as part of an integrated and unified United Nations structure, shall, in full accordance with the principles of national ownership, have the following strategic objectives (para. 2)

### Peace and security in Africa

[S/PRST/2020/5](#)  
11 March 2020

The Council reaffirms its commitment to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and stresses that Member States have the primary responsibility in countering terrorist acts and violent extremism conducive to terrorism (sixth paragraph)

## B. Discussion relating to Article 2 (7)

During the period under review, Article 2 (7) of the Charter of the United Nations was not explicitly invoked in the Council's deliberations. Nonetheless, during several in-person meetings and videoconferences, Council members discussed the principle of non-intervention in domestic matters enshrined in Article 2 (7).

At its 8700th meeting, held on 10 January, during which the Council adopted resolution [2504 \(2020\)](#), thereby extending the cross-border humanitarian assistance in the Syrian Arab Republic established under resolution [2165 \(2014\)](#),<sup>98</sup> several Council members referred to the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic in the context of providing humanitarian assistance in the country (see case 8). Council members also held discussions relevant to the interpretation and application of Article 2 (7) during open videoconferences held during the period under review. In that regard, in connection with the high-level videoconferences held to consider the item entitled "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace", Council members, other Member States and entities addressed the importance of national ownership in the context of transitional justice (see case 9) and addressing contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity (see case 10). In addition, discussions held in connection with several other open videoconferences throughout the

reporting period touched upon the principles enshrined in Article 2 (7).<sup>99</sup>

During an open debate held under the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security" on 9, 10 and 13 January at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>100</sup> the representative of Egypt highlighted the need to review the effectiveness of certain weak implementation tools, particularly those pertaining to sustainable development and the comprehensive concepts of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, while respecting the sovereignty of States.<sup>101</sup> He stressed that, in order to prevent the United Nations from serving as "a crisis babysitter", it was necessary, inter alia, for States to cooperate in accordance with the principles of the Charter. The representative of the Philippines said that the United Nations stood on the foundation of the aggregated sovereignty of its Members and that it harnessed sovereignty not for some against others, but for the common purposes of peace and productive cooperation. The representative

<sup>98</sup> Resolution [2504 \(2020\)](#), para. 3.

<sup>99</sup> See, in connection with the item entitled "Briefing by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees", [S/2020/560](#) (China, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Viet Nam); in connection with "The situation in the Middle East", [S/2020/353](#) (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Syrian Arab Republic); and, in connection with "The situation concerning Iraq", [S/2020/1193](#) (Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Iraq).

<sup>100</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 31 December 2019 ([S/2020/1](#)).

<sup>101</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).



of Cuba emphasized that the Council must carry out its functions in accordance with the powers conferred upon it by the Charter itself to safeguard international peace and security but must do so without double standards or discrimination, and always in accordance with justice and principles.<sup>102</sup> He stressed that a truly strong and participatory United Nations was required, with a transparent and duly democratized Council and a revitalized General Assembly that supported States in consolidating their sovereignty for the future which should be determined by every nation without any kind of interference. The representative of Uruguay underlined that the international community must not lose sight of the principles of non-intervention and self-determination when dealing with internal conflicts.

The representative of Oman pointed out that, given the tensions and conflicts facing the world, an increasing responsibility was to be shouldered by the United Nations and it was therefore important to underline the need for a more balanced and more cooperative relationship between the Council and the General Assembly. He stressed that, in order for Council resolutions to be more credible, they should be in line with the provisions of the Charter, in particular the principle of respect for the national sovereignty of States.

### **Case 8** **The situation in the Middle East**

In 2020, Council members, during meetings and open videoconferences in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”, discussed the implications of the cross-border humanitarian assistance mechanism in the Syrian Arab Republic established under resolution [2165 \(2014\)](#) vis-à-vis the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity and the primary responsibility of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for improving the humanitarian situation in the country.

On 10 January, at its 8700th meeting,<sup>103</sup> the Council adopted resolution [2504 \(2020\)](#), by which it extended the cross-border humanitarian assistance mechanism for a period of six months, until 10 July 2020.

Following the adoption of the resolution, the representative of China said that his country had always had reservations regarding the establishment of the cross-border humanitarian assistance mechanism. It had consistently advocated that, in taking any action, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country

concerned and the will of its Government must be respected. He noted that cross-border humanitarian assistance was a special relief method adopted under specific circumstances and should be evaluated and adjusted in a timely manner in line with developments on the ground. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic bore the primary responsibility for improving the humanitarian situation in the country and, under the prevailing circumstances, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the relevant parties should step up cooperation with the Government and prioritize the provision of humanitarian assistance from inside the country. The representative of Viet Nam shared his country’s position that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic bore the primary responsibility for addressing the humanitarian situation in the country, with the assistance of the international community.

On 29 January, at the Council’s 8707th meeting, which was held to consider the same item,<sup>104</sup> the representative of China emphasized that humanitarian relief efforts should strictly comply with international law, the Charter and General Assembly resolution [46/182](#) and refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of the recipient country. He reiterated that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic bore the primary responsibility for improving the humanitarian situation in the country and that cross-border humanitarian relief was a special relief mechanism adopted in specific circumstances. The United Nations should proactively propose plans to evaluate it and make adjustments in the light of developments in the country, all the while carefully listening to the views of the country’s Government and strengthening cooperation among all Syrian parties. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines emphasized the need for an inclusive and consultative process and further dialogue with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on all decisions that concerned the country, with respect for its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The representative of Tunisia expressed his country’s belief that ending the system of cross-border humanitarian assistance would require a progressive approach, in full respect for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The representative of the Dominican Republic recalled that, just as sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity were fundamental international principles, so too was the responsibility of States to protect their populations, to not cause suffering and to safeguard their livelihoods and well-being.

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<sup>102</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>103</sup> See [S/PV.8700](#).

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<sup>104</sup> See [S/PV.8707](#).



The representative of Viet Nam emphasized that humanitarian assistance on the ground needed to be maintained where it was needed. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic had the primary responsibility in that regard, with the continuous joint support of Member States and international organizations. He also emphasized that humanitarian work must be carried out in full respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the country.

### **Case 9 Peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

During its 8723rd meeting, held on 13 February 2020 at the initiative of Belgium, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>105</sup> the Council held a high-level open debate under the item, focused on transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict situations.<sup>106</sup>

At the meeting, Council members addressed the concepts of national ownership, non-interference in internal affairs and the role of international organizations, including the United Nations, in the context of transitional justice initiatives. In that regard, the representative of China underscored that, based on the Charter and universally recognized international law, it was imperative to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of every country and to respect the countries concerned in their efforts to advance their transitional justice processes step by step, in a manner consistent with their own national conditions.<sup>107</sup> No models should be imposed from outside, nor should any interference be permitted in their internal affairs or struggles, and only by adhering to the principle of sovereignty could transitional justice efforts be justified, thereby winning the trust of the countries concerned and promoting peace and development. The representative of Tunisia expressed his country's support for the strengthening of international cooperation to reform legislation and legal sovereign institutions in post-conflict or post-repressive periods in affected countries. This was to ensure that such legislation was aligned with international law, the criteria of international criminal justice and international human rights law, thereby providing the requirements of effective national ownership over transitional justice. Similarly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Belgium emphasized that any transitional justice process must be subject to national ownership. The representative of Liechtenstein said

that the overall purpose of transitional justice was to help societies to overcome a difficult, often painful, past, promote reconciliation and support a common way forward towards sustainable peace. National ownership of such processes was essential, but in many cases, in particular where atrocity crimes had been committed on a large scale, international or regional assistance might be not only helpful but, indeed, necessary. The representative of Colombia said that transitional justice did not have a single mould applicable to different contexts, adding that every effort to consolidate peace, including transitional mechanisms, must start from the principle of national ownership.<sup>108</sup>

The representative of Egypt stressed his country's position on the importance of considering the specificity of every situation, emphasizing that there was no one-size-fits-all approach. The success of transitional justice endeavours and the move from a divisive past to a shared future depended on the respect of the international community for providing assistance and support to the countries concerned and the principle of national ownership and leadership of those efforts.

The representative of Romania noted that further progress in transitional justice could be achieved if more United Nations peace operations were mandated to address it, and suggested that an effective way for the international community to support institutional reforms, while safeguarding the principle of national ownership, was to strengthen the rule of law component of peace operations. The representative of Morocco recognized that reconciliation and peacebuilding were closely linked to promoting respect for the law in order to ensure the effective implementation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. He emphasized that Member States should develop national policies based on good practices to establish institutional bodies to work in the area, adding that, whatever mechanism was implemented, its success would depend above all on taking into account the specificities of the society in which transitional justice was to be implemented, and that national ownership was key in that regard.

The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic recalled that his country had not requested any technical assistance from the United Nations to establish the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in

<sup>105</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 4 February 2020 (S/2020/98).

<sup>106</sup> See S/PV.8723 and S/PV.8723 (Resumption 1).

<sup>107</sup> See S/PV.8723.

<sup>108</sup> See S/PV.8723 (Resumption 1).

the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011. In his country, there were long-standing national legal and judicial bodies that were willing and able to achieve justice and provide accountability and reparations without the flagrant interference that sought to achieve distorted justice and reprisals rather than a genuine transitional justice.

#### **Case 10 Peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

On 3 November, at the initiative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>109</sup> Council members held an open videoconference at the ministerial level in connection with the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, focused on the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity.<sup>110</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Deputy Secretary-General, the Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency, the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, and the President of the Economic and Social Council. Representatives of all Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference, while the delegations of 38 non-Council members and the European Union submitted their statements in writing.<sup>111</sup> At the videoconference, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation underscored that countries facing an uphill battle in transitioning from conflict to sustainable peace were especially in need of the international community’s assistance and that, in granting such assistance, it was necessary to be guided by the principle that it was the primary responsibility of the countries themselves to develop and implement peacebuilding strategies and priorities in accordance with the needs and requirements of their societies. He emphasized that every case required a particular, unique approach without the imposition of automatic one-size-fits-all solutions and policy prescriptions.

The Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines expressed his country’s emphasis on the

<sup>109</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 30 October 2020 (S/2020/1064).

<sup>110</sup> See S/2020/1090.

<sup>111</sup> The following countries submitted written statements: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sudan, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates.

need for peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding to be pursued concurrently as part of a peace and security, development and humanitarian continuum, adding that adequate resources must therefore be made available to improve lives and livelihoods while bolstering national ownership over political and peace processes. The representative of Indonesia stressed the need to ensure that the United Nations missions mandated by the Council provided a strong foundation for long-term and sustained socioeconomic development. He also stressed that, for that to succeed, strong national ownership and the inclusive participation of all local stakeholders were needed.

In a statement submitted for the videoconference, the delegation of Brazil underlined that peacebuilding and sustaining peace were cross-pillar endeavours that could be realized only on the basis of respect for sovereignty and national ownership. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran highlighted the principled assumption that conflicts could be resolved comprehensively and permanently only when all their root causes and drivers were addressed justly, properly and in a comprehensive manner, particularly through an enhanced national ownership over related peace and political processes.

The delegation of Chile welcomed the reflective exercise involving the Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Secretariat, as well as the review of the peacebuilding architecture, geared towards sustaining peace, with a view to identifying successful field-level processes, which promoted the involvement of local communities in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, strengthening the principle of national ownership. The representative of Slovakia, while acknowledging the importance of ensuring that the needs of all segments of society were taken into account, emphasized that national ownership and leadership should continue to be at the heart of all efforts.

### **C. Invocation of the principle enshrined in Article 2 (7) in communications**

During the period under review, there were two explicit references to Article 2 (7) of the Charter in communications brought to the attention of the Council.

In a letter dated 3 April 2020 to the President of the Council,<sup>112</sup> the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela accused the United States of openly violating Article 2 (7) of the Charter by

<sup>112</sup> S/2020/277.

attempting to impose its justice system on the sovereign State of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela when the Attorney General of the United States accused the President of the Republic, Nicolás Maduro, of being a drug trafficker and offered a \$15 million reward for information leading to his arrest.

In a letter dated 21 December 2020 to the Secretary-General and the President of the Council,<sup>113</sup> the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran referred to the letter from the representative of Egypt dated 29 October 2020,<sup>114</sup> in which the latter had

transmitted the resolutions adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at the ministerial-level meeting held on 9 September 2020. In his letter, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed concern regarding a resolution adopted by the League in support of a unilateral claim by the United Arab Emirates over the Iranian islands of Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb and the Lesser Tunb. He emphasized that supporting such a baseless claim ran counter to the peremptory norms of international law and the purposes and principles of the United Nations, in particular Article 2 (7) of the Charter, which prohibited interference in the internal affairs of other States.

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<sup>113</sup> [S/2020/1271](#).

<sup>114</sup> [S/2020/1058](#).



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**Part IV**  
**Relations with other United Nations organs**

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## Introductory note

Part IV of the present supplement covers the practice of the Security Council with regard to Articles 4–6, 10–12, 15 (1), 20, 23, 24 (3), 65, 93, 94, 96 and 97 of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the relations of the Council with other principal organs of the United Nations, namely, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the International Court of Justice. Material relating to the relations of the Council with the Secretariat is featured in part II, section V, which deals with the administrative functions and powers of the Secretary-General in connection with meetings of the Council pursuant to rules 21 to 26 of its provisional rules of procedure. The Trusteeship Council continued to be inactive during the period under review.<sup>1</sup>

During the period under review, the General Assembly continued to address recommendations to the Council regarding the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council and the Assembly, in parallel and within the limitations imposed by the Charter, considered the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and in the Syrian Arab Republic. In 2020, the Assembly encouraged the Council to immediately resume discussion on the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including the country's human rights situation. In addition, the two organs collaborated on the election of judges to fill vacancies at the International Court of Justice and on the roster of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals consistent with the applicable provisions of the statute of the Mechanism, the provisional rules of procedure of the Council and the rules of procedure of the Assembly.

In 2020, the President of the Security Council participated in and delivered statements at various events of the General Assembly marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. Owing to the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, many of those events were held online. On 26 June, the President of the Council for the month (France) participated in a virtual ceremony to commemorate the signing of the Charter. On 21 September, the President of the Council for the month (Niger) participated in the high-level meeting to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. On 26 October, the President of the Council for the month (Russian Federation) also participated in the observance ceremony in commemoration of United Nations Day. The President of the Council for the month of December (South Africa) also participated in a meeting of the special session of the General Assembly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, held on 3, 4 and 14 December. Moreover, in December, the Council and the General Assembly adopted their third set of identical resolutions, Council resolution [2558 \(2020\)](#) and Assembly resolution [75/201](#), in connection with peacebuilding and sustaining peace and the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Assembly adopted a number of other resolutions referring to its relationship with the Council, and the Council, for its part, continued to refer to various Assembly resolutions in its decisions.

In 2020, Council members continued to discuss the relations between the Council and subsidiary organs of the General Assembly, in particular the Human Rights Council and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. During the period under review, Council members held informal meetings with the Human Rights Council and its special procedures in connection with conflict prevention by the Security Council. In addition, during the review period, Council members'

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<sup>1</sup> The Trusteeship Council completed its mandate under the Charter in 1994 and suspended its operations on 1 November 1994. For more information see *Repertoire, Supplement 1993–1995*, chap. VI, part III.

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discussions were focused on the importance of the development of synergies among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as with the other entities of the United Nations system, with respect to addressing contemporary drivers of conflict, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. As described in greater detail in part II of the present supplement, in 2020, faced with the absence of meetings in the Security Council Chamber due to the pandemic, Council members initiated the practice of holding videoconferences and, starting from 14 July 2020, developed a hybrid model, alternating in-person meetings with videoconferences. Part IV of the supplement features relevant discussions held in the context of both meetings and videoconferences.

In November 2020, the President of the Economic and Social Council participated in an open videoconference of the Security Council held in connection with the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, which was focused on contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity. In addition, the President of the Security Council for the month (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) participated in a joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission entitled “Fostering global solidarity and conflict-sensitive responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic impacts”.

Council members heard two briefings by the President of the International Court of Justice during the reporting period: the first at a closed videoconference held on 28 October and the second, on 18 December, at an open videoconference held in connection with the item entitled “The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security” and focused on strengthening cooperation between the Council and the Court. In 2020, the Council did not address any requests for information or assistance to the Economic and Social Council, nor did it make recommendations or decide on measures with regard to the judgments rendered by the International Court of Justice or request the Court to give an advisory opinion on any legal question.

## I. Relations with the General Assembly

### Note

Section I is focused on various aspects of the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly in accordance with Articles 4–6, 10–12, 15 (1), 20, 23, 24 (3), 93, 94, 96 and 97 of the Charter, rules 40,<sup>2</sup> 60 and 61 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council and Articles 4, 8, 10–12 and 14 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice.

Section I is divided into eight subsections. Subsection A deals with the election by the General Assembly of the non-permanent members of the Council, in accordance with Article 23 of the Charter. Subsections B and C concern the functions and powers of the Assembly vis-à-vis Articles 10 to 12, with a particular focus on the practice and authority of the Assembly to make recommendations to the Council. Subsection D covers instances in which a decision by the Council must be taken prior to that of the Assembly under Articles 4 to 6, 93 and 97, such as the admission of new Members or the appointment of judges to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. Subsection E examines the practices for the election of members of the International Court of Justice, requiring concurrent action by the Council and the Assembly. Subsection F covers the annual and special reports of the Council to the Assembly, in accordance with Articles 15 and 24 (3). Subsection G concerns Council relations with the subsidiary organs established by the Assembly that have played a part in the work of the Council during 2020. Subsection H features other Council practice bearing on relations with the Assembly.

### A. Election by the General Assembly of the non-permanent members of the Security Council

#### Article 23

1. *The Security Council shall consist of fifteen Members of the United Nations. The Republic of China, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the*

*United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America shall be permanent members of the Security Council. The General Assembly shall elect ten other Members of the United Nations to be non-permanent members of the Security Council, due regard being specially paid, in the first instance to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution.*

2. *The non-permanent members of the Security Council shall be elected for a term of two years. In the first election of the non-permanent members after the increase of the membership of the Security Council from eleven to fifteen, two of the four additional members shall be chosen for a term of one year. A retiring member shall not be eligible for immediate re-election.*

3. *Each member of the Security Council shall have one representative.*

During the period under review, at its seventy-fourth regular session, the General Assembly elected five non-permanent members to the Council, in accordance with Article 23 of the Charter, to replace those whose terms of office were to expire on 31 December 2020 (see table 1). Owing to the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, in accordance with its decision 74/557 of 29 May 2020, by which it established the procedure for holding elections by secret ballot without a plenary meeting during the pandemic, the Assembly elected non-permanent members of the Council without holding a plenary meeting. On 3 September, the Assembly took note of its decision 74/418 of 17 and 18 June 2020, entitled “Election of non-permanent members of the Security Council”.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See General Assembly decision 74/573 of 3 September 2020. See also [A/74/PV.62](#).

<sup>2</sup> Rule 40 of the provisional rules of procedure is also covered in part II, sect. IX.

Table 1

### Election by the General Assembly of non-permanent members of the Security Council

<i>Term</i>	<i>General Assembly decision</i>	<i>Date of election</i>	<i>Members elected for the term</i>
2021–2022	74/418	17–18 June 2020	India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico and Norway

## **B. Recommendations made by the General Assembly to the Security Council under Articles 10 and 11 of the Charter**

### *Article 10*

*The General Assembly may discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter, and except as provided in Article 12, may make recommendations to the Members of the United Nations or to the Security Council or to both on any such questions or matters.*

### *Article 11*

1. *The General Assembly may consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments, and may make recommendations with regard to such principles to the Members or to the Security Council or to both.*

2. *The General Assembly may discuss any questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security brought before it by any Member of the United Nations, or by the Security Council or by a state which is not a Member of the United Nations in accordance with Article 35, paragraph 2, and, except as provided in Article 12, may make recommendations with regard to any such questions to the state or states concerned or to the Security Council or to both. Any such question on which action is necessary shall be referred to the Security Council by the General Assembly either before or after discussion.*

3. *The General Assembly may call the attention of the Security Council to situations which are likely to endanger international peace and security.*

4. *The powers of the General Assembly set forth in this Article shall not limit the general scope of Article 10.*

During the period under review, the General Assembly addressed recommendations to the Council regarding the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security. Several of these recommendations concerned the powers and functions of the Council under Articles 10 and 11 (1) of the Charter. The relevant provisions of the resolutions

of the Assembly are set out in table 2. In addition, in Assembly resolution [75/76](#), adopted under the item entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa”, Member States explicitly recalled the provisions of Article 11 (1), in which it is stipulated that a function of the Assembly is to consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and arms limitation.<sup>4</sup>

In connection with Article 11 (2) of the Charter, the General Assembly made recommendations to the Council with regard to specific questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security or requesting action by the Council concerning those questions. In its recommendations, in reference to items already on the Council’s agenda, the Assembly called on the Council to ensure accountability, including through the consideration of a referral of the situation in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to the International Criminal Court and to consider the further development of sanctions in order to effectively target those who appeared to be most responsible for human rights violations. The Assembly also encouraged the Council to immediately resume discussion on the situation in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, including the country’s human rights situation. Concerning the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Assembly urged the Council to reauthorize the use of the border crossings of Bab al-Salam and Ya’rubiyah for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the country and to continue to consider additional crossing points on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General regarding alternative modalities for the border crossing of Ya’rubiyah. The Assembly also continued to call on the Council to ensure accountability of those responsible for violations and abuses of international humanitarian law or human rights law in the Syrian Arab Republic. The relevant provisions of the resolutions of the Assembly are set out in table 3.

In 2020, the General Assembly did not draw the attention of the Council to any situations likely to endanger international peace and security pursuant to Article 11 (3) of the Charter.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> General Assembly resolution [75/76](#), first preambular paragraph.

<sup>5</sup> For information on referrals of other disputes or situations to the Security Council, see part VI, sect. I.

Table 2

**Recommendations to the Security Council in resolutions of the General Assembly regarding the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security**

<i>General Assembly resolution and date</i>	<i>Provisions</i>
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**Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa**

74/302 3 September 2020	Recognizes the growing and emerging challenges and risks facing United Nations peacekeeping operations and political missions, and in this regard recalls the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and the report of the Secretary-General entitled “The future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations”, as well as recommendations supported by Member States in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping in particular on prevention, mediation and stronger global regional partnerships, including between the United Nations and the African Union, and encourages the Security Council, as appropriate, to consult with relevant regional organizations, particularly the African Union, especially if transitioning from a regional to a United Nations peacekeeping operation (para. 35)
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**Report of the International Criminal Court**

75/3 2 November 2020	Encourages further dialogue between the United Nations and the International Criminal Court, and welcomes in this regard the increased interaction of the Security Council with the Court under various formats, including the holding of open debates on peace and justice and working methods, with a special focus on the role of the Court (para. 20)
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**Comprehensive review of special political missions**

75/100 10 December 2020	Encouraging enhanced exchanges of information, in an appropriate manner, among the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat, making use of the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission, when relevant, on overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions (eighth preambular paragraph)
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Table 3

**Recommendations to the Security Council in resolutions of the General Assembly with regard to specific questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security**

<i>General Assembly resolution and date</i>	<i>Provisions</i>
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**Situation of human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea**

75/190 16 December 2020	Encourages the Security Council to continue its consideration of the relevant conclusions and recommendations of the commission of inquiry on human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and take appropriate action to ensure accountability, including through consideration of referral of the situation in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to the International Criminal Court and consideration of further sanctions in order to target effectively those who appear to be most responsible for human rights violations that the commission has said may constitute crimes against humanity (para. 12)
	Also encourages the Security Council to immediately resume discussion on the situation in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, including the country’s human rights situation, in the light of the serious concerns expressed in the present resolution, and looks forward to its continued and more active engagement on this matter (para. 13)

**Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic**

<p>75/193 16 December 2020</p>	<p>Deplores the closure of the Bab al-Salam for the purpose of cross-border humanitarian aid, and urges the Security Council to reauthorize the use of the border crossings of Bab al-Salam and Ya'rubiyah and to continue to consider additional crossing points on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General regarding alternative modalities for the border crossing of Ya'rubiyah, emphasizes that more than 6.2 million people live in areas not under the control of the Syrian regime and 4.2 million require humanitarian assistance, and also considers the multiplier effect of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and that the cross-border mechanism remains an indispensable tool to address the humanitarian needs of the population, which cannot be reached through existing operations within the Syrian Arab Republic, in the light of the limitations of cross-line assistance (para. 21)</p> <p>Emphasizes the need to ensure that all those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law or violations and abuses of human rights law are held to account through appropriate, fair and independent domestic or international criminal justice mechanisms, stresses the need to pursue practical steps towards this goal, and for that reason encourages the Security Council to take appropriate action to ensure accountability, noting the important role that the International Criminal Court can play in this regard in accordance with complementarity (para. 38)</p>
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Concerning the deliberations in the Council, during the period under review, Article 10 of the Charter was explicitly referred to once, and Article 11 was explicitly referred to twice. At a meeting of the Council held on 13 February under the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”,<sup>6</sup> the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic stated that, in adopting resolution 71/248, by which it had established the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011, despite its full knowledge that the Council was the sole organ responsible for addressing the situation in his country, the General Assembly had encroached upon the mandate of the Council and had even ignored the fact that its mandate, as provided in Articles 10, 11, 12 and 22 of the Charter, did not give it the right or authority to establish any investigative or legislative body or a mechanism such as that. The second explicit reference to Article 11 was made in the context of an open videoconference, also held in connection with the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”.<sup>7</sup>

Council members and non-Council members alike continued to address issues that may be considered of relevance for the application and interpretation of Articles 10 and 11 of the Charter in the context of the Council’s meetings and open videoconferences. In that regard, at an open debate

held on 9, 10 and 13 January under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”,<sup>8</sup> the representative of Cuba stated that the United Nations must defend multilateralism and reject any proposal that would constitute interference by the Council in matters falling within the purview of the other principal organs of the Organization, especially the General Assembly.<sup>9</sup> At the same meeting, the representative of Uruguay pointed out that the Charter conferred upon the Council responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security and that such responsibility must be fulfilled under international law, while respecting the principles set out therein, the most fundamental principle being the promise to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of States and to settle disputes by peaceful means. To that end, the Council had a central role to play and must, at all times, work in cooperation with the General Assembly.

In 2020, Council members specifically discussed the Council’s role in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic in connection with different items on its agenda. At an open videoconference held on 2 July in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and focused on the implications of COVID-19,<sup>10</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation said that the medical aspects of the international response to the outbreak and the global response to its socioeconomic impact fell to the relevant United Nations entities and agencies, namely, the World

<sup>6</sup> See S/PV.8723 (Resumption 1).

<sup>7</sup> See S/2020/1090 (Kenya). For more information, see cases 1 and 4.

<sup>8</sup> See S/PV.8699, S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1) and S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2).

<sup>9</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1).

<sup>10</sup> See S/2020/663.



Health Organization, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The representative of South Africa stressed that the attention that the Council paid to global public health emergencies should be clear and directly linked to issues that fell under the purview of its mandate. He urged the Council to be cautious and to refrain from focusing on international public health matters and economic measures that were more appropriately addressed by the broader United Nations system, the Secretary-General and the Assembly. In his written statement, the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela similarly stressed a preference for the issue to be addressed within the framework of the Assembly. The representative of Cuba indicated in her statement that it was the responsibility of the Assembly to assume the pivotal role in the coordination of international efforts to tackle the pandemic and its consequences, and the Council's interference in matters outside its competence must cease. By contrast, at an open videoconference held on 12 August in connection with the item entitled "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace" and focused on pandemics and the challenges of sustaining peace,<sup>11</sup> the delegation of El Salvador called on the Security Council to continue to address the public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular with regard to conflict zones and with a view to subsequently taking economic measures, which should be promoted effectively by the United Nations system and the Assembly. Council members also discussed the role of the Council regarding other challenges, with reference to Articles 10 and 11 of the Charter (see case 1).

### **Case 1 Peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

On 3 November, at the initiative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>12</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace" and focused on contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity.<sup>13</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Deputy Secretary-General, the Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency, the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies and the President of the Economic and Social Council. Representatives of all Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference. The representatives of

non-Council member States and the European Union submitted their statements in writing.<sup>14</sup>

One explicit reference was made to Article 11 of the Charter, by the representative of Kenya, who recalled that the Charter provided a vision for a preventive diplomatic strategy that would require the Council to work in coherence with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, under Articles 11 and 65, respectively, to enable the creation of conditions of stability and well-being necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations. The representative of China underscored that global threats and challenges called for robust global responses and stressed that the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and other bodies should fulfil their respective mandates and complement each other. The delegation of Colombia, while reiterating the importance of the work of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, underscored its view that the Assembly, as a universal body providing for a comprehensive and inclusive approach that took into account the intrinsic links between climate change and social and economic issues, was the proper context for debating and taking decisions relating to the causes and impacts of climate change. The representative of Cuba stressed the need to ensure that the Council met its overriding responsibility for maintaining international peace and security and respected the mandates entrusted to it by the Charter to other organs of the Organization, especially the Assembly. The delegation of Mexico noted that international security was multidimensional and that the threats faced by States were not only military and political, but were also related to economic and social development challenges and other phenomena, such as pandemics and environmental challenges. While the Council bore the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, other principal organs of the United Nations, such as the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the Peacebuilding Commission, also had a key role to play in preventing development challenges from becoming a threat to

<sup>11</sup> See [S/2020/799](#).

<sup>12</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 30 October 2020 ([S/2020/1064](#)).

<sup>13</sup> See [S/2020/1090](#).

<sup>14</sup> The following countries submitted written statements: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sudan, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates.

peace. In reference to the unique nature of contemporary drivers of conflicts, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran noted that new approaches and innovative measures were required in order to address those drivers in an appropriate and realistic manner. Rather than applying traditional measures such as sanctions, those drivers should be addressed by extending economic and financial assistance to the societies concerned, which were exactly the areas where the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council could play an effective role in the amelioration of the situation.

### C. Practice in relation to Article 12 of the Charter

#### Article 12

1. *While the Security Council is exercising in respect of any dispute or situation the functions assigned to it in the present Charter, the General Assembly shall not make any recommendation with regard to that dispute or situation unless the Security Council so requests.*

2. *The Secretary-General, with the consent of the Security Council, shall notify the General Assembly at each session of any matters relative to the maintenance of international peace and security which are being dealt with by the Security Council and shall similarly notify the General Assembly, or the Members of the United Nations if the General Assembly is not in session, immediately the Security Council ceases to deal with such matters.*

Subsection C covers the practice of the Council in relation to Article 12 of the Charter. Article 12 (1) limits the authority of the General Assembly with regard to any dispute or situation in respect of which the Council is exercising its functions under the Charter.

During the period under review, no reference was made to Article 12 (1) in decisions of the Council nor did the Council request the General Assembly to make a recommendation with regard to any dispute or situation. Nonetheless, Article 12 was explicitly referred to twice during the deliberations of the Council. At an open debate of the Council held on 9, 10 and 13 January 2020 under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”,<sup>15</sup> the representative of Morocco said that the Charter constituted the road map of the Organization and that it was therefore crucial to safeguard the unity of its message and implement its provisions. To that end, the

founding fathers of the United Nations had enshrined in the Charter a separation of the functions, powers and prerogatives among the bodies of the Organization and specifically articulated, in its Article 12, a distinction between the mandate of the Assembly and that of the Council.

During Council meetings, speakers held differing views regarding the prerogatives and scope of the action of the General Assembly and the Council. At a meeting held on 13 February under the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”,<sup>16</sup> the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic said that the Assembly had encroached on the mandate of the Council and violated Article 12 of the Charter in adopting resolution 71/248 establishing the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism, despite its full knowledge that the Council was the sole organ responsible for addressing the situation in his country. The Assembly had ignored the fact that its mandate, as provided in Articles 10, 11, 12 and 22 of the Charter, did not give it the right or authority to establish any investigative or legislative body or a mechanism such as the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism.

In contrast, at an earlier meeting held on 22 January under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”,<sup>17</sup> the representative of Liechtenstein had said that the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism had been established as a full-fledged subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, while the Council continued to ignore the calls for ensuring accountability for the worst crimes committed in the Syrian Arab Republic, in particular the call for a referral to the International Criminal Court. Similarly, at the meeting held on 13 February under the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”,<sup>18</sup> the same representative expressed regret that, in the ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Council had essentially ignored the accountability and justice dimension and had “passed the ball” to the Assembly, which had consequently established the Mechanism. He underscored, however, that there was also a conceptual difficulty with giving transitional justice tasks to the Council; although it had mandated peacekeeping operations, the Council would not stay engaged for the long years that were often required to provide transitional justice.

During meetings and open videoconferences, participants also addressed the question of the responsibility and action of the General Assembly in

<sup>15</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2).

<sup>16</sup> See S/PV.8723 (Resumption 1).

<sup>17</sup> See S/PV.8706 (Resumption 1).

<sup>18</sup> See S/PV.8723.

the context of the use of the veto by the permanent members of the Council. At the 8699th meeting of the Council, held on 9 January under the item “Maintenance of international peace and security”,<sup>19</sup> the representative of Liechtenstein said that, as the Council acted on behalf of the entire membership, the Assembly had a responsibility to hold the Council accountable. In that regard, she explained that Liechtenstein supported the automatic convening of the Assembly whenever a veto was cast in the Council, in order to discuss the matter, and stressed that such a discussion would take place without prejudice to any possible outcome and irrespective of the substance of the draft resolution that had been subject to a veto. At the first resumption of that meeting, held the following day,<sup>20</sup> the representative of Costa Rica expressed support for the proposal put forward by Liechtenstein. That position was reiterated by another representative of Liechtenstein in his statement submitted for the open videoconference held on 15 May on the working methods of the Council, in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”.<sup>21</sup> In his statement submitted for an open videoconference held on 21 July in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”,<sup>22</sup> the same representative referred specifically to the use of the veto by two permanent members of the Council to block two draft resolutions relating to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. In that regard, he said that it was long past time that such flagrant use of the veto be met with a response from the wider membership, including through action in the Assembly.

Under Article 12 (2), the Secretary-General is required to notify the General Assembly of the matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security being dealt with by the Council or with which the Council has ceased to deal. During the period under review, Council members held meetings and open videoconferences throughout the year to discuss matters on its agenda. As described in further detail in part II, despite there being an official record of open videoconferences in the form of a document of the Council in which all statements, whether delivered orally or submitted in writing, were compiled, those videoconferences were not considered formal meetings of the Council for all relevant purposes, including for inclusion in the summary statement of the Secretary-General on items of which the Council is seized and the stage reached in their consideration circulated

weekly to Council members in accordance with rule 11 of the provisional rules of procedure.<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, although the Secretary-General continued to notify the Assembly of the matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security that were being dealt with by the Council in the context of meetings,<sup>24</sup> he did not do so when those matters were discussed in the context of open videoconferences, as the notification was prepared on the basis of those weekly statements. The consent of the Council, required under Article 12 (2), is obtained through the circulation of the draft notification by the Secretary-General to the members of the Council. Following receipt of the notification, the Assembly formally takes note of it.<sup>25</sup>

#### **D. Practice in relation to provisions of the Charter involving recommendations by the Security Council to the General Assembly**

##### *Article 4*

*1. Membership in the United Nations is open to all other peace-loving states which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter and, in the judgment of the Organization, are able and willing to carry out these obligations.*

*2. The admission of any such state to membership in the United Nations will be effected by a decision of the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council.*

##### *Article 5*

*A Member of the United Nations against which preventive or enforcement action has been taken by the Security Council may be suspended from the exercise of the rights and privileges of membership by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council. The exercise of these rights and privileges may be restored by the Security Council.*

<sup>23</sup> S/2020/273, para. 19. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II, sect. I. For information specific to matters of which the Council is seized, see part II, sect. III.B.

<sup>24</sup> See A/75/300.

<sup>25</sup> See General Assembly decision 74/575 of 3 September 2020, in which the Assembly took note of the notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12 (2), dated 1 September 2019 (A/74/300); see also *Repertoire, Supplement 2019*, part IV, sect. I.C. As at 31 December 2020, the Assembly had not taken note of the notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12 (2), dated 1 September 2020 (A/75/300).

<sup>19</sup> See S/PV.8699.

<sup>20</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1).

<sup>21</sup> See S/2020/418.

<sup>22</sup> See S/2020/736.

*Article 6*

*A Member of the United Nations which has persistently violated the Principles contained in the present Charter may be expelled from the Organization by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council.*

*Article 93, paragraph 2*

*A state which is not a Member of the United Nations may become a party to the Statute of the International Court of Justice on conditions to be determined in each case by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council.*

*Article 97*

*The Secretariat shall comprise a Secretary-General and such staff as the Organization may require. The Secretary-General shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council. He shall be the chief administrative officer of the Organization.*

*Rule 60*

*The Security Council shall decide whether in its judgement the applicant is a peace-loving State and is able and willing to carry out the obligations contained in the Charter and, accordingly, whether to recommend the applicant State for membership.*

*If the Security Council recommends the applicant State for membership, it shall forward to the General Assembly the recommendation with a complete record of the discussion.*

*If the Security Council does not recommend the applicant State for membership or postpones the consideration of the application, it shall submit a special report to the General Assembly with a complete record of the discussion.*

*In order to ensure the consideration of its recommendation at the next session of the General Assembly following the receipt of the application, the Security Council shall make its recommendation not less than twenty-five days in advance of a regular session of the General Assembly, nor less than four days in advance of a special session ...*

The Charter provides for joint decision-making by the Council and the General Assembly in relation to a number of matters, but requires a decision by the Council to be taken first. This is the case with respect to the admission, suspension or expulsion of Members (Articles 4, 5 and 6), the appointment of the Secretary-

General (Article 97) and the conditions under which a State that is not a Member of the United Nations may become a party to the Statute of the International Court of Justice (Article 93 (2)).<sup>26</sup> In addition, the statute of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals provides that the judges of the Mechanism shall be elected by the Assembly from a list submitted by the Council.<sup>27</sup>

During the period under review, no questions arose concerning the conditions of accession to the Statute of the International Court of Justice. There was no reference to Articles 4, 5 or 6, no activity with regard to the admission of new Members or the suspension or expulsion of any Member State and no action with regard to the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General. With regard to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, the Council and the General Assembly collaborated on the election of judges to fill vacancies on the roster of the Mechanism.

**Membership in the United Nations: references to Articles 4 and 6**

The admission of a State to membership in the United Nations and the suspension or expulsion of a Member State from the Organization are effected by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Council (Articles 4 (2), 5 and 6 of the Charter). In accordance with rule 60 of its provisional rules of procedure, the Council submits to the Assembly, within specified time limits, its recommendations concerning each application for membership, together with a record of its discussions in relation to the application.

During the period under review, the Council did not recommend the admission of any State for membership in the United Nations. It made no negative recommendations, which would have required the submission of a special report to the General Assembly. In addition, the Council did not recommend the suspension or expulsion of any Member State. Nonetheless, consistent with previous years, at meetings and open videoconferences in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle

<sup>26</sup> Articles 4 (3) and 69 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice provide for the Council to make recommendations to the General Assembly regarding the conditions under which a State which is a party to the Statute but is not a Member of the United Nations may participate in electing members of the Court, and in making amendments to the Statute.

<sup>27</sup> Article 10 of the statute of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (resolution 1966 (2010), annex 1).



East, including the Palestinian question”, participants expressed support for the admission of the State of Palestine as a full Member of the Organization.<sup>28</sup>

### Procedure for the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General

In a statement submitted in connection with the open videoconference held on 15 May on the “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”, which concerns the working methods of the Council,<sup>29</sup> the representative of Cuba recognized the increase in the number of public meetings, including open debates and wrap-up sessions, over recent years, as well as the unprecedented process of consultation and exchange with Member States in the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General.

### Appointment of judges to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

By its resolution 1966 (2010) of 22 December 2010, the Council established the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals to carry out residual functions of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations

Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994.<sup>30</sup> According to Article 10 of the statute of the Mechanism, the judges of the Mechanism are elected by the General Assembly from a list submitted by the Council. In the event of a vacancy in the roster of judges of the Mechanism, the Secretary-General appoints judges after consultation with the Presidents of the Council and of the Assembly, for the remainder of the term of office concerned.<sup>31</sup>

During the period under review, following the resignation of one of the judges of the Mechanism on 19 July 2019 and pursuant to article 10 (2) of the statute of the Mechanism, the General Assembly concurred with the intention of the Secretary-General to appoint a judge nominated to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the office, of which the Council had taken note in the previous year.<sup>32</sup> In addition, the Council took note of the intention of the Secretary-General to reappoint the 25 judges, including the President of the Mechanism, as well as of his nomination of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism for reappointment for a new term of office.<sup>33</sup> The General Assembly subsequently concurred with those intentions and that nomination.<sup>34</sup> Thereafter, by its resolution 2529 (2020) of 25 June, pursuant to article 14 (4) of the statute of the Mechanism, the Council reappointed the Prosecutor of the Mechanism, with effect from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2022.<sup>35</sup>

For further details on the actions taken by the Secretary-General, the Council and the General Assembly, see table 4.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, S/PV.8706 (Syrian Arab Republic); and S/PV.8706 (Resumption 1) (Cuba). See also S/2020/341 (Cuba, League of Arab States, Qatar (on behalf of the Group of Arab States) and Syrian Arab Republic); and S/2020/1055 (Cuba and Syrian Arab Republic).

<sup>29</sup> See S/2020/418.

<sup>30</sup> Resolution 1966 (2010), para. 1.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., annex 1.

<sup>32</sup> See S/2019/999, S/2019/1000 and S/2020/108.

<sup>33</sup> See S/2020/580 and S/2020/581.

<sup>34</sup> See S/2020/616.

<sup>35</sup> Resolution 2529 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>36</sup> For more information, see part I, sect. 24.

Table 4

### Actions taken by the Security Council and the General Assembly concerning judges of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals in 2020<sup>a</sup>

<i>Letter from the Secretary-General</i>	<i>Letter from the President of the Security Council</i>	<i>Council resolution and date</i>	<i>Transmittal to the General Assembly</i>	<i>Assembly decision or resolution and date</i>
S/2019/999, transmitting the nomination of a judge to fill one vacancy in the roster of judges of the Mechanism	S/2019/1000, taking note of the intention of the Secretary-General to appoint the judge nominated to fill the vacancy			

<i>Letter from the Secretary-General</i>	<i>Letter from the President of the Security Council</i>	<i>Council resolution and date</i>	<i>Transmittal to the General Assembly</i>	<i>Assembly decision or resolution and date</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/108</a> , transmitting a letter from the President of the General Assembly reflecting his concurrence with the appointment of the nominated judge				
<a href="#">S/2020/580</a> , transmitting information on the intention of the Secretary-General to reappoint 25 judges and the President of the Mechanism and on the nomination of the Prosecutor for reappointment	<a href="#">S/2020/581</a> , taking note of the intention of the Secretary-General to reappoint 25 judges and the President of the Mechanism and his nomination of the Prosecutor for reappointment	Resolution <a href="#">2529 (2020)</a> , para. 1 25 June 2020		
<a href="#">S/2020/616</a> , transmitting a letter from the President of the General Assembly reflecting his concurrence with the reappointment of the 25 judges				

<sup>a</sup> Includes actions of the Council and the General Assembly in 2019 for the purposes of providing background information.

## E. Election of members of the International Court of Justice

### *Rule 40*

*Voting in the Security Council shall be in accordance with the relevant Articles of the Charter and of the Statute of the International Court of Justice.*

### *Rule 61*

*Any meeting of the Security Council held in pursuance of the Statute of the International Court of Justice for the purpose of the election of members of the Court shall continue until as many candidates as are required for all the seats to be filled have obtained in one or more ballots an absolute majority of votes.*

The election of members of the International Court of Justice requires action by the Council in conjunction with the General Assembly, with the two organs proceeding independently of one another. The procedure for the election is set out in rules 40<sup>37</sup> and 61 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council; Articles 4, 8, 10 to 12, 14 and 15 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice;<sup>38</sup> and

rules 150 and 151 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly.<sup>39</sup>

During the period under review, the Council held an election to fill the seats of the five members of the Court whose terms of office would expire on 5 February 2021. In accordance with Article 7 of the Statute of the Court, the Secretary-General transmitted a note to the Council and the General Assembly containing a list of nominations submitted by national groups, followed by another note containing the curricula vitae of the nominated judges.<sup>40</sup> The Secretary-General also transmitted to the Council and the General Assembly a memorandum in which he set out the procedure for the election of the judges.<sup>41</sup> The Council and the Assembly proceeded with the concurrent votes on 11 November 2020.<sup>42</sup> The Council concluded its election after the first round on the same day, but more than five candidates received the

conference in the event of more than three meetings of the Council and the General Assembly; (e) the procedure for the filling of vacancies; and (f) the term of office applied to judges elected to fill a vacancy. Article 8 provides that the two organs proceed independently.

<sup>39</sup> Rules 150 and 151 of the General Assembly provide that the election of the members of the Court take place in accordance with the Statute of the Court and that any meeting of the Assembly held in pursuance of the Statute of the Court for the purpose of electing members of the Court continue until as many candidates as are required for all the seats to be filled have obtained, in one or more ballots, an absolute majority of votes.

<sup>40</sup> See [S/2020/615](#) and [S/2020/619](#).

<sup>41</sup> See [S/2020/618](#).

<sup>42</sup> See [S/PV.8773](#) and [A/75/PV.24](#).

<sup>37</sup> Rule 40 of the provisional rules of procedure is also covered in part II, sect. IX.

<sup>38</sup> Articles 4, 10 to 12, 14 and 15 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice establish the procedure for the following: (a) the nomination of the judges by the national groups in the Permanent Court of Arbitration; (b) the majority necessary for the election of judges; (c) the number of meetings to be held for the purpose of the election of judges; (d) the holding of a joint



absolute majority of votes required at the Assembly, leading to another round of voting.<sup>43</sup> On 12 November, having obtained the required absolute majority of votes in both the Assembly and the Council, Iwasawa Yuji (Japan), Georg Nolte (Germany), Julia Sebutinde (Uganda), Peter Tomka (Slovakia) and Xue Hanqin

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

(China) were elected as members of the Court for a nine-year term of office beginning on 6 February 2021.<sup>44</sup>

For details regarding the election of the new members of the Court, see table 5.

<sup>44</sup> See General Assembly decision 75/403 of 12 November 2020.

Table 5

**Concurrent elections of members of the International Court of Justice to fill expiring vacancies**

<i>Note by the Secretary-General</i>	<i>Council meeting setting the date of the election and date</i>	<i>Council resolution deciding the election date</i>	<i>Council meeting for the election</i>	<i>General Assembly plenary meeting for the election</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/615</a>			<a href="#">S/PV.8773</a>	<a href="#">A/75/PV.24</a>

**F. Annual and special reports of the Security Council to the General Assembly**

*Article 15, paragraph 1*

*The General Assembly shall receive and consider annual and special reports from the Security Council; these reports shall include an account of the measures that the Security Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security.*

*Article 24, paragraph 3*

*The Security Council shall submit annual and, when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration.*

*Rule 60, paragraph 3*

*If the Security Council does not recommend the applicant State for membership or postpones the consideration of the application, it shall submit a special report to the General Assembly with a complete record of the discussion.*

During 2020, the Security Council maintained its practice of submitting annual reports to the General Assembly pursuant to Article 24 (3) of the Charter. The annual report was submitted to the Assembly, covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019.<sup>45</sup> The note by the President of the Council dated 30 August 2017<sup>46</sup> contains the stipulation that the report consist of an introduction, containing an agreed concise summary prepared on behalf of the Council under the coordination of the President of the Council for the month of July.

<sup>45</sup> [A/74/2](#).

<sup>46</sup> [S/2017/507](#).

However, in the case of the member holding the presidency for the month of July ending its tenure on the Council that year, that task devolves on the member of the Council next in English alphabetical order and who will not be leaving the Council at the end of that calendar year. The introduction of the annual report was therefore prepared by the delegation of the Russian Federation, as the member of the Council next in English alphabetical order after Peru and Poland, which had held the presidency of the Council for the months of July and August 2019, respectively, as both had left the Council at the end of 2019. The content and procedure concerning the annual report were discussed at an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#))” (see case 2).

The Council considered and adopted its draft annual report, without a vote, at its 8746th meeting, held on 14 July.<sup>47</sup> During the meeting, the representative of the Russian Federation said that the draft report contained information about the actions that the Council had taken in 2019 to maintain international peace and security, recalling that the Council carried out that responsibility on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations, as set out in Article 24 of the Charter.<sup>48</sup> He expressed the conviction that the annual report was an important mechanism for keeping other Member States informed of the Council’s activities and noted that, for the first time, the Council had been able to agree on the draft report by mid-May. In drafting the introduction, he recalled that the Russian Federation had sought to provide a brief but comprehensive description of the key activities of the Council during the reporting period so as to ensure that all Member

<sup>47</sup> See [S/PV.8746](#). See also [S/2020/666](#).

<sup>48</sup> See [S/PV.8746](#).

States and interested parties received as much information as possible about the Council's work in 2019.

Owing to the extraordinary circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic during the period under review, the General Assembly considered the annual report of the Council during a virtual informal meeting held on 31 August.<sup>49</sup> On 3 September, the Assembly took note of the report.<sup>50</sup> No special reports were submitted by the Council to the Assembly during the reporting period.

## Case 2

### Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)

On 15 May, at the initiative of Estonia, which held the presidency of the Council for the month, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions,<sup>51</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)" and focused on the Council's working methods.<sup>52</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Executive Director of Security Council Report, the Chair of the Informal Working Group and the Arnold A. Saltzman Professor of Professional Practice in International and Public Affairs of Columbia University, Edward Luck. Representatives of six Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference.<sup>53</sup> The representatives of non-Council member States submitted their statements in writing.<sup>54</sup>

At the videoconference, participants recognized the importance of the text of the note by the President of the Council dated 27 December 2019<sup>55</sup> on the procedure of the annual report. Some of them welcomed the inclusion of deadlines, and many Member States stressed the need for the annual report to be submitted on time.<sup>56</sup> The representative of Costa Rica expressed his country's expectation that the annual report would be duly presented to the membership before 21 June, despite the absence of a clear indication as to the applicable deadlines for the internal discussion and presentation of the report for the period. The representative of Singapore indicated that the General Assembly's consideration of the annual report of the Council was a vital exercise in transparency and accountability and expressed the hope that the timelines stipulated in the new note by the President of the Council, namely, that the report must be "discussed and thereafter adopted by the Council no later than 30 May", in time for its consideration by the Assembly "immediately thereafter", would be upheld. While noting that the new time frames adopted by the Council for the publication of its annual report were due to apply starting from 2021, the delegation of Ireland nevertheless urged the Council to adopt its most recent report as soon as possible. Similarly, the delegation of Norway, on behalf of the Nordic countries, expressed the hope that greater strides could be made to improve the timeliness and analysis of the Council's annual report to the Assembly, especially ahead of the new note by the President, due to take effect in 2021.

Participants also expressed the desire for improved content, greater transparency and consultation in the process of preparing the annual report. The representative of Costa Rica noted that considerations of content closely tied to transparency and accountability were not addressed as Member States wished them to be. Accountability involved much more than submitting insipid reports that listed activities, without analysing or explaining them, on the major events affecting international peace and security in the period under review; it meant objectively and transparently reporting on and outlining achievements, challenges, lessons learned and the road ahead. Similarly, the representative of Cuba expressed support for greater transparency in the work of the Council and advocated in favour of, inter alia, an annual report that was thorough and analytical and expressed regret that the annual reports submitted to the General Assembly consisted of merely descriptive accounts of Council meetings, activities

<sup>49</sup> See <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1a/k1auw4vqh2> and <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1w/k1wbz0q3vu>.

<sup>50</sup> See General Assembly decision 74/576 of 3 September 2020. See also A/74/PV.62.

<sup>51</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/374).

<sup>52</sup> See S/2020/418.

<sup>53</sup> China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam (on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Security Council).

<sup>54</sup> The following countries submitted written statements: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Canada, Chile (in its national capacity and on behalf of the Group of Like-Minded States on Targeted Sanctions), Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Slovakia, Switzerland (on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group), Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Ukraine.

<sup>55</sup> S/2019/997.

<sup>56</sup> See S/2020/418 (Russian Federation, Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore and Slovakia).

and decisions, rather than reflecting a comprehensive explanatory analysis of its work in order to assess the causes and implications of its decisions. The delegation of Fiji emphasized that a deeper analysis of the general underlying trends and drivers would be welcome, as well as of those specific to the situations being reported on. The representative of India expressed support for calls to make the annual report more substantive and analytical, rather than a mere summary of the number and dates of the Council's meetings, and stressed that the manner of submitting the annual report also led to delays, thereby limiting an important opportunity for engagement of the wider membership with the Council. The delegation of Ireland reiterated its call for the inclusion of an analytical introduction in the report to enable the Assembly to engage in a meaningful way with the Council; simply recounting a list of meetings held and decisions made during the preceding year did not permit such review and interaction. The delegation of Canada suggested that the annual report to the Assembly should be substantive, informative and timely and should serve to strengthen the linkages between the two bodies. In their statements, the representatives of Brazil and Nigeria also called for a more analytical and comprehensive annual report. In its statement, the delegation of Mexico also stressed the importance for the Council's annual reports to the Assembly to contain analytical information on its deliberations. The representative of Slovakia argued, in his statement, that the timely submission of the annual report of the Council to the Assembly would enable more substantive consideration of the report, in line with the mandate of the Assembly as the main deliberative organ of the United Nations, and emphasized that discussions on such an important report must not be conducted in a perfunctory manner. The representative of El Salvador underscored that a substantive increase in the participation of the entire United Nations membership in the work of the Council meant greater interaction with regard to its annual report to the Assembly and expressed regret that, despite repeated calls, the Council had not fulfilled its commitment in that regard, thus undermining the ability of Assembly members to participate in the process.

Participants also focused on the importance of monthly assessments. The representative of Singapore emphasized the importance for the General Assembly to have robust discussions on the work of the Council, which enhanced the legitimacy and credibility of the Council. He also stressed that the monthly assessments of the work of the Council were equally important and expressed disappointment at the low number of monthly assessments available for 2019 and 2020. In

that regard, the delegation of Norway, on behalf of the Nordic countries, urged all presidencies to submit their monthly assessments for inclusion in the annual report, as they were especially valuable for providing context and complementing the information presented in the introduction to the report.

On behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, the representative of Switzerland expressed concern about the effects that the working methods of the Council during the COVID-19 pandemic could have on the Council's reporting instruments under the Charter, in particular its annual report, and called on the Council to show consistency in the implementation of the note by the President of the Council dated 30 August 2017<sup>57</sup> and of the eight most recently adopted notes on measures to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the work of the Council<sup>58</sup> and to honour its commitment regarding its annual report.<sup>59</sup> Recalling the importance of that process as a vehicle for transparency and accountability in the Council's work, the Group looked forward to the opportunity to discuss its content in the General Assembly as soon as possible.

### **G. Relations with subsidiary organs established by the General Assembly**

During the period under review, the Council continued to develop its relations with various subsidiary organs established by the General Assembly, namely, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Human Rights Council and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

#### **Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People**

During 2020, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People participated in the work of the Council. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee participated in one meeting and two open videoconferences concerning the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup> S/2017/507.

<sup>58</sup> S/2019/990, S/2019/991, S/2019/992, S/2019/993, S/2019/994, S/2019/995, S/2019/996, S/2019/997.

<sup>59</sup> See S/2020/418.

<sup>60</sup> See S/PV.8706, S/PV.8706 (Resumption 1), S/2020/341 and S/2020/736.

### Human Rights Council

One decision adopted by the Security Council contained references to the Human Rights Council. By its resolution [2548 \(2020\)](#) of 30 October, the Council welcomed the ongoing interaction of Morocco with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council.<sup>61</sup> The provisions of the decision in which the Security Council made explicit reference to the Human Rights Council are set out in table 6.

The relations between the two Councils were also addressed in meetings and open videoconferences. At a meeting held on 13 February under the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, which was focused on transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict situations,<sup>62</sup> the Executive Director of the Foundation for Human Rights in South Africa, Trustee of the Desmond Tutu Peace Centre and Chair of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, said that, in charting the road ahead, the Council needed to be more innovative, by taking decisive approaches towards current conflicts on its agenda and acting in concert with other United Nations bodies, including the Human Rights Council, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the General Assembly and continental bodies such as the African Union, so as to enhance its legitimacy and its effectiveness in maintaining international peace and security. At the same meeting, the representative of Germany expressed support for the United Nations toolbox, noting in particular the need to strengthen the Council’s focus on human rights. In that regard, he added that the Council should invite commissions mandated by the Human Rights Council to provide briefings on their efforts in collecting evidence and establishing a path leading towards accountability.

At an open videoconference held on 7 July in connection with the item entitled “United Nations peacekeeping operations”,<sup>63</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation underscored that the Security Council was not a human rights body and that any attempt to somehow squeeze the topic of human rights into its agenda encroached upon the prerogatives and mandates of the Human Rights Council, OHCHR and other relevant institutions. By contrast, in her statement submitted for the same videoconference, the representative of Liechtenstein stated that, in order to address human rights violations more effectively as part of its peace and security mandate, the Council itself must better coordinate with the human rights machinery of the United Nations, in particular the

Human Rights Council, relevant special procedure mandate holders and OHCHR.

In its statement submitted for the open videoconference held on 17 July in connection with the item entitled “Women and peace and security”,<sup>64</sup> the delegation of India noted that, as the issue of violence against women, including sexual violence, was discussed by other United Nations bodies, including the Human Rights Council, the deliberations of the Security Council should remain focused on such atrocities perpetrated in situations of armed conflict threatening intentional peace and security.

In the statement submitted for the open videoconference held on 12 August in connection with the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace” and focused on pandemics and the challenges of sustaining peace,<sup>65</sup> the representative of Denmark emphasized that human rights must not become a casualty of the pandemic and that the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights must be “front and centre” in the response. He welcomed the recent convening of an informal exchange between the two Councils and hoped to see similar exchanges happen more frequently. Similarly, in its statement submitted for the same videoconference, the delegation of the European Union welcomed the convening of the informal meeting between the Security Council and the President of the Human Rights Council, adding that an effective response to the challenge would need to draw upon cross-pillar United Nations coherence to ensure a “One United Nations” mandate delivery at the country level, with full respect for human rights, gender equality and the principle of non-discrimination.

At an open videoconference held on 3 November in connection with the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace” concerning contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity,<sup>66</sup> the representative of France expressed support for reinforcing synergies with the Human Rights Council while respecting the mandate of each forum.

At the 8775th meeting of the Council, held on 12 November under the item entitled “The situation in Somalia”,<sup>67</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation expressed regret for the continued practice of using Council resolutions to promote human rights-related aspects of the Somalia dossier and, stressing that a separate body, the Human Rights Council, existed to

<sup>64</sup> See [S/2020/727](#).

<sup>65</sup> See [S/2020/799](#).

<sup>66</sup> See [S/2020/1090](#).

<sup>67</sup> See [S/PV.8775](#).

<sup>61</sup> Resolution [2548 \(2020\)](#), twentieth preambular paragraph.

<sup>62</sup> See [S/PV.8723](#).

<sup>63</sup> See [S/2020/674](#).



address those issues, called for respect for the traditional division of labour.

In its communications of 2020, the Council also addressed its relations with the Human Rights Council. In a letter dated 14 September 2020 addressed to the President of the Security Council, the representative of Estonia transmitted the Chair's summary of an open Arria-formula meeting on human rights in Belarus, held on 4 September.<sup>68</sup> In his summary, the Chair recalled the broad consensus reached at the meeting that the developments in Belarus required the attention of the international community and of the United Nations. He also included a set of recommendations, including a call to convene a special session of the Human Rights Council.<sup>69</sup>

In a letter dated 30 July 2020 addressed to the Secretary-General,<sup>70</sup> the representative of Germany transmitted a letter from the President of the Human Rights Council to the President of the Security Council. In the letter, the President of the Human Rights Council extended her thanks to the President of the Security Council for organizing the informal exchange held on 28 July with the members of the Security Council. She underscored that the virtual discussion had provided a valuable opportunity to continue the informal channel of dialogue between the two Councils that had been established in 2018 with a

view to strengthening the Geneva-New York relationship. She recalled that, during the exchange, several members of the Security Council had enquired about possible ways of enhancing the dialogue between the two bodies, and she reiterated the proposal of her predecessor to organize an informal conversation between the Human Rights Council and the President of the Security Council for the month.<sup>71</sup>

### Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations

In one decision adopted during the reporting period, the Council made reference to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations of the General Assembly. By its resolution [2553 \(2020\)](#) of 3 December, the Council recalled the reports of the Special Committee on the subject of security sector reform and the development of a United Nations approach to security sector reform, and encouraged Member States to continue to be engaged and to facilitate strategic discussions on strengthening the United Nations approach and role in that critical area, including through the Special Committee.<sup>72</sup> Decisions adopted by the Council in 2020 that contained references to the Special Committee are featured in table 6.

<sup>68</sup> [S/2020/900](#), annex. The meeting was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia.

<sup>69</sup> For further information on Arria-formula meetings, see part II.

<sup>70</sup> [S/2020/768](#).

<sup>71</sup> For more information on prior initiatives relating to informal dialogue between the members of the Security Council and the Human Rights Council, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2019*, part IV, sect. I.G.

<sup>72</sup> Resolution [2553 \(2020\)](#), eleventh preambular paragraph and para. 16.

Table 6  
Security Council decisions containing references to subsidiary organs of the General Assembly

<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Provision</i>
<b>Human Rights Council</b>	
<b>The situation in Western Sahara</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2548 (2020)</a> 30 October 2020	Welcoming in this regard, steps and initiatives taken by Morocco, and the role played by the National Council on Human Rights regional commissions operating in Dakhla and Laayoune, and Morocco's interaction with special procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council (twentieth preambular paragraph)
<b>Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations</b>	
<b>Maintenance of international peace and security</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a> 3 December 2020	Recalling reports of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations of the General Assembly, which have provided guidance to the United Nations Secretariat on the subject of security sector reform and the development of a United Nations approach to security sector reform (eleventh preambular paragraph)

Encourages Member States to continue to be engaged and to facilitate strategic discussions on strengthening the United Nations approach and role in this critical area, including through the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations of the General Assembly and the Peacebuilding Commission (para. 16)

In addition, in meetings and open videoconferences, Council members recognized the importance of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. At an open videoconference held on 14 September in connection with the item entitled “United Nations peacekeeping operations”,<sup>73</sup> the representative of the United States stated that improving peacekeeping performance was an integral part of the Secretary-General’s Action for Peacekeeping agenda, a priority for the Security Council, as outlined in resolution 2436 (2018), and a focus area of the Special Committee. At an open videoconference held on 3 December in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and focused specifically on security sector reform,<sup>74</sup> the representative of China said that security sector reform required coordination and synergy by multiple players and that the Peacebuilding Commission and the Special Committee were important platforms for discussions on issues related to it.<sup>75</sup>

## H. Other Security Council practice bearing on relations with the General Assembly

### Special and other sessions of the General Assembly

In 2020, at the request of the President of Azerbaijan,<sup>76</sup> the General Assembly convened its thirty-first special session between 10 July and 14 December.<sup>77</sup> The President of the Security Council for the month (South Africa) participated in a meeting of the special session, held on 3, 4 and 14 December, but did not deliver a statement.<sup>78</sup> In addition, in 2020, the President of the Council participated in and

delivered statements at various events of the Assembly marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. On 26 June, the President of the Council for the month (France) participated in a virtual ceremony to commemorate the signing of the Charter of the United Nations.<sup>79</sup> On 21 September, the General Assembly held a ceremony in commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.<sup>80</sup> The President of the Council for the month (Niger) participated in the meeting and delivered a statement. At the ceremony, the Assembly adopted its resolution 75/1, containing a declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, in which Member States reiterated the importance of abiding by the Charter, principles of international law and relevant resolutions of the Security Council and committed themselves to instilling new life in discussions on the reform of the Security Council and to continuing the work to revitalize the Assembly and strengthen the Economic and Social Council.<sup>81</sup> On 26 October, the President of the Council for the month (Russian Federation) participated in and delivered a statement at the observance ceremony in commemoration of United Nations Day.<sup>82</sup>

### General Assembly decisions concerning relations with the Security Council

The General Assembly also made reference to its relations with the Council in several other decisions. By its decision 74/569, adopted on 31 August 2020 under the item entitled “Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council”, the Assembly decided to reaffirm its central role concerning the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Council and other matters related to the Council, and to immediately continue intergovernmental

<sup>73</sup> See [S/2020/911](#).

<sup>74</sup> See [S/2020/1176](#).

<sup>75</sup> Decisions concerning relations with the Peacebuilding Commission, a joint subsidiary organ of the Security Council and the General Assembly, are covered in detail in part IX, section VII.

<sup>76</sup> See [S/2020/364](#), annex I.

<sup>77</sup> See [www.un.org/pga/75/wp-content/uploads/sites/100/2020/12/UNGASS-COVID-FINAL-PROGRAM.pdf](#). See also [A/S-31/3](#).

<sup>78</sup> See [A/S-31/PV.2](#), [A/S-31/PV.2 \(Resumption 1\)](#) and [A/S-31/PV.2 \(Resumption 2\)](#). See also decision [S-31/10 \(A/S-31/3, section II.B\)](#).

<sup>79</sup> See [www.un.org/pga/74/un-charter-day/](#). France was represented by its Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

<sup>80</sup> See [A/75/PV.3](#).

<sup>81</sup> General Assembly resolution 75/1, paras. 9 and 14.

<sup>82</sup> See [https://media.un.org/asset/k1f/k1fljvcf9e](#).



negotiations on Council reform in informal plenary meetings of the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.<sup>83</sup>

With respect to the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic, in its resolution [75/193](#), adopted on 16 December 2020, the General Assembly expressed support for the work carried out by the

Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, welcomed the reports of the Commission of Inquiry and reiterated its decision to transmit those reports to the Council. The Assembly further requested the Commission to continue to provide briefings to the Assembly and the members of the Council.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup> General Assembly decision 74/569. The Assembly also welcomed the active engagement, initiatives and intensive efforts of the President of the General Assembly, noted with appreciation the active role and concrete efforts of the Co-Chairs undertaken in a consultative manner with a view to an early comprehensive reform of the Council and decided to convene the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council during its seventy-fifth session, if Member States so decided. The Assembly also decided to include the item in the agenda of its seventy-fifth session.

### Security Council decisions concerning relations with General Assembly

A number of resolutions and presidential statements adopted by the Council in 2020 contained specific references to the General Assembly in connection with policy and implementation issues other than those covered in subsections A, D, E and G above, as set out in table 7.

<sup>84</sup> General Assembly resolution [75/193](#), twenty-second preambular paragraph.

Table 7

### Security Council decisions containing specific references to the General Assembly in connection with policy and implementation issues other than those covered in subsections A, D, E and G

<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Provision</i>
<b>Children and armed conflict</b>	
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a> 10 September 2020	The Security Council notes General Assembly resolution <a href="#">74/275</a> , which established the International Day to Protect Education from Attack, emphasizes the importance of access to quality education for all girls and boys in armed conflict, including those undergoing reintegration programmes, noting that schools can provide life-saving safe spaces, psychosocial and other support services, skills development and a foundation for lifelong learning and can contribute to stability and poverty reduction, and in this regard acknowledges the importance of education in preventing violent conflict and sustaining peace (twenty-fifth paragraph)
<b>Maintenance of international peace and security</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2532 (2020)</a> 1 July 2020	Having considered resolution <a href="#">74/270</a> , entitled “Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)”, adopted by the General Assembly on 2 April 2020 (ninth preambular paragraph)
Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a> 3 December 2020	Recalling its resolution <a href="#">2282 (2016)</a> , which recalled General Assembly resolution <a href="#">70/1</a> , entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets (third preambular paragraph)
	Encourages Member States to continue to be engaged and to facilitate strategic discussions on strengthening the United Nations approach and role in this critical area, including through the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations of the General Assembly and the Peacebuilding Commission (para. 16)
<b>Peacebuilding and sustaining peace</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2558 (2020)</a> 21 December 2020	Reaffirming General Assembly and Security Council resolutions <a href="#">70/262</a> and <a href="#">2282 (2016)</a> of 27 April 2016, as well as <a href="#">60/180</a> and <a href="#">1645 (2005)</a> of 20 December 2005, <a href="#">65/7</a> and <a href="#">1947 (2010)</a> of 29 October 2010 and <a href="#">72/276</a> and <a href="#">2413 (2018)</a> of 26 April 2018, and recalling statements by the President of the Security Council of 28 July 2016, 21 December 2017 and 18 December 2018 (second preambular paragraph)

Noting that this year marks the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security, and the fifth anniversary of Security Council resolution [2250 \(2015\)](#) on youth and peace and security, and recognizing the importance of the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and youth in peacebuilding, recalling further the fifth anniversary of General Assembly resolution [70/1](#), entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (sixth preambular paragraph)

Expressing grave concern about the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across the world, especially in conflict-affected countries, and stressing the need for full implementation of Security Council resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) and noting the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution [74/306](#) in this regard, further noting that 2020 inaugurates the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, recognizing that progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all its Goals and targets could be hampered, and peacebuilding and development gains reversed, and emphasizing the need to integrate peacebuilding and sustaining peace into efforts to build back better (seventh preambular paragraph)

Notes that peacebuilding financing remains a critical challenge, and therefore takes note of the General Assembly decision to convene a high-level meeting in the seventy-sixth session to advance, explore and consider options for ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding, and to invite, starting at the seventy-fifth session, the relevant United Nations bodies and organs, including the Peacebuilding Commission, in accordance with respective mandates, to present inputs in advance for Member States’ consideration and discussion at this meeting, and to affirm a commitment to pursuing action-oriented outcomes (para. 4)

Calls for a further comprehensive review of United Nations peacebuilding in 2025, and requests the Secretary-General to present to the General Assembly and the Security Council an interim report in 2022 and a second, detailed report in 2024 in advance of the review, and also requests the Secretary-General to continue to present a report every two years following that review, on continued implementation of the resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, with due attention to the impact of relevant reforms on the performance of the United Nations system in advancing the implementation of the resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and with emphasis on the systematic impact made at the field level, for the consideration of Member States (para. 5)

**The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a> 18 December 2020	Requests the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to consider the environmental impacts of its operations when fulfilling its mandated tasks and, in this context, to manage them as appropriate and in accordance with applicable and relevant General Assembly resolutions and United Nations rules and regulations (para. 46)
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**The situation in Mali**

Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a> 29 June 2020	Requests the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali to consider the environmental impacts of its operations when fulfilling its mandated tasks and, in this context, to manage them as appropriate and in accordance with applicable and relevant General Assembly resolutions and United Nations rules and regulations (para. 59)
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**The situation in the Central African Republic**

Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a> 12 November 2020	Authorizes French armed forces, within the provisions of their existing bilateral agreement with the Central African Republic and the limits of their capacities and areas of deployment, at the request of the Secretary-General, to use all the means to provide operational support to elements of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic when under serious threat, from the date of adoption of this resolution, and requests France to ensure reporting to the Council on the implementation of this mandate and to coordinate its reporting with that of the Secretary-General referred to in paragraph 54 of this resolution (para. 52)
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**Youth and peace and security**

Resolution 2535 (2020) 14 July 2020	Noting that the term “youth” is defined in the context of this resolution as persons of the age of 18–29 years old, and further noting the variations of definition of the term that may exist on the national and international levels, including the definition of youth in General Assembly resolutions 50/81 and 56/117 (ninth preambular paragraph)
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**Other relevant decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council**

In December 2020, the Council and the General Assembly adopted their third set of identical resolutions (Council resolution 2558 (2020) and Assembly resolution 75/201) in connection with peacebuilding and sustaining peace and the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture of the Peacebuilding Commission.

**Security Council discussions concerning relations with the General Assembly**

In 2020, Council members and other participants in meetings and open videoconferences continued to address the Council’s cooperation and engagement with the General Assembly.<sup>85</sup> At the open videoconference held on 15 May in

connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”, which concerns the working methods of the Council,<sup>86</sup> the representative of China stressed that the President of the Council played a leading role in strengthening the cooperation and coordination between the Council and the Assembly. He recalled that, during its presidency of the Council in March, China had maintained close coordination with the President of the General Assembly and that such practices had proven conducive to the Council’s work and would be helpful if continued. The representative of Malaysia similarly expressed a sense of encouragement generated by the continuous monthly engagement between the Presidents of the Council and of the Assembly, adding that the readout of that engagement, which was circulated by the President of the Assembly, was valuable to all Member States.

<sup>85</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Kenya, Switzerland and Singapore); S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1) (Oman and Uruguay); and S/2020/418 (Executive Director of Security Council Report, China, Bahrain, Brazil, El Salvador, Malaysia, Switzerland (on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group) and Turkey).

<sup>86</sup> See S/2020/418.

**II. Relations with the Economic and Social Council***Article 65*

*The Economic and Social Council may furnish information to the Security Council and shall assist the Security Council upon its request.*

**Note**

Section II concerns the relationship between the Council and the Economic and Social Council, with a particular focus on the practice of the Security Council in relation to Article 65 of the Charter. Subsection A covers the deliberations of the Council concerning relations with the Economic and Social Council, including the participation of the President of the Economic and Social Council in a meeting of the Security Council held in November 2020. Subsection B concerns the communications of the Council containing references to its relations with the Economic and

Social Council. The President of the Economic and Social Council participated in one open videoconference during the reporting period, held under the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”.<sup>87</sup> On 19 November, the President of the Security Council for the month (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) participated in a joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, entitled “Fostering global solidarity and conflict-sensitive responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic impacts”.<sup>88</sup>

The Council did not address any requests to the Economic and Social Council for information or

<sup>87</sup> See S/2020/1090. For more information, see case 4.

<sup>88</sup> For an informal summary of the joint meeting, see [www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/ecosoc-pbc\\_joint\\_meeting\\_informal\\_summary.pdf](http://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/ecosoc-pbc_joint_meeting_informal_summary.pdf).

assistance, nor did it explicitly refer to Article 65 of the Charter in any outcome documents.

### **A. Discussions concerning relations with the Economic and Social Council**

During the period under review, there were several references to the relations between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in the deliberations of the Security Council, including three explicit references to Article 65 in two open videoconferences.<sup>89</sup> The key discussions in this regard took place during the annual open debate on the Council's working methods (see case 3), as well as in the context of a thematic debate under the item entitled "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace" (see case 4).

In addition, Security Council members discussed the interaction between the two Councils in the context of both country-specific and thematic items on its agenda.

#### **Discussions in relation to country-specific items**

At an open videoconference held on 19 June in connection with the item entitled "The question concerning Haiti", with reference to the transition of the United Nations presence in Haiti from a peacekeeping mission to a special political mission, speakers underscored that the Economic and Social Council and its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti should play an important role in that process.<sup>90</sup>

#### **Discussion in relation to thematic items**

At an open videoconference held on 21 April in connection with the item entitled "Protection of civilians in armed conflict" and focused on protecting civilians from conflict-induced hunger,<sup>91</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation noted that the specialized United Nations agencies and platforms, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, continued to play a crucial role in addressing various socioeconomic issues. His delegation was convinced of the need to explore the potential of holding discussions on those issues under the auspices of the General Assembly and the

Economic and Social Council. At the same videoconference, the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines underscored that, in order to end hunger by 2030, a whole-of-system approach was required to tackle food insecurity, both within and beyond situations of conflict, which meant that the Council must make a greater effort to work alongside the Peacebuilding Commission and other entities, including the Economic and Social Council, to tackle the root causes of insecurity across the peace, security, development and humanitarian nexus.

At an open videoconference held on 2 July in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security" and aimed at addressing the implications of COVID-19,<sup>92</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation stated that the Council's efforts in helping to combat the pandemic should be focused, first and foremost, on its impact on the functioning of peacekeeping missions, by ensuring the continuity of peace processes and supporting the implementation of the Secretary-General's ceasefire initiative. The medical aspects of the international response to the outbreak and the global response to its socioeconomic impact fell to the relevant United Nations entities and agencies, namely, the World Health Organization, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

At an open videoconference held on 24 July in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security" and aimed at addressing the question of climate and security,<sup>93</sup> the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines recalled that while United Nations organs such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council continued to play important roles, it was vitally important that climate perspectives be incorporated comprehensively into the peace and security pillar of the Organization, adding that what was needed was a complementary, synergistic approach to make the best use of the expertise of all relevant organs and actors. Similarly, the delegation of Nauru, in its statement submitted on behalf of the 51-member Group of Friends on Climate and Security, while recognizing and supporting other efforts and processes taking place within different parts of the United Nations family, including the Economic and Social Council, expressed the view that the Security Council must do more. In its written statement, the delegation of Poland argued that addressing the implications of climate change was not only the responsibility of the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, but

<sup>89</sup> See [S/2020/418](#) (Executive Director of Security Council Report); and [S/2020/1090](#) (President of the Economic and Social Council and Kenya).

<sup>90</sup> See [S/2020/568](#) (Dominican Republic and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (also on behalf of the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia)).

<sup>91</sup> See [S/2020/340](#).

<sup>92</sup> See [S/2020/663](#).

<sup>93</sup> See [S/2020/751](#).

also of the Security Council, as climate change posed risks to peace and security. In its written statement, the delegation of the Republic of Korea affirmed that a United Nations system-wide approach to climate-related security risks was needed, as was better coordination among United Nations bodies. The delegation referred to the Economic and Social Council resolution 2020/2 on international support to the Sahel region, in which closer cooperation between relevant United Nations bodies and Member States was set out, as a good example leading to more concrete actions.

At an open videoconference held on 17 September in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and focused on the humanitarian effects of environmental degradation and peace and security,<sup>94</sup> the representative of Brazil underscored in his written statement that climate change and environmental challenges were phenomena that could have no possible military solution and were challenges that must be dealt with primarily through development tools, avoiding the risk of undue securitization. In that regard, the United Nations system relied on a roster of forums and agencies tasked with handling environmental issues, including the Economic and Social Council, the Second Committee of the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa.

### **Case 3 Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)**

On 15 May, at the initiative of Estonia which held the presidency of the Council for the month, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions,<sup>95</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)” and focused on the Council’s working methods.<sup>96</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Executive Director of Security Council Report, the Chair of the Informal Working Group and the Arnold A. Saltzman Professor of Professional Practice in International and Public Affairs of Columbia

University, Edward Luck. Representatives of six Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference.<sup>97</sup> The representatives of non-Council member States submitted their statements in writing.<sup>98</sup>

The Executive Director of Security Council Report said that the Council had, at times, hesitated to take up certain forms of global threats, such as climate threats, cyberthreats, pandemic threats or root causes of conflict that lay in structural inequality and other chronic human rights violations, adding that there was no shadow Council to address those systemic threats to shared security. In that regard, she noted that, as the Council did not want to encroach on the mandates of other bodies, it could be timely to strengthen the exchanges between the Council and those other bodies, as an expression of the Council’s own role and as support for those bodies’ taking up those global threats. The provision in Article 65 of the Charter for the Economic and Social Council to furnish information to the Security Council, and assistance if requested, had the potential to bring some root causes of conflict more strongly to the fore. Whether it be with the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission or other bodies, she encouraged Council members to develop ways to work coherently and burden-share with those entities to address threats to peace and security. Similarly, the representative of China stated that, with regard to thematic issues that went beyond its mandate, the Council should work in close coordination with other United Nations bodies, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Recalling that, during its presidency of the Council, China had maintained close coordination with the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Secretary-General and stressing that such practices had proved conducive to the Council’s work, he encouraged the presidencies for different months to better coordinate with each other so

<sup>97</sup> China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam (on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Security Council).

<sup>98</sup> The following countries submitted written statements: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Canada, Chile (in its national capacity and on behalf of the Group of Like-Minded States on Targeted Sanctions), Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Slovakia, Switzerland (on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group), Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Ukraine.

<sup>94</sup> See S/2020/929.

<sup>95</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/374).

<sup>96</sup> See S/2020/418.



as to enhance integrity and synergy and avoid duplication. The representative of the Russian Federation reiterated his delegation's appeal for the Council's agenda not to be overloaded and abused with the consideration of thematic subjects on the agendas of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council or other United Nations bodies.

In his statement, the representative of Bahrain indicated that his delegation welcomed the relentless pursuit of greater coordination and cooperation among the main organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other relevant bodies, so as to enable the Organization to work rapidly and effectively and support the Security Council in implementing its mandate. The representative of Malaysia said that his delegation was encouraged by the continuous monthly engagement between the Presidents of the Council and of the Assembly and expressed hope that similar engagement could be strengthened with the President of the Economic and Social Council, as peace and security issues were also linked to the subjects of women, youth and development. The representative of Turkey also stressed in his statement the need to increase coordination and cooperation between the Security Council and other main bodies of the United Nations, including the Economic and Social Council. The representative of El Salvador expressed support for greater interaction by the Council with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations bodies. Noting that the Security Council's field visits were valuable but could be very costly, she further suggested that they could be carried out among the various subsidiary bodies of the Council, including the Peacebuilding Commission, and by the Economic and Social Council, with a view to coordinating efforts and strengthening the dynamics of the Organization.

#### **Case 4 Peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

On 3 November, at the initiative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>99</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace" and focused on contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity.<sup>100</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Deputy Secretary-General, the Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development

Agency, the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies and the President of the Economic and Social Council. Representatives of all Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference. The representatives of non-Council member States and the European Union submitted their statements in writing.<sup>101</sup>

The President of the Economic and Social Council said that, although little noted and never utilized, Article 65 of the Charter provided that the Economic and Social Council might "furnish information to" the Council and should assist the Council "upon its request". He added that the framers of the Charter had clearly conceived that the United Nations would both collectively maintain and enforce peace and create the conditions for peace and stability.

Following the briefings, videoconference participants discussed the relations between the two organs and the potential for concrete cooperation. The Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines stressed that, amid the vast and continually expanding health, economic, social, humanitarian and security challenges experienced by people globally, it was necessary to take bold steps to alleviate human suffering, especially in conflict-affected areas. He called for a whole-of-system approach and enhanced cooperation between the Council and other main organs such as the Economic and Social Council, as exemplified by the work of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti. The representative of China underscored that global threats and challenges called for robust global responses, and stressed that the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and other bodies should fulfil their respective mandates and complement each other. The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation expressed support for the cooperation and pooling of efforts of various United Nations agencies, when appropriate and agreed to by all Member States, and for the development and strengthening of dialogue between the two Councils.

In its statement, the delegation of the United Arab Emirates welcomed the Council's greater engagement with other entities of the United Nations and encouraged growing synergies. Noting that, in recent

<sup>99</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 30 October 2020 (S/2020/1064).

<sup>100</sup> See S/2020/1090.

<sup>101</sup> The following countries submitted written statements: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sudan, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates.



years, the Economic and Social Council had engaged on several issues on the Security Council's agenda on an ad hoc basis, the delegation stressed that such relationships should be strengthened. In his statement, the representative of Kenya recalled that the Charter provided a vision for a preventive diplomatic strategy that would require the Security Council to work in coherence with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, under Articles 11 and 65, respectively, to enable the creation of conditions of stability and well-being necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations.

The representative of Ecuador suggested in his statement that, in coordination with the Economic and Social Council, the Security Council should take account of the economic dimensions of armed conflicts and promote initiatives aimed at ensuring stable contexts for the involvement of civil society, academia and the private sector. In his statement, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran noted that the effects of climate change in terms of the emergence or escalation of conflicts could not be properly addressed through the application of traditional measures such as sanctions, but rather through extending economic and financial assistance to the societies concerned, which were the exact areas where the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council could play an effective role in the amelioration of the situation. In its statement, the delegation of Mexico argued that threats such as pandemics and environmental challenges could not be addressed or overcome in isolation and that, while the Security Council bore the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, other principal organs of the United Nations, including the Economic and Social Council, also had a key role to play in preventing development challenges from becoming a threat to peace.

The delegation of Brazil underscored that peacebuilding and sustaining peace were cross-pillar endeavours that were connected with topics of interest to the whole United Nations membership and that should be discussed and implemented under the leadership of other political forums, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with their respective mandates. In that connection, the delegation expressed support for enhancing the advisory capacities of the Peacebuilding Commission with a view to providing recommendations to the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. A similar expression of support for the Commission's advisory capacity and bridging role

among the various bodies was articulated by other delegations in their statements.<sup>102</sup> The representative of Namibia called for the Council to make greater use of the expertise and insight that both the Commission and the Economic and Social Council could provide on their respective focus areas, as such collaboration would serve only to benefit those who were seeking to build peace and security and ensure the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## **B. Communications of the Security Council concerning relations with the Economic and Social Council**

Several communications circulated as documents of the Council during the reporting period contained references to the relationship between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. In his report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace,<sup>103</sup> the Secretary-General took note of the potential for greater collaboration between the two Councils, indicating that the operational activities for the Economic and Social Council's development segment in 2020 had served to underscore the need to better connect actions in development, humanitarian assistance and peace. The Secretary-General also welcomed the Peacebuilding Commission's consideration of the designation of an informal coordinator to liaise with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

In a letter dated 3 March 2020 addressed to the President of the Security Council,<sup>104</sup> the representatives of Kuwait and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines transmitted their joint report on the informal retreat on the working methods of the Council, co-hosted by the two delegations and held in Kingstown from 17 to 19 January 2020. According to the report, some members at the retreat had addressed the subject of interaction with other principal organs of the United Nations, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, emphasizing that there was potential for greater collaboration with the Presidents of those two organs. Although the President of the Security Council met on a monthly basis with the President of the Assembly, that was not the practice with respect to the President of the Economic and Social Council.

<sup>102</sup> Canada, El Salvador, Georgia, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria, Portugal and Slovakia.

<sup>103</sup> [S/2020/773](#).

<sup>104</sup> [S/2020/172](#).

### III. Relations with the International Court of Justice

#### Article 94

1. *Each Member of the United Nations undertakes to comply with the decision of the International Court of Justice in any case to which it is a party.*

2. *If any party to a case fails to perform the obligations incumbent upon it under a judgment rendered by the Court, the other party may have recourse to the Security Council, which may, if it deems necessary, make recommendations or decide upon measures to be taken to give effect to the judgment.*

#### Article 96

1. *The General Assembly or the Security Council may request the International Court of Justice to give an advisory opinion on any legal question.*

2. *Other organs of the United Nations and specialized agencies, which may at any time be so authorized by the General Assembly, may also request advisory opinions of the Court on legal questions arising within the scope of their activities.*

#### Note

Section III concerns the relationship between the Council and the International Court of Justice. In accordance with Article 94 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Council may make recommendations or decide upon measures to be taken to give effect to the judgment rendered by the Court if a party to a case fails to perform its obligations under that judgment. Pursuant to Article 96, the Council may also request the Court to give an advisory opinion on any legal question. In addition, pursuant to Article 41 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice, notice of any provisional measures to be taken to preserve the rights of parties may be given by the Court to the parties and to the Council.

During the reporting period, in line with the prior practice of the Council, the President of the International Court of Justice was invited to give a briefing to Council members in a closed session. Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the working methods of the Council, the President of the Court addressed Council members at a closed videoconference held on

28 October 2020.<sup>105</sup> In addition, the Council heard a briefing by the President of the Court at an open videoconference, held on 18 December, in connection with the item entitled “The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security”, with a focus on the theme of strengthening the cooperation between the Council and the Court.<sup>106</sup> Subsection A covers the decisions of the Council containing references to the Court. Subsection B provides information on discussions held among Council members during the reporting period on the relations between the Council and the Court. Subsection C covers communications of the Council concerning the relationship between the two organs.

#### A. Decisions of the Council referring to the International Court of Justice

In a presidential statement adopted on 21 December to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, the Council recalled its previous statements in which it had reaffirmed the importance of the International Court of Justice in the international architecture and maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>107</sup> Stressing the importance of all the provisions of the Charter regarding the peaceful settlement of disputes and the Court, the Council also expressed its continued commitment to fostering interaction between the two organs, in accordance with their respective mandates under the Charter.<sup>108</sup> The Council also recognized the positive contribution of the Court to the rule of law at the international level and its key role in adjudicating disputes among States, thus defusing tensions and restoring peaceful relations among States, and noted the growing number of cases brought to the Court on all aspects of international relations, which demonstrated confidence in the Court.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>105</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 19. For more information on closed meetings held under the item entitled “Briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice”, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2000–2003 to 2019*.

<sup>106</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#).

<sup>107</sup> [S/PRST/2020/13](#), fifth paragraph. See also [S/PRST/2006/28](#), [S/PRST/2010/11](#) and [S/PRST/2012/1](#).

<sup>108</sup> [S/PRST/2020/13](#), third and tenth paragraphs.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, sixth and seventh paragraphs.

## B. Discussions concerning relations with the International Court of Justice

During the period under review, nine explicit references to Article 94<sup>110</sup> of the Charter and eight explicit references to Article 96<sup>111</sup> were found in the context of deliberations by Council members and non-Council members. Most of those references, including on the relationship between the Council and the Court, were made in statements submitted for the open videoconference held on 18 December in connection with the item entitled “The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security” (see case 5).

One explicit reference to Article 94 of the Charter was made at a meeting held on 13 January under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”,<sup>112</sup> by the representative of Djibouti, who elaborated on the means for peaceful settlement of disputes, underscoring that much of the international infrastructure for resolving such disputes was already in place, including the creation, through the Charter, of the International Court of Justice as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations for resolving legal disputes between States. Expressing a sense of encouragement stemming from how frequently States had invoked the Court’s jurisdiction in preceding years, he emphasized that, when a State failed to comply with a judgment of the Court, the Council must not hesitate to act under Article 94 to decide upon measures to give the judgment effect.

Two explicit references to Article 96 of the Charter were made at an open debate held on 9, 10 and 13 January under the item “Maintenance of international peace and security”,<sup>113</sup> by the Secretary-General and the representative of Egypt. On the first day of the debate, the Secretary-General recalled that Chapter VI of the Charter provided for many available tools for the peaceful settlement of disputes, including negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement.<sup>114</sup> Emphasizing that there was ample evidence that those tools could be effective when applied with purpose and unity, he called upon

the Council to further utilize the powers granted to it under the Charter, including the investigation of disputes in accordance with Chapter VI and the referral of legal questions to the International Court of Justice for advisory opinions in accordance with Article 96. The representative of Egypt expressed regret that the Council rushed to use Chapter VII of the Charter instead of Chapter VI, which contained a call for taking pre-emptive and preventive diplomatic steps and for activating the role of the Court, in accordance with Article 36 (3) of the Charter, on the referral of disputes of a legal nature to the Court, and with Article 96, on requests for an advisory opinion from the Court.

At the resumption of the meeting held the following day,<sup>115</sup> the representative of Slovenia underscored that one of the major intersections between the Charter, the Council and the rule of law was the enforcement of those rules and decisions, especially through the International Court of Justice. The representative of Uruguay emphasized that the relations between the Council and the Court must be strengthened, calling upon the Council to encourage the settlement of disputes, in particular legal ones, when other means, such as negotiation, mediation, conciliation, had not been effective. The representative of Azerbaijan, speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, underscored the Movement’s principled position and commitment with regard to the promotion of the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter and emphasized the significant role played by the Court in promoting and encouraging the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and the Statute of the Court. The Movement urged the Council, the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, when duly authorized, to make greater use of the Court as a source of advisory opinions on and interpretation of international law within the scope of their activities.

### Case 5 The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security

On 18 December, at the initiative of South Africa, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>116</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in

<sup>110</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#) (Djibouti); and [S/2020/1286](#) (France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Mexico, Peru and Portugal).

<sup>111</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#) (Secretary-General and Egypt); and [S/2020/1286](#) (President of the International Court of Justice, Tunisia, Bangladesh, Denmark, Peru and Portugal).

<sup>112</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>113</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>114</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>115</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>116</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 11 December 2020 ([S/2020/1194](#)).

the maintenance of international peace and security” and focused on strengthening cooperation between the Council and the International Court of Justice.<sup>117</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard a briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice. Representatives of all Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference. The representatives of non-Council member States submitted their statements in writing.<sup>118</sup>

The President of the International Court of Justice focused his briefing on the question of how to strengthen the partnership between the Council and the Court so as to uphold the rule of law at the international level. In his view, while the partnership between the two organs was already strong, it could be further strengthened. He recalled that the Council had only once exercised its powers under Article 36 (3) of the Charter to recommend that disputing parties settle their disputes through the Court,<sup>119</sup> namely, in the *Corfu Channel case (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland v. Albania)*. The Council had also only once requested an advisory opinion from the Court under Article 96,<sup>120</sup> namely, in the case of *Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 (1970)*. He stressed that the vitality of the relationship between the two principal organs could not be evaluated by the quantity, but rather by the quality, of their collaboration.<sup>121</sup> He recalled that the *Corfu Channel* case, the referral of which had helped to avoid a dispute that could have degenerated into a full-blown war involving several protagonists, had demonstrated that the system of cooperation established through the Charter between the Court and the Council could produce results. The President of the Court also elaborated on the “less visible” ways in which the two organs contributed to each other’s work and thus cooperated with each other, mainly through their respective contributions to the development of international law and, hence, to the strengthening of the international rule of law. He recalled that the Court had consistently supported the Council’s mission to maintain international peace and security, for example by confirming in one advisory opinion that the Council

could establish peacekeeping forces, to be funded through the general budget of the Organization, and by clarifying in two others how to interpret and determine the binding character of Council resolutions, thereby contributing to their effectiveness. The President of the Court reiterated his prior appeal to the Council to resume its past tradition of recommending the referral of legal disputes to the Court and to again make use of the Court’s advisory function on legal questions. He expressed his agreement with the text of the Declaration on the Prevention and Removal of Disputes and Situations Which May Threaten International Peace and Security and on the Role of the United Nations in this Field, set out in the annex to General Assembly resolution 43/51, in that a request for an advisory opinion from the Court could play an important role in the Council’s work on preventing situations or disputes from becoming a threat to international peace and security. He also suggested an expanded dialogue between the two organs, recommending in particular that, in addition to the annual briefing of the Council by the President of the Court, that the Council include in its schedule a visit to the Court once every three years, following the triennial change in the composition of the Court, so as to allow the Council to see, first-hand, the work of the Court and discuss issues of common interest. Recalling the previous presidential statements in which the Council called upon States to consider accepting the jurisdiction of the Court,<sup>122</sup> he noted that such statements had contributed to strengthening the relationship between the two organs and suggested that they be made periodically – every three to five years – starting from the date of his briefing.<sup>123</sup>

In numerous statements prepared for the videoconference, Member States either invoked Articles 94 and/or 96 of the Charter explicitly or discussed the principles described therein. The representative of France noted that the mandates of the International Court of Justice and the Council were complementary for the maintenance of international peace and security and highlighted the links between the two organs as enshrined in the Charter. She further underscored that the absence of a referral to the Council under Article 94 (2) tended to demonstrate the authority of the Court’s judgments, adding that the binding scope of decisions also applied to orders. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines recalled that, under Chapter VI of the Charter, a symbiotic relationship had been envisioned between the Council and the Court, with the Council’s critical

<sup>117</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#).

<sup>118</sup> The following countries submitted written statements: Austria (on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Rule of Law, as well as Cyprus), Bangladesh, Brazil, Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Japan, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Peru and Portugal.

<sup>119</sup> See resolution 22 (1947).

<sup>120</sup> See resolution 284 (1970).

<sup>121</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#).

<sup>122</sup> [S/PRST/2006/28](#), [S/PRST/2010/11](#) and [S/PRST/2012/1](#).

<sup>123</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#).

mandate bolstered by the valuable contributions of the Court. She noted, however, that the Council had not taken full advantage of the Court's well-established jurisprudence, which was grounded in robust decisions and advisory opinions, stressing the need for the Council to encourage Member States to utilize the Court in the pursuit of the peaceful settlement of disputes. She added that it was imperative for the Council to consider making recommendations to give effect to the Court's directions, in line with the guidance of the Charter, as set out in Article 94.

The representative of Tunisia underscored the different yet related competencies of the two organs in the settlement of international disputes, within the framework of the Charter, and called for enhanced interaction and coordination within their respective mandates by making full use of relevant international legal provisions. He added that the Council should consider referrals to the International Court of Justice and requests for the Court to issue advisory opinions on any legal questions, as provided for under Articles 36 (3) and 96 (1) of the Charter. He also acknowledged the role of the Court in spurring the Council to action as provided for under Article 94.

The representative of Bangladesh cautioned that non-compliance with the orders and judgments of the International Court of Justice posed a serious threat to international peace and security and recalled that, under Article 94 (2) of the Charter, the Council had been granted the power to "make recommendations or decide" on measures to be taken to give effect to a judgment if a request was made by one of the parties to the dispute. She also suggested that the Council should take a proactive approach, to help to uphold the sanctity of the Court's orders by taking measures to implement the Court's judgments, such as recommending that conflicting parties refer their disputes to the Court and making appropriate use of Article 96 (1) of the Charter to refer questions of international law to the Court so as to seek its advisory opinions.

The delegation of Brazil identified four specific ways in which cooperation could be fostered between the Council and the International Court of Justice, namely, through greater use by the Council of the advisory jurisdiction of Court; through continued dialogue and mutual consideration by each organ of the other's views on issues of common interest; by recommending that States in conflict submit their dispute to the Court; and through the enforcement of the Court's decisions. On behalf of the Nordic countries, the representative of Denmark recalled that through the Charter, a close relationship was envisaged between the Council and the Court, providing the two

organs with ample opportunities for intensive cooperation. He stressed that, at a time when the rules-based order was increasingly under pressure, the Council and the Court should use their Charter prerogatives to play vital and mutually complementary roles in promoting the rule of law, including with regard to human rights and peace and security. Together, they had the potential to be a powerful force for upholding the rule of law at the international level, in particular through Articles 33 (2) and 96 (1) of the Charter, under which the Council was authorized to call upon States parties to any dispute to settle such disputes by peaceful means and to request advisory opinions from the Court on legal matters.

The delegation of Mexico stressed the role of the Council in the execution of the judgments of the International Court of Justice under Article 94 (2) and called on those States, including permanent members of the Council, that had not yet accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court to make a statement in that regard as a show of support between two principal organs. The delegation further suggested that the Council could take greater advantage of its ability to request advisory opinions from the Court in order to obtain an impartial, legal and technical view of certain situations, thereby helping to depoliticize certain items on its agenda.

The delegation of Peru noted that, historically, the Council had not taken advantage of the full potential offered by its interaction with the International Court of Justice and stressed that the Council was empowered, at any stage of a dispute, to make recommendations within the framework of its functions. It was essential that the Council recommend, on a more regular basis, that situations between States that jeopardized international peace and security be referred to the Court. It was also essential that the Council take a more active role should one of the parties fail to comply with the obligations arising from a ruling of the Court, by discussing the matter in depth and dictating the necessary measures to ensure its implementation, in accordance with Article 94 (2) of the Charter. The delegation encouraged the members of the Council to promote the effective use of the prerogative to request an advisory opinion, in accordance with Article 96 (1), because of the benefits it could bring to resolving disputes or to clarifying the legal basis of certain decisions of the Council. Similarly, the delegation of Portugal noted that, under Article 94 (2), the Council could be called on to take action to enforce a judgment of the Court. The delegation indicated that strengthening of the cooperation between the two organs would reinforce



the tasks conferred, under the Charter, upon the United Nations, its Member States and specifically those two organs, and recalled a number of concrete steps already provided for in the Charter that the Council could take to ensure progress in that direction, such as recommending the submission of dispute to the Court; revisiting its power to ensure compliance with Court judgments, pursuant to Article 94; taking a more proactive role and establishing an overview procedure, together with the Court, to monitor compliance; and requesting advisory opinions of the Court, pursuant to Article 96 (1), with greater frequency. The delegation further suggested the drafting of a road map on specific ways to implement the tools made available to the Council under the Charter.

Council members reflected on concrete measures and actions that the Council could take to strengthen cooperation between the two organs. The representative of Belgium recalled that, under the Charter, the Council was unambiguously granted three powers for cooperation with the International Court of Justice: two at the outset, by recommending that disputes be submitted to the Court or by requesting an advisory opinion, and one subsequently, by making recommendations or taking measures to enforce a decision of the Court, without which the Court could not be truly effective. He further suggested that, in addition to those three specific functions, the Council could also innovate by, for example, inviting the President of the Court to provide briefings when non-compliance with Court decisions could threaten international peace and security. A similar view was voiced by the representative of South Africa, who also expressed regret that the Council and Member States had, over the years, not made frequent enough use of the potential of the Court to settle disputes peacefully. He also suggested that Council members, in their consideration of thematic agenda items and country-specific situations alike, should bear in mind the provisions of the Charter concerning the interaction of the two organs and the possible role that the Court could play in assisting the Council in the execution of its mandate.

The delegation of the Dominican Republic recalled that the relationship between the two organs had remained largely inactive and minimal over the years and called upon the Council to increase opportunities for cooperation with the International Court of Justice in the area of conflict prevention as a peaceful mechanism for the settlement of disputes. It further urged the members of the Council to enhance the jurisdiction of the Court and to explore new forms

of cooperation, in particular in the areas of peacekeeping operations and transitional justice.

The representative of Estonia affirmed that the mandate of the Council in relation to the International Court of Justice was manifold; the Council could request advisory opinions from the Court, could recommend that parties to a legal dispute refer it to the Court and could proactively take measures to ensure compliance with a judgment of the Court. He recalled, however, that those comprehensive tools had been far too rarely used by the Council during the 75 years of its existence and underscored that there was scope for improvement and further cooperation between the two organs and among Member States. In that regard, he called for more frequent recourse to the Court by the Council as a useful avenue for the clarification of legal issues. He also expressed the hope that the discussion held that day would contribute to further consideration of a stricter application of Article 36 (3) of the Charter, namely, that legal disputes should, as a general rule, be referred to the Court. Similarly, the representative of the Niger expressed his delegation's wish to see greater involvement by the Council with the Court through the referral of legal disputes to the Court, in accordance with Article 36 (3).

Referring to the proposals made by the President of the International Court of Justice in his briefing, the representative of Germany stressed that it would be good if disputes were referred to the Court more often; it could also be valuable if the Council invited the President of the Court to provide briefings when instances of non-compliance with decisions of the Court could threaten international peace and security. With respect to the use of advisory functions with regard to conflict prevention, his country subscribed to the recommendation that the Council use it more often. He also expressed support for the possibility of the Council visiting the Court and pointed out that, as the evolution of international law was reflected in both the practice of the Council and the jurisdiction of the Court, cooperation between the two organs was needed more than ever.

The representative of Indonesia highlighted the need for the Council to engage in more dialogue and interaction with the International Court of Justice in the exercise of its mandate, and recalled that the Charter provided tools to the Council to peacefully settle disputes between States by making use of the Court's jurisdiction in such cases or requesting its advisory opinions on legal questions that arose in the Council's work, stressing that the Council needed to be encouraged to make use of those Charter tools.



The representative of Viet Nam highlighted the separate but complementary roles of the International Court of Justice and the Council, adding that there was much space for strengthening the coordination and cooperation between the two organs. He expressed his country's support for the enhanced cooperation between the Council and the Court in accordance with the established institutional framework, recalling the Council's mandate to recommend that the relevant parties refer their disputes to the Court, while noting that the *Corfu Channel* case was the first and only example thereof. Furthermore, of 28 advisory opinions issued by the Court, only one had been made upon request of the Council; the Council could build on its good past practices to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law as a conflict prevention tool. He underlined the need to strengthen dialogue between the two organs on more substantive matters and added that the judicial expertise of the Court could make a significant contribution to the work and activities of the Council in dealing with burning international legal issues arising in thematic agenda items and in the context of conflict or post-conflict situations. The delegation of Austria, on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Rule of Law, as well as Cyprus, also encouraged the Council to make more use of the Court's expertise and to use all the tools provided by the Charter in that regard, including encouraging States to refer legal disputes to the Court in its resolutions and always, when considering situations that constituted a threat to international peace and security, examining whether the Court should be seized of the matter.

Various delegations welcomed the open debate on strengthening cooperation between the Council and the International Court of Justice. The representative of Japan expressed his delegation's expectation for discussions on the topic to continue in the Council, while emphasizing the need for the Court to continue rendering judgments and advisory opinions of the highest quality and for the Council to duly respect the role and function of the Court in its consideration of the maintenance of international peace and security. Similarly, the representative of Liechtenstein expressed hope that the debate would be the beginning of a new conversation on the Council making more frequent usage of the Court, as a legal tool.

Participants at the videoconference also focused on the distinct and complementary functions of the two organs. The representative of China emphasized that strengthening cooperation between the Council and the International Court of Justice was conducive to maintaining the United Nations-centred international

system and the international order underpinned by international law. He emphasized the need to strengthen the interaction between the two organs and called on the Council to respect and support the independent work of Court, stressing the need for both to perform their respective duties and collaborate with each other under the Charter. The representative of the Russian Federation pointed out that, each within its respective mandate, the Court and the Council interacted with one another and contributed to the peaceful settlement of disputes. The delegation of Morocco also underscored that the action of the two organs was complementary and distinct and that the strengthening of the existing cooperation between them, within the institutional framework provided by the Charter and with full respect for their respective mandates, contributed positively to the work of the Council.

Some speakers underscored the impact of the International Court of Justice on the enhancement of the rule of law and international law. The representative of the United Kingdom stressed that the rule of law at the international level and the role played by the Court would be further enhanced if more States accepted its compulsory jurisdiction. He said that his country welcomed the annual closed meeting between the Council and the Court as a forum for discussion and an example of the cooperation between the Council and the Court. The representative of the United States noted the private annual briefing by the President of the Court and the exchange of views with the Council about issues of common interest, adding that, in the light of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Court, it was fitting to have a second opportunity to highlight the crucial role of the Court, and to do so at a public meeting. He further underscored that the Court played a vital role in promoting and preserving the rule of law and in advancing international peace and security through the peaceful resolution of disputes. He pointed to the likelihood that some of those disputes might never reach the Council as reinforcing the effectiveness of the United Nations framework. As situations developed into matters requiring the Council's attention, it was necessary to be mindful of where the Court could play a role while preserving the fundamental principle of State consent to the judicial settlement of disputes.

### **C. Communications concerning relations with the International Court of Justice**

During the period under review, the Council continued to exchange letters<sup>124</sup> with the Secretary-General and to receive his reports<sup>125</sup> on the progress of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission established to facilitate the implementation of the ruling of the International Court of Justice of 10 October 2002 on the land and maritime boundary dispute between the two countries. In addition, in a letter dated 3 March 2020

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<sup>124</sup> S/2020/1322 and S/2020/1323.

<sup>125</sup> S/2020/585 and S/2020/1293.

addressed to the President of the Security Council,<sup>126</sup> the representatives of Kuwait and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines transmitted a joint report on the informal retreat on the working methods of the Security Council, which had been co-hosted by the two delegations and held in Kingstown from 17 to 19 January. According to the report, members at the retreat had called for greater interaction at the annual closed meeting with the President of the International Court of Justice and for the consideration of greater support for the work of the Court.

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<sup>126</sup> S/2020/172.

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**Part V**  
**Functions and powers of the  
Security Council**

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## Introductory note

Part V of the present Supplement covers the functions and powers of the Security Council, as defined in Articles 24, 25 and 26 of the Charter of the United Nations, and is accordingly divided into three sections. Under each section, explicit and implicit references made to those Articles in decisions, meetings and communications of the Council during 2020 are listed. Part V also features explicit and implicit references made by participants in the context of open videoconferences, despite them not being considered meetings of the Council.<sup>1</sup> Case studies in each of the three sections provide an overview of specific instances in which the above-mentioned Articles were discussed in meetings and open videoconferences, or which otherwise illustrate how the Council has applied or interpreted those Articles. Consistent with previous supplements, however, section III does not include any such case study, since there were no examples of substantive discussions on Article 26 of the Charter in 2020.

As outlined in section I below, in 2020, the Council made no explicit reference to Article 24 of the Charter in its decisions, instead referring to its “primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security” in 12 of its decisions in connection with the situation in Libya and various thematic issues, such as United Nations peacekeeping operations, the maintenance of international peace and security, children and armed conflict, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. In addition, Council members and other participants at the meetings and open videoconferences discussed the primary responsibility of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security in connection with a broad range of items. The most salient deliberations concerned thematic issues, such as the maintenance of international peace and security, implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#)), and peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In those deliberations, Council members and other participants explored the scope of the Council’s primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, including with regard to health and climate change insofar as they affected international peace and security. The working methods of the Council were also discussed as tools for enabling and enhancing the capacity of the Council to deliver on its primary responsibility.

As featured in section II, in 2020, the Council made explicit references to Article 25 in two of its decisions, both of which were adopted in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”. Article 25 was also explicitly invoked four times during one Council meeting held in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, and three times in the context of open videoconferences held in connection with the items entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#))” and “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”. The obligation of Member States to carry out the decisions of the Council was extensively discussed during meetings and open videoconferences held in connection with the items entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”, concerning resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), and “Non-proliferation”, concerning resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). In addition, seven communications of the Council contained 10 explicit references to Article 25, mostly in connection with resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Five draft resolutions proposed, but not adopted, in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”, specifically the Syrian conflict and the cross-border humanitarian mechanism established in paragraphs 2 and 3 of

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, see part II.

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resolution [2165 \(2014\)](#), also included explicit references to Article 25 of the Charter.

As described in section III, in 2020, the Council did not refer to its responsibility for formulating plans for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments pursuant to Article 26 in any of its decisions. By contrast, Article 26 was invoked explicitly during a meeting held in connection with the item entitled “Non-proliferation”. In addition, two statements submitted in the context of open videoconferences held in connection with the items entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#))” and “Maintenance of international peace and security” also contained explicit references to Article 26. No communications addressed to the Council in 2020 featured that Article explicitly.



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## I. Primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security under Article 24

### Article 24

1. *In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf.*

2. *In discharging these duties the Security Council shall act in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations. The specific powers granted to the Security Council for the discharge of these duties are laid down in Chapters VI, VII, VIII and XII.*

3. *The Security Council shall submit annual and, when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration.*

### Note

Section I covers the practice of the Council concerning its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under Article 24 of the Charter,<sup>2</sup> and is divided into two subsections. Subsection A deals with decisions adopted in 2020 that refer to the primary responsibility of the Council pursuant to Article 24. Subsection B examines references to that Article made in discussions held during Council meetings and open videoconferences.

During the period under review, the Council did not adopt any decision explicitly referring to Article 24. That Article was, however, directly invoked in several instances during meetings of the Council, as well as in the context of open videoconferences, notably in relation to the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and during the annual discussion on its working methods in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”. Explicit references to Article 24 were also made in five communications of the Council in 2020. In a letter from the representatives of Kuwait and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,<sup>3</sup> Article 24 was explicitly referenced twice in connection with discussions on the

working methods of the Council, held during the informal retreat organized from 17 to 19 January 2020 in Kingstown. In addition, three explicit references to Article 24 were made in the concept note for the open videoconference held in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”, on the theme “Ensuring transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the work of the Security Council”,<sup>4</sup> on 15 May 2020. Four explicit references were also made to Article 24 in a subsequent analytical summary of that videoconference, contained in the letter dated 8 July 2020 from the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.<sup>5</sup> In addition, in a letter dated 3 August 2020,<sup>6</sup> the representative of Pakistan submitted a legal appraisal of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in which reference was made to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Namibia* case,<sup>7</sup> which included an explicit reference to Article 24. Furthermore, in a concept note for the open videoconference held on 18 December 2020 in connection with the item entitled “The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security”, on the theme “Strengthening the cooperation between the Security Council and the International Court of Justice”,<sup>8</sup> the representative of South Africa made one explicit reference to Article 24.

### A. Decisions referring to Article 24

During the period under review, the Council did not refer explicitly to Article 24 in its decisions. Instead, in seven resolutions and five presidential statements, the Council referred to its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security while taking a broad range of actions. Consistent with past practice, implicit references to Article 24 were featured mainly in preambular paragraphs of resolutions and initial paragraphs of presidential statements predominantly in

<sup>4</sup> S/2020/374, annex.

<sup>5</sup> S/2020/675. References to Article 24 (3) are further featured in part IV, sect. I.F.

<sup>6</sup> S/2020/772. See also sect. II.C below.

<sup>7</sup> *Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 (1970)*, *Advisory Opinion*, I.C.J. Reports 1971, p. 16.

<sup>8</sup> S/2020/1194, annex.

<sup>2</sup> Article 24 (3), under which the Council is required to submit annual and special reports to the General Assembly, is covered in part IV, sect. I.F.

<sup>3</sup> S/2020/172.

connection with thematic issues on the agenda of the Council.

### Resolutions

In 2020, the Council implicitly invoked Article 24 in seven resolutions, in which it reaffirmed, recalled, bore in mind or indicated that it was mindful of its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security while taking a variety of actions. Two of those resolutions were adopted in connection with Libya, under the items entitled “The situation in Libya” and “Maintenance of international peace and security”; in both, the Council acted explicitly under Chapter VII. The other five resolutions concerned thematic issues ranging from the safety and security of peacekeepers, women in peacekeeping and security sector reform to the implications of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic for the maintenance of international peace and security and youth, peace and security. Information about the resolutions is provided in table 1.

### Presidential statements

During the year under review, the Council adopted five presidential statements containing implicit references to Article 24, in which it reaffirmed, reiterated or recalled its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The five presidential statements related to upholding the Charter of the United Nations, integrating child protection into peace processes, protecting civilians from conflict-induced hunger, addressing attacks against schools as a grave violation of children’s rights, and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Further details about the presidential statements are provided in table 1.

Table 1  
Decisions in 2020 containing implicit references to Article 24 (1) of the Charter

<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/1</a> 9 January 2020	Third paragraph	Maintenance of international peace and security	Upholding the United Nations Charter
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/3</a> 12 February 2020	First paragraph	Children and armed conflict	Integrating child protection into peace processes
Resolution <a href="#">2518 (2020)</a> 30 March 2020	First preambular paragraph	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Safety and security of peacekeepers
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/6</a> 29 April 2020	Second paragraph	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	Protecting civilians from conflict-induced hunger
Resolution <a href="#">2526 (2020)</a> 5 June 2020	Fourth preambular paragraph	The situation in Libya	
Resolution <a href="#">2532 (2020)</a> 1 July 2020	First preambular paragraph	Maintenance of international peace and security	
Resolution <a href="#">2535 (2020)</a> 14 July 2020	Tenth preambular paragraph	Maintenance of international peace and security	
Resolution <a href="#">2538 (2020)</a> 28 August 2020	Second preambular paragraph	United Nations peacekeeping operations	
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/8</a> 10 September 2020	Second paragraph	Children and armed conflict	Attacks against schools as a grave violation of children’s rights

<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>
Resolution <a href="#">2546 (2020)</a> 2 October 2020	Fourth preambular paragraph	Maintenance of international peace and security	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution <a href="#">2491 (2019)</a> (S/2020/876)
Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a> 3 December 2020	First preambular paragraph	Maintenance of international peace and security	
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/11</a> 4 December 2020	Second paragraph	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	

## B. Discussion relating to Article 24

During the period under review, Article 24 was invoked both explicitly and implicitly at numerous meetings of the Council, as well as in statements delivered or submitted in the context of open videoconferences. Speakers made three explicit references to Article 24 at a meeting and its resumption held in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”.<sup>9</sup> In addition, Article 24 was expressly invoked on 12 occasions in statements delivered and submitted in writing in the context of an open videoconference held in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”.<sup>10</sup>

The following case studies illustrate the nature of some of the issues discussed in 2020 with regard to the interpretation of the primary responsibility of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security pursuant to Article 24 of the Charter. The cases capture discussions held in connection with the items on the maintenance of international peace and security (cases 1, 3, 4 and 5), the implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507), which concerns the working methods of the Council (case 2), and peacebuilding and sustaining peace (case 6).

<sup>9</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#) (Switzerland) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Uruguay and Georgia).

<sup>10</sup> See [S/2020/418](#) (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Viet Nam, Cuba, Ecuador, India, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, Norway, Philippines, Poland and Republic of Korea).

### Case 1

#### Maintenance of international peace and security

At its 8699th meeting, held on 9 January at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>11</sup> the Council held, under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, a high-level open debate in connection with the sub-item entitled “Upholding the United Nations Charter”.<sup>12</sup> At the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, reaffirming its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>13</sup> The Council also heard briefings by the Secretary-General and the Chair of the Elders.<sup>14</sup>

In his statement, the Secretary-General said that trust within and among nations was on the decline. This could be seen in the work of the United Nations, including the Council, when Member States struggled or failed to find reasonable common ground. He added that the current climate crisis spared no one and that international cooperation was at a crossroads, both of which presented a grave test to multilateralism and posed a challenge for the Council, which under the Charter had the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. At a time of global division and turmoil, the Charter remained the shared framework of international cooperation for the common good. While the Charter and its purposes and principles remained as relevant as ever, he noted, the tools had to adapt to new realities,

<sup>11</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 31 December 2019 (S/2020/1).

<sup>12</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>13</sup> [S/PRST/2020/1](#).

<sup>14</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

to be used with greater determination and creativity, including by ensuring the implementation by Member States of the Council's decisions pursuant to Article 25 of the Charter.

During the debate, some speakers recalled or reaffirmed the Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security: the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam expressed the belief that the Council, as the organ with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter, should be at the forefront to ensure respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter. He added that Council members had to take the lead by setting good examples themselves. The representative of China affirmed that the Charter conferred upon the Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, noting that that was the sacred mission of the 15 members of the Council. He asserted that Council members had to enhance mutual trust, strengthen unity, avoid the politicization of certain issues and remain committed to diffusing conflicts and preventing war. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland affirmed that the Council had the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security but that others, including the Secretary-General, through Article 99, also had a vital role to play. She echoed the Secretary-General's reference to Article 25 and the need to uphold the decisions of the Council in that context. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Haiti stated that the Charter made the Council an important pillar in the architecture of the Organization, conferring upon it the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The representative of Argentina said that the collective security system gave the Council the primary responsibility for maintaining peace and security, noting that it was the organ legitimized through the Charter for that purpose. The representative of Mexico stated that, in matters involving international peace and security, States had to act in a manner consistent with the Charter and general international law. When States failed in that obligation, he added, it was even more important that the Council be up to the occasion to defend and enforce the Charter, in strict accordance with its powers and in full exercise of its responsibility. The representative of Morocco declared the essence of the Charter as being and continuing to be the maintenance of international peace and security, which remained the core objective of United Nations operations. He added that the Council, which bore the primary responsibility

in that area, was dedicated to serving as the guarantor of peace and security in the world.<sup>15</sup> The representative of Brunei Darussalam pointed to the Council's moral and persuasive authority to demonstrate the principles and fundamentals contained in the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. The representative of Turkey stated that the Council needed to fulfil its mission as the primary United Nations organ for maintaining international peace and security because the success of the Council was, in the eyes of many, indelibly linked to the credibility of the United Nations as a whole.

At the meeting, some speakers observed that the Council was challenged or even undermined by several elements in discharging its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security: the representative of the Russian Federation expressed its opposition to the use of unilateral coercive measures in the absence of corresponding Council resolutions or in addition to measures taken by the Council, which undermined its role in the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>16</sup> The representative of Japan expressed deep regret that some Member States failed to comply with Council decisions, asserting that the States Members of the United Nations conferred on the Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and that the Charter required Member States to accept and carry out the decisions of the Council. The representative of Afghanistan shared a similar view, stating that the lack of implementation of or the disregard for Council resolutions by various countries not only deterred efforts in the fight for international peace and security but also led to the weakening of the political mandate of the Council. The representative of Singapore noted that the Council undoubtedly had the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security but that all Member States could and, indeed, must contribute to it. In that regard, when countries disrespected a decision of the Council, they undermined the credibility of the entire Council and weakened its ability to maintain international peace and security. The representative of Rwanda stated that there was a need for all Member States to uphold the Charter in the maintenance of international peace and security and that multilateral cooperation must be strengthened.<sup>17</sup> He added that challenges such as terrorism, climate change and transnational organized crime would be effectively addressed if Member States worked together.

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<sup>15</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>16</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>17</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

Other speakers acknowledged the challenges facing the Council while pointing to the need for unity to overcome those challenges. The representative of the United States of America said that the Council must acknowledge that inaction, repetition and intransigence had created a credibility gap. She added that the Council needed to recapture its sense of unity and purpose as the body with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.<sup>18</sup> The representative of Albania noted the need for a more responsive and effective Council as the body in charge of maintaining international peace and security, adding that, when the Council had managed to overcome its divisions and take united action, it had successfully achieved the purposes enshrined in the Charter. The representative of Kenya, noting that the Council carried the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, pointed to the implications and effects of dissonance within the Council on important international peace and security questions and actions. The representative of Kuwait stressed that the success achieved by means of the tools provided by the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security would depend on unity and consensus within the Council.<sup>19</sup> The representative of Lebanon noted that, when the Council was blocked and prevented from taking any meaningful decisions, it was not fulfilling its responsibilities under the Charter.<sup>20</sup> She added that the unity of the Council was more urgent than ever, as the multilateral system was facing many critical tests and conflicts were multiplying.

Some participants focused on the ways in which the Council could overcome the challenges that it faced in maintaining international peace and security: the representative of Liechtenstein noted that the Council was equipped with an important new tool, namely the ability to refer situations involving acts of aggression to the International Criminal Court.<sup>21</sup> If applied in a meaningful way, that tool could assist the Council in the prevention of conflicts, reinforcing the Council's role under the Charter in maintaining international peace and security. The representative of Ethiopia stated that the Council, as the primary organ entrusted by the Charter with the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, had to embrace the changing global dynamics and recommit to pursuing robust political solutions through meaningful partnerships with regional and subregional organizations. The representative of Myanmar said that, given the Council's primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, all

Member States, large or small, should be subject to the principles of objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity when carrying out its mandate.<sup>22</sup> The representative of Slovenia, recalling that the Council had been entrusted with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, noted that, so far, the Council had succeeded in some cases but had failed in many others, adding that members of the Council discharged that responsibility on behalf of the entire United Nations membership and should therefore look beyond their national interests. The representative of Costa Rica stated that, in order for the United Nations to take up the reins of global governance, the Council had to shoulder the responsibilities incumbent upon it in the maintenance of international peace and security, bearing in mind human rights considerations in its actions and enhancing its conflict prevention efforts.

## Case 2 Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)

On 15 May, at the initiative of Estonia, which held the presidency of the Council for the month jointly with Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, whose representative chaired the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions,<sup>23</sup> members of the Council held an open videoconference on the working methods of the Council in connection with the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)".<sup>24</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in her capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group, as well as by the Executive Director of Security Council Report and a professor from Columbia University. The representatives of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States delivered their remarks during the videoconference, as did the representative of Viet Nam, who spoke on behalf of the 10 elected members. In their written submissions, published as part of the record of the videoconference,

<sup>22</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>23</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 7 May 2021 ([S/2020/374](#)).

<sup>24</sup> See [S/2020/418](#).

<sup>18</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>19</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>20</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>21</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).



representatives of non-Council member States<sup>25</sup> also made explicit and implicit references to Article 24 focusing on the responsibility of the Council to act on behalf of the wider United Nations membership in accordance with Article 24.

Several speakers underlined the importance of input from the wider United Nations membership for the discharge of Council duties stemming from Article 24. The Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions noted that, pursuant to Article 24 (1) of the Charter, the Council acted on behalf of the Members of the United Nations and that the holding of the debate demonstrated the significant value that the Council attached to the voice of the United Nations membership. Speaking on behalf of the non-permanent members, the representative of Viet Nam looked forward to receiving the views and inputs from the wider membership of the United Nations to improve the working methods of the Council so that it could better fulfil its responsibility under Article 24.

Discussing the responsibility of the Council under Article 24, several participants also raised the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Touching upon the unprecedented circumstances posed by the pandemic, the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remarked that, in the light of its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council could not be allowed to be paralysed. In a similar vein, the representative of China, noting that the Council bore the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, stated that the international community expected the Council to play its due role and appropriately address prominent issues concerning international peace and security, adding that the pandemic had brought unprecedented challenges to the functioning of the Council. In his written statement, the representative of Azerbaijan referred to the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security conferred on the Council. He added that the emergence of the pandemic had triggered the need for additional urgent measures aimed at safeguarding the effectiveness of the Council under unprecedented and extraordinary circumstances. The representative of

Liechtenstein, in his written statement, expressed the view that the Council's response to COVID-19 was an opportunity to consider broader questions, chief among which was the need to adopt a human-centred perspective of peace and security. He added as a key lesson that addressing human security was no less important to the maintenance of international peace and security than preventing and ending the outbreak of armed conflict and that both were intimately linked, noting, however, that the Council was less prepared to deal with that fundamental dimension of security. The delegation of the United Arab Emirates, for its part, noted that the world relied on the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, even when meetings did not take place at the iconic horseshoe table.

In their written statements, various non-Council members highlighted the prerogative of the Council to act on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations in accordance with Article 24 and, in this context, noted the importance of transparency and efficiency in its work. The representative of Cuba stated that, in accordance with Article 24, States Members of the United Nations recognized that the Council, in discharging its functions, acted on their behalf and that, consequently, the work of the Council was the collective responsibility of all Member States. She added that greater transparency in the work of the Council would thus help in fulfilling that collective responsibility. The representative of Ecuador noted in his statement that the Council acted on behalf of all Member States pursuant to Article 24, which also meant that it had the obligation to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, as set out in that Article, one that had to be fulfilled without any exceptions. According to the representative of El Salvador, improving the Council's working methods and adapting them to the evolving realities of the Council and the international context was vital to fulfilling the mandate of the Charter of the United Nations and to taking decisions that would ensure rapid and effective action for the maintenance of international peace and security. Explicitly referring to Article 24 (1), the representative of Italy noted that the Council was expected to make decisions that would secure effective action on behalf of the wider United Nations membership. The Council should therefore be accountable to the wider membership, she added, especially when its inaction prevented the Council from fulfilling its responsibility to maintain international peace and security. The representative of Kuwait made a similar point, recalling that Article 24 stipulated that the Council carried out its duties on behalf of all Member States and stressing that the wider membership was responsible for ensuring that

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<sup>25</sup> The representatives of the following countries submitted written statements: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Ukraine.



the Council was held accountable for its actions and its proper functioning in line with its mandate. According to the representative of Morocco, Articles 24, 25 and 26 provided the Council with important powers and prerogatives, which it could not exercise without adopting an effective and efficient approach. The delegation of Norway, on behalf of the Nordic countries, recalled the fundamental principle that Article 24 enshrined the responsibility of the Council to act on behalf of the entire United Nations membership, which meant that the Council had a responsibility to undertake broad engagement and consultation with non-members, particularly the concerned States. Referring to the working methods of the Council, the representative of the Philippines noted that the wider membership should be able to take part in the process not just in a “token” or perfunctory manner but in a meaningful way, which was in line with Article 24 (1). Similarly, the representative of Poland affirmed that continuous, transparent, effective, efficient and agile functioning of the Council, during both ordinary and exceptional circumstances, should be ensured in line with Article 24 (1), as well as Article 28 (1). Explicitly referring to Article 24, the representative of the Republic of Korea noted that the Article emphasized that the Council should act promptly, effectively and on behalf of the wider membership. In this regard, he welcomed the holding of the videoconference with the participation of non-Council members, expressing the belief that it was a testament to the Council’s commitment to continuing to promote transparency and efficiency, while holding itself accountable to the wider membership.

In their written statements, non-Council members stressed the need for the Council to act preventively, effectively and promptly as aspects inherent to its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The delegation of Australia stated that, to achieve its core function of maintaining international peace and security, the Council was encouraged to use all the tools at its disposal to enhance its ability to prevent and not just respond to conflict, in line with the sustaining peace agenda. With regard to the Council’s responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the representative of Azerbaijan noted that its effectiveness and accountable functioning necessitated, first and foremost, the implementation of its decisions. He stated that Article 25 of the Charter was clear about the obligations of Member States and noted that the objective of maintaining international peace and security was hardly attainable if universally recognized fundamental values, norms and principles were overtly disregarded, misinterpreted or made conditional by

aggressors who sought to whitewash their illegal actions. According to the delegation of Cyprus, the Council, as the organ entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, must be kept informed about peace processes and agreements brokered by the United Nations so as to be able to endorse such agreements and to play a responsible role in their implementation, which required better synergy between the Council and the Secretary-General. Concerning the effectiveness of the Council, the representative of Malaysia stated that the Council must do its best in closing the gap between early warning and early action. He added that, with regard to the decision-making process, the Council needed to act promptly, decisively and in unison in maintaining international peace and security. Under the current veto system, the Council had too often failed in its mandate, owing to the narrow interests of some members.

### **Case 3 Maintenance of international peace and security**

Following the adoption on 1 July of resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), in which the Council considered that the unprecedented extent of the COVID-19 pandemic was likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security and demanded a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda,<sup>26</sup> on 2 July, Council members held, under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, an open videoconference in connection with the sub-item entitled “Implications of COVID-19”.<sup>27</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Secretary-General and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Representatives of all Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference, while the representatives of 47 non-Council members and the European Union submitted their statements in writing.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), final preambular paragraph and para. 1.

<sup>27</sup> See [S/2020/663](#). For more information on the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, see part I, sect. 35.

<sup>28</sup> The representatives of the following countries submitted written statements: Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

In his briefing, the Secretary-General noted that the COVID-19 pandemic continued to profoundly affect peace and security across the globe, adding that the wide-ranging risks, stemming from a health pandemic that had become a protection crisis, required an urgent and united response, including from the Council.<sup>29</sup> The President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, in his briefing, asserted that, on the front lines of fighting the pandemic, the convergence of health and security was not a matter of political debate but of simple and experienced truth. He noted that much could be done in the Council and beyond, citing the adoption of resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) as a chance to reset and to translate the consensus reflected in the text into greater cooperation and action to protect civilians.

During the discussion, several Council members held the view that the Council's responsibility under Article 24 of the Charter required it to take into consideration the peace and security implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and other new types of threats. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia asserted that the adoption of resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) confirmed that the Council must remain regularly involved in the peace and security implications of COVID-19. Recalling that the Council bore the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under the Charter of the United Nations, the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France noted that the Council must address the destabilizing effect of pandemics, which it was able to do with HIV/AIDS in 2000 and with the Ebola virus disease in 2014 and 2018. Similarly, the representative of the Dominican Republic noted that the potential and unprecedented magnitude of the COVID-19 outbreak globally constituted a threat to international peace and security and could critically harm human security around the world. Affirming that the "men and women who signed the Charter of the United Nations 75 years ago entrusted the Security Council with upholding peace and security", the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany asserted that the Council had to finally embrace a broader understanding of peace and security. The founders of the United Nations might have had "artillery, bombers and soldiers" in mind when they drafted the Charter, but at present a virus could be deadlier than a gun, a cyberattack could cause more harm than a soldier and climate change threatened more people than most conventional weapons. He noted that maintaining peace and security in the twenty-first century meant early, preventive action

<sup>29</sup> See [S/2020/663](#).

based on good reporting and adequate capacities in the United Nations system. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia noted that, as the nature and scope of threats evolved, it was necessary to rethink the notion of security and adapt approaches and tools, adding that a change of paradigm was greatly needed. He expressed his country's strong belief that the Council needed to discuss such issues in more depth to be able to deliver on its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Other Council members held a different view, cautioning the Council not to address issues that might fall outside the scope of its mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security. In this regard, the representative of the Russian Federation expressed the belief that the efforts of the Council to help combat the pandemic should focus on the pandemic's impact on the functioning of peacekeeping missions, ensuring the continuity of peace processes and supporting the implementation of the Secretary-General's ceasefire initiative. He noted that the potential for a sharp deterioration of humanitarian situations in armed conflicts compounded by COVID-19 should be considered primarily in relation to the situation of specific countries on the agenda of the Council. He cautioned that attempts to generalize such discussions would take the Council outside the scope of its mandate. The representative of South Africa reiterated his country's position that the attention paid by the Council to global public health emergencies should be clear and directly linked to issues that fell under the purview of its mandate. He urged the Council to be cautious and to refrain from focusing on international public health matters and economic measures that were more appropriately addressed by the broader United Nations system, the Secretary-General and the General Assembly.

In their written submissions, non-Council members also discussed the links between the challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and the mandate of the Council in maintaining international peace and security. Some delegations<sup>30</sup> pointed to the earlier response of the Council to health crises such as HIV/AIDS and the Ebola virus disease, noting that the Council should have a more flexible view of what constituted a threat to international peace and security in order to discharge its mandate in the maintenance of international peace and security on behalf of the entire United Nations membership. In

<sup>30</sup> For example, Afghanistan, Canada, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Netherlands, Qatar, Slovenia, Switzerland and United Arab Emirates.

contrast, other delegations,<sup>31</sup> while noting that the COVID-19 pandemic had a potential impact on the maintenance of international peace and security, held the view that the Council should not interfere in or address matters that fell within the mandate of other organs or agencies of the United Nations system, such as the General Assembly or the World Health Organization.

#### Case 4

##### Maintenance of international peace and security

On 24 July, at the initiative of Germany, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>32</sup> Security Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and the sub-item entitled “Climate and security”.<sup>33</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas in the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, the Director of the Centre national d’études stratégiques et de sécurité and the Director of Sustainable Pacific Consultancy, Niue. Fourteen Council members spoke during the videoconference,<sup>34</sup> as did the representatives of Belize, Ireland, Kenya, the European Union, Denmark, Fiji and Nauru.<sup>35</sup> In addition, 29 delegations from among non-Council members submitted their statements in writing.<sup>36</sup>

In his briefing, the Assistant Secretary-General noted that, while there was no automatic link between climate change and conflict, climate change did exacerbate existing risks and created new ones. He

warned that failure to consider the growing impacts of climate change would undermine efforts at conflict prevention, peacemaking and sustaining peace and would risk trapping vulnerable countries in a vicious circle of climate disaster and conflict.

During the discussion, some Council members spoke in favour of addressing the issue of climate change in the context of the Council’s mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Development Cooperation of Belgium noted that some might think that the topic of climate change did not belong on the agenda of the Council because of its complexity. As an elected member, however, Belgium consistently backed a Council with a broader role in addressing climate-related security risks. He added that, as attested by the wide participation in the debate and the continuous support of a clear majority of Council members, from all regions, that was a broadly shared endeavour. The Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany called upon the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative on climate and security who would ensure that climate change was placed where it belonged, namely, at the heart of the Council’s work of maintaining international peace and security in the twenty-first century. He announced that Germany would convene an informal expert group of the Council on climate and security as soon as possible, with the goal of enshrining the topic in the Council’s work once and for all. Similarly, the representative of the Dominican Republic affirmed that Council members needed to continue working towards the creation of the necessary mandate to ensure that the topic of the effects of climate change on international peace and security figured regularly on the Council’s agenda. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines asserted that it was clear that the Council must work within its mandate to address the grave consequences of the climate crisis for international peace and security. She added that the Council had acknowledged the impact of extreme weather events on security but that, owing to a lack of collective political will, it had not been able to include climate and security considerations in numerous resolutions. She noted the need for adequate data on country- and region-specific situations, with consideration of the differential and gendered impacts of climate-related risks, in order to improve the Council’s capacity to maintain international peace and security. She also advocated the appointment of a special representative on climate and security and called for strengthening cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in this regard.

<sup>31</sup> For example, Cuba and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

<sup>32</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 18 July 2020 (S/2020/725).

<sup>33</sup> See S/2020/751.

<sup>34</sup> Of those, 11 Council members (Belgium, Viet Nam, Germany, Estonia, United Kingdom, China, Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa) submitted written statements.

<sup>35</sup> The representative of Denmark spoke on behalf of the Nordic countries, and the representative of Nauru spoke on behalf of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security. Belize, Ireland and Kenya were represented by their respective ministers for foreign affairs.

<sup>36</sup> The delegations of the following countries submitted written statements: Brazil, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czechia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tuvalu (on behalf of the 14 States members of the Pacific Islands Forum) and United Arab Emirates.

By contrast, other members held the view that the issue of climate change needed to be addressed within country-specific contexts and in accordance with the Council's mandate. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam supported efforts to address climate-related challenges, including at the Council. However, in addressing climate and security issues, the Council needed to respect the sovereignty, national ownership and primary responsibility of States and act in accordance with its mandate. The representative of China stated that climate change was, in essence, a development issue rather than a security one and that there was no direct linkage between the two. The Council, as the organ handling international peace and security issues, should act in line with the mandates of the relevant resolutions, analyse security challenges and the security implications of climate change for the countries concerned and discuss and handle relevant issues on a country-specific basis. In a similar vein, the representative of South Africa stated that his country remained wary of introducing climate change into the Council as a thematic issue. Where climate change was thought to be a clear contributing factor to a threat to international peace and security, it was appropriate for the Council to comment within the specific context of the countries that might be affected. Even in those circumstances, he continued, the contribution that the Council could make was modest and unclear. There were reasonable questions as to when and on what scientific basis the Council would invoke climate change as a contributing factor to a specific conflict situation and where precisely it would draw the line with respect to incorporating environmental issues into its agenda. He added that it was necessary to "guard against mandate creep" by the Council and the Council outpacing its own resources and capacities.

In their written contributions, some delegations of non-Council members also discussed the relation between climate change and the Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The representative of Fiji stated that the Council's core responsibility, namely the maintenance of international peace and security, was fundamental and would be fulfilled through sustained and accelerated progress in implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change. The representative of Brazil noted that the discussion on climate and security proposed for the videoconference was an opportunity to reflect on the question at hand but more so on the scope of the mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security, given to the Council by the Charter. The Council was mandated to deal with concrete, immediate threats to international peace and

security and should therefore abstain from adopting blanket statements on the proposed topic and instead opt for assessing threats to international peace and security on a case-by-case basis. According to the delegation of Guatemala, despite the success of various efforts, the impact of climate change was real, and in that context the Council must also consider its negative effects within the framework of international peace and security mandates. Climate change was one of the factors that intensified existing threats, tensions and instability, a challenge that threatened to overburden the most vulnerable countries and regions with fragile and conflict-affected environments. Affirming that the Council had the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, it added that the magnitude of the challenge of climate change was becoming more evident and required thorough consideration by both permanent and non-permanent members of the Council.

#### **Case 5 Maintenance of international peace and security**

On 17 September, at the initiative of the Niger, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>37</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security", under the sub-item entitled "Humanitarian effects of environmental degradation and peace and security".<sup>38</sup> Council members heard briefings by the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Executive Secretary of the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and a civil society and environmental activist. In addition to representatives of Council members who spoke during the videoconference, delegations of 19 Member States submitted their statements in writing, as did the delegation of the European Union and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.<sup>39</sup>

During the videoconference, Council members discussed the extent to which the topic of climate change should be addressed by the Council in the context of international peace and security. In this

<sup>37</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 1 September 2020 (S/2020/882).

<sup>38</sup> See S/2020/929.

<sup>39</sup> The delegations of the following countries submitted written statements: Brazil, Denmark, Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, Namibia, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and Ukraine.

regard, the Minister of State for the Commonwealth and South Asia of the United Kingdom noted that the Council must make climate risk assessment and climate resilience an integral part of its work, adding that the Council presented the best vehicle for addressing climate-related security threats. The representative of Belgium expressed the belief that it was appropriate for Council members to discuss the consequences of climate change on conflict and humanitarian needs and stated that one of his country's priorities during its term on the Council had been to mainstream climate-related security risks into relevant Council mandates. According to the representative of France, in order to enable the Council to react in a timely manner, the Secretary-General should be able to present, every two years, an assessment of the threats to international peace and security posed by the impacts of climate change in all regions of the world. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Regional Integration of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines pointed to the need for an integrated and coherent approach that leveraged the technical capacities of all United Nations organs and specialized agencies, within their respective mandates. He noted the importance of incorporating the humanitarian and security concerns of climate change and environmental degradation into all mandated reports for situations on the Council's agenda. The representative of the Dominican Republic recognized that the Council was faced with the challenge of considering an unconventional threat to international peace and security. Noting that his country continued to look to the Council to fulfil its international peace and security mandate, the representative of South Africa expressed interest in hearing the views of Council members on the value that the Council could add to addressing the humanitarian effects of environmental degradation on peace and security. The representative of Tunisia stated that the climate change and security nexus should be considered further by the Council and that those issues needed to remain on its agenda and required a more in-depth discussion by the Council. Similarly, the representative of Viet Nam held the view that managing the adverse effects of climate change, ecosystem degradation and their humanitarian and security risks should be part of the Council's efforts to maintain international peace and security.

By contrast, the representative of China stated that there was no direct link between environmental issues and peace and security, adding that such issues needed to be discussed and handled in country-specific ways. He noted that the Council should effectively implement its primary responsibility for maintaining

international peace and security, promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes and paving the way for reconstruction. Similarly, the representative of the Russian Federation expressed doubt that the Council was a platform for a generic environment-related debate and in that respect stated that there was no automatic link between environmental issues, including climate change, and conflict. It was paramount that the Council focus its efforts on the fulfilment of its core function of the maintenance of international peace and security on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations. If that was addressed, it would certainly contribute to the protection of the environment.

In their written submissions, non-Council members also addressed the issue of climate change in the context of the maintenance of international peace and security. The representative of Brazil stated that it was incumbent on Member States to be watchful of the division of labour among the different bodies of the United Nations system, seeking synergies and complementarities while retaining their respective mandates and competencies. He noted that the Council was mandated to respond to concrete threats to international peace and security requiring immediate attention from the international community and added that diverting the Council's attention to issues beyond the mandate entrusted to it in the Charter was counterproductive and potentially detrimental to the proper functioning of the multilateral machinery. According to the representative of India, there had been an increasing tendency both within and outside the Council to start discussing environmental issues with a certain disregard for the various important principles that governed environmental discussions on topics such as climate change and biological diversity. Steering away from such principles as "common but differentiated responsibilities" or attempting to discuss such issues by obfuscating the identity of those responsible for addressing them would only do a disservice to the real issue and would make it difficult to have a meaningful discussion thereon.

In contrast, the representative of Ireland stated that the United Nations system, and the Council in particular, must address environmental factors as part of its peace mandate, adding that Ireland continued to call for a special representative on climate and security, who could further support those efforts. According to the representative of Mexico, although the Council was not the organ charged with responding to the global threat of climate change and its demonstrated effects on environmental degradation, the humanitarian impact of that threat and its effects might accentuate the risk



of instability or exacerbate existing conflicts. It was therefore necessary to work in a coordinated manner with the various entities present in the field, including humanitarian actors, to generate scientific evidence and synergies that facilitated timely analysis and improved the system's decision-making and preventive capacities. In his written submission, the representative of Portugal welcomed the inclusion of the security-climate nexus in the discussions of the Council, expressing the belief that the Council, in line with its responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security, should pay close attention to climate-related security risks and take on board the knowledge generated by such entities as the United Nations climate security mechanism in order to better understand the interlinkages among climate change, conflict prevention and sustaining peace. Similarly, the representative of the United Arab Emirates stated that the Council's consideration of environmental issues was a necessary part of maintaining international peace and security.

#### **Case 6 Peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

On 3 November, the Council convened an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace" and the sub-item entitled "Contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity".<sup>40</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Deputy Secretary-General, the Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency, the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies and the President of the Economic and Social Council. Representatives of all Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference, while the delegations of 38 non-Council members and the European Union submitted their statements in writing.<sup>41</sup> In her briefing,

<sup>40</sup> See [S/2020/1090](#).

<sup>41</sup> The delegations of the following countries submitted written statements: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates.

the Deputy Secretary-General welcomed the increased attention that the Council was devoting to addressing contemporary drivers of conflict and instability and recalled the Secretary-General's appeal for a new push by the international community, led by the Council, to make a global ceasefire a reality by the end of 2020.

During the videoconference, Council members discussed the mandate of the Council in the context of contemporary drivers of conflict. According to the Minister of State in the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, unless the Council systematically and effectively considered the security implications of climate change, global pandemics, underdevelopment and violations of human rights, Council members would fall short of what the international community and, most of all, those who were most severely affected by conflicts expected them to deliver. If the Council wanted to remain relevant, it would have to "up its game" and "grapple with" the security implications of pandemics, climate change and the other pressing global issues that the world expected it to address. The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation expressed the view that it was extremely important that, through division of labour among the main United Nations agencies, each one must perform its functions in strict accordance with its mandate. That applied to the Council discussion on the climate agenda, and the leading role in that area fell to the relevant United Nations agencies. For the representative of France, while the causes of conflict evolved, the Charter of the United Nations and the responsibilities of the Council were immutable. It was imperative that the Council continuously adapted its actions and tools in order to fulfil its principal responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. According to the representative of Indonesia, the Council, as the organ with the principal mandate of maintaining international peace and security, should continue to mainstream a comprehensive approach to ensure peace and stability that encompassed security, human rights and humanitarian aspects, as well as sustainable development.



## II. Obligation of Member States to accept and carry out decisions of the Security Council under Article 25

### Article 25

*The Members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter.*

### Note

Section II outlines the practice of the Council in relation to Article 25 of the Charter, which concerns the obligation of Member States to accept and carry out the decisions of the Council. It is divided into three subsections. Subsection A contains references to Article 25 in decisions of the Council, subsection B examines how the principle of Article 25 was dealt with in deliberations of the Council, and subsection C features explicit references to Article 25 in communications of the Council.

In 2020, the Council adopted two decisions containing explicit references to Article 25 in connection with the situation in the Middle East.<sup>42</sup> In addition, there were four instances in which Article 25 was explicitly invoked during the Council meetings, notably in the context of deliberations on the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”.<sup>43</sup> Article 25 was also featured explicitly on three occasions in statements submitted for open videoconferences held in connection with the items entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”<sup>44</sup> and “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”.<sup>45</sup> Details of the most salient issues related to Article 25 addressed during the meetings and in the context of open videoconferences in 2020 are provided in subsection B. During the year under review, 10 explicit references to Article 25 were also made in seven communications of the Council, details of which are provided in subsection C.<sup>46</sup> Article 25 was explicitly invoked in five draft resolutions that were not adopted.

<sup>42</sup> Resolutions 2504 (2020) and 2533 (2020).

<sup>43</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Secretary-General, United Kingdom and Egypt) and S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1) (Azerbaijan).

<sup>44</sup> See S/2020/418 (Azerbaijan and Morocco).

<sup>45</sup> See S/2020/1090 (Azerbaijan).

<sup>46</sup> S/2020/212; S/2020/451, annex; S/2020/772, annex; S/2020/814, annex; S/2020/816, annex; S/2020/822, annex; and S/2020/1000.

### A. Decisions referring to Article 25

In 2020, the Council adopted two decisions containing an explicit reference to Article 25 under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East” in relation to the Syrian Arab Republic. In both resolutions, the Council underscored that Member States were obligated under Article 25 to accept and carry out its decisions.<sup>47</sup>

In addition, five draft resolutions on the situation in the Middle East that were not adopted contained explicit references to Article 25. In all those draft resolutions, the Council would have underscored that Member States were obligated under Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations to accept and carry out the Council’s decisions.<sup>48</sup>

### B. Discussion relating to Article 25

During the year under review, Article 25 was explicitly and implicitly referred to at numerous meetings and in statements delivered or submitted in the context of open videoconferences of the Council. The most salient discussions on the binding nature of Council decisions and the obligation of Member States to implement them took place during meetings and open videoconferences held in connection with the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question (see cases 7 and 8), and non-proliferation (see case 9).

#### Case 7

#### The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 21 and 22 January, the Council held its first quarterly open debate for the year under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”.<sup>49</sup> At the meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator briefed the Council on the latest developments that had taken place during the reporting

<sup>47</sup> Resolutions 2504 (2020) and 2533 (2020), final preambular paragraph.

<sup>48</sup> S/2020/24, S/2020/654, S/2020/658, S/2020/667 and S/2020/683, final preambular paragraph. For further information, see part I, sect. 20.

<sup>49</sup> See S/PV.8706 and S/PV.8706 (Resumption 1).

period.<sup>50</sup> During the discussion following the briefing, several speakers criticized the continued and increased violations of relevant resolutions, recalling their binding nature and appealing to the Council, as well as all States, individually and collectively, to ensure compliance with those resolutions.

In their remarks, several speakers maintained that impunity for violations of Council resolutions committed by States undermined the credibility and effectiveness of the Council. The observer for the State of Palestine noted that Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), must be respected and that initiatives endorsing illegal schemes and departing from the global consensus enshrined in the Council's resolutions were rejected and doomed to fail. Insisting on the full implementation of resolution 2234 (2016), the representative of South Africa noted that the continued contravention by Israel of resolution 2334 (2016) damaged the Council's credibility and that overt violations of Council resolutions would usually elicit harsher measures imposed on the party responsible for such infractions. The representative of Kuwait made a similar point, noting the Council's inability to hold Israel accountable for failing to implement its resolutions.<sup>51</sup> Speaking on behalf of the States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the representative of Bangladesh stated that it was incumbent upon the international community to take concrete actions to compel respect for and compliance with Council resolutions on the part of Israel. She added that Bangladesh looked upon the Council to fulfil its Charter obligations and enforce its resolutions.

Referring to destabilizing activities in the Middle East, the representative of Israel noted that the export by the Islamic Republic of Iran of its missiles was in violation of Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 1559 (2004), 1701 (2006), 2216 (2015) and 2231 (2015). The representative of Lebanon noted that violations by Israel of resolution 1701 (2006) continued unabated. In explaining the reasons behind the instability in the Middle East, the representative of Portugal, speaking on behalf of 27 European Union member States, noted that Council resolutions had been violated by both sides. He called upon all parties to take urgent steps that would contribute to the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016) and thereby increase the chances for peace and a two-State solution. Similarly, the representative of China noted that all parties concerned should earnestly implement resolution 2334 (2016).<sup>52</sup>

Some speakers held the view that Council resolutions and their interpretation were not "à la carte": the representative of Germany, echoed by the representative of Lebanon, stated that international law was not like an à la carte menu and called for the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Council.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the representative of France reiterated that resolution 2334 (2016) could not be subject to à la carte interpretation.<sup>54</sup>

Referring to the Golan Heights, the representative of the Sudan, speaking on behalf of the Group of Arab States, called upon Israel to abide by resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) by withdrawing fully from the occupied Syrian Golan.<sup>55</sup> The representative of Cuba noted that the decision of the United States to recognize the sovereignty of Israel over the Golan Heights and to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel constituted flagrant violations of Council resolutions. In reiterating the binding nature of Council resolutions, the representative of Jordan noted that, since Israeli violations and aggressions in occupied East Jerusalem breached Council resolutions, they were therefore null and void and without legal or political effect.<sup>56</sup>

## Case 8 The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 25 August, the Council held a videoconference in connection with the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question",<sup>57</sup> during which the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General delivered his monthly briefing. Against the backdrop of the letter dated 20 August 2020 from the representative of the United States<sup>58</sup> notifying the Council of the significant non-performance by the Islamic Republic of Iran of its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the majority of Council members expressed their disagreement with the position of the United States and presented their views on the obligations of Member States, under Article 25 of the Charter, to implement resolution 2231 (2015).

<sup>53</sup> See S/PV.8706 and S/PV.8706 (Resumption 1).

<sup>54</sup> See S/PV.8706.

<sup>55</sup> See S/PV.8706 (Resumption 1).

<sup>56</sup> See S/PV.8706.

<sup>57</sup> See S/2020/837.

<sup>58</sup> S/2020/815. Details of related communications of the Council containing references to Article 25 are provided in subsection C below.

<sup>50</sup> See S/PV.8706.

<sup>51</sup> See S/PV.8706 (Resumption 1).

<sup>52</sup> See S/PV.8706.

In their initial remarks, several speakers explained their positions regarding the letter from the United States of 20 August 2020 regarding resolution 2231 (2015) and asked the President of the Council to state his position on the matter.<sup>59</sup> The representative of South Africa noted that the United States, having confirmed its withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and by not participating in any of the Plan's structures or subsequent activities, ceased to be a participant of the Plan and was therefore ineligible to submit a notification to the Council under the terms of resolution 2231 (2015). He also noted that, as resolution 2231 (2015) and the Plan were inextricably linked and were mutually contingent, any party that, of its own volition, withdrew from the Plan could not be regarded as a participant State and would therefore not be able to invoke the provisions of resolution 2231 (2015) as a participant State. The representative of the Russian Federation said that the United States had submitted a letter with a claim that the actions of the Islamic Republic of Iran allegedly triggered a snapback process, as foreseen in paragraph 11 of resolution 2231 (2015), noting that almost all Council members had responded immediately with a letter to the President. He observed that an overwhelming majority of the members had explicitly stated in those letters that the letter from the United States could not be considered a notification under paragraph 11 of resolution 2231 (2015), nor did it trigger the snapback procedure, since the United States had ceased its participation in the Plan. He then asked the President to inform the members of the results of bilateral consultations held after receipt of the letter from the United States and to clarify his view on the claim of the United States, in particular whether he intended to follow the procedures foreseen in paragraph 11 of resolution 2231 (2015). Holding a similar view, the representative of China pointed out that the overwhelming majority of Council members believed that the demand by the United States to restore United Nations sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran had no legal grounding and went against common views and that the snapback mechanism should not be deemed as invoked. He urged the President not to take any action on the demand of the United States, adding that the Council should fully respect the views of the international community and the overwhelming majority of Council members, uphold its credibility and authority and fulfil its responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. He also expressed his strong wish that the President inform the Council members of his position

<sup>59</sup> See [S/2020/837](#).

on the letter from the United States and his plan to guide the discussion in the Council in that regard.

In response to comments received from several Council members, the representative of Indonesia, speaking in his capacity as President of the Council for the month of August, said that, after having consulted members and receiving letters from many of them, it was clear to him that one member had a particular position on the issue while a significant number of members had differing views. He held the view that there was no consensus in the Council and noted that the President was therefore not in the position to take further action.

In the ensuing discussion, Council members reiterated their stance on the matter as reflected in the above-mentioned letters, with most concurring with the assessment of the President. The representative of France recalled the view expressed by the European members of the Council in their letter circulated on 20 August,<sup>60</sup> namely that the United States was not a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action participant State under resolution 2231 (2015) anymore, and therefore they did not consider that the United States notification was effective. To be more precise, she added, the purported notification under paragraph 11 of resolution 2231 (2015) was incapable of having legal effect and so could not bring into effect the procedure foreseen under paragraph 11, that is, the snapback procedure. The representative of France took note of the converging views expressed by 13 of the 15 members of the Council on that matter and expressed the firm belief that, as a consequence, no further steps could take place within the Council.<sup>61</sup> The representative of Germany fully subscribed to the position stated by the representative of France and expressed full support for the view of the President that the purported notification of the United States was, in legal terms, null and void. The representative of the United Kingdom aligned himself with the position expressed by the representatives of France and Germany, noting that the United Kingdom did not support a move to snapback at that time. The representative of Belgium noted that the current situation could pose a threat to the proper functioning, authority and integrity of the Council, adding that Belgium did not recognize the legality of the purported notification by the United States. He affirmed that Council members must abide by the methods and decisions agreed upon by that body and by the international community, not undermine them.

<sup>60</sup> [S/2020/839](#). Details of related communications of the Council containing references to Article 25 are provided in subsection C below.

<sup>61</sup> See [S/2020/837](#).

The representative of Estonia also expressed support for the Council presidency in considering the notification as ineffective for the purposes of a snapback, given that there was no agreement among the Plan's initial participants regarding the status of the United States as a participant. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines maintained the position outlined in the joint letter of the three African members of the Council, namely the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia, as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,<sup>62</sup> that having confirmed its withdrawal from the Plan and by not participating in any of the Plan's structures or subsequent activities, the United States ceased to be a participant and was therefore ineligible to submit a notification to the Council under the terms of resolution 2231 (2015).<sup>63</sup> The representative of China also expressed support for the conclusion made by the President, noting that it was a step in the right direction, while the representative of the Russian Federation noted that the President was taking a prudent step, given the positions of Council members on the matter. Taking the floor to reaffirm full support for the leadership of the President, the representative of Viet Nam reiterated that the Charter of the United Nations and international law should be strictly adhered to, adding that the Plan constituted an integral part of resolution 2231 (2015).

Delivering her second statement, the representative of the United States said that, on 20 August, the United States took the only remaining reasonable and responsible action, reminding members of the Council of the right of the United States under resolution 2231 (2015) to trigger the snapback mechanism and its firm intent to do so "in the absence of courage and moral clarity by the Council". Noting that the Islamic Republic of Iran had defied the Council's arms embargo and stating that the Russian Federation and China revelled in the Council's dysfunction and failure, the representative of the United States regretted that other members of the Council had lost their way and currently found themselves "standing in the company of terrorists".

### Case 9 Non-proliferation

In 2020, the status of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was discussed by Council members at

various meetings and videoconferences in connection with the item entitled "Non-proliferation".<sup>64</sup>

At the end of the year, on 22 December, Council members held an open videoconference and heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Head of Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations and the representative of Belgium, in his capacity as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).<sup>65</sup> During the videoconference, Council members discussed the recent developments with regard to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and the steps taken by the United States in this context in the preceding months.<sup>66</sup>

In her briefing, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs noted the view of the United States that, as of 20 September 2020, all provisions of prior resolutions that had been terminated by resolution 2231 (2015) applied in the same manner and that the measures contained in paragraphs 7, 8 and 16 to 20 of resolution 2231 (2015) had also been terminated. She added that the majority of Council members and the Islamic Republic of Iran had written to the Council stating that, among other things, the letter dated 20 August 2020 from the United States had not initiated the process set forth in paragraph 11 of resolution 2231 (2015). She also noted that those States had expressed their strong support for the Plan and the continued implementation of the resolution. The Under-Secretary-General recalled that the President of the Council for the month of August and the President of the Council for the month of September had indicated that they were not in a position to take any action with regard to the aforementioned letter from the United States, while the President of the Council for the month of October also took note of those developments.<sup>67</sup> Similarly, the Head of Delegation of the European Union stated that the United States could not be considered a participant State, given that it had ceased its participation in the agreement on 8 May 2018 and therefore could not initiate the process of reinstating sanctions under resolution 2231 (2015). He also noted that the majority of Council members regarded such attempts by the United States as having no legal basis.

During the discussion, the representative of China noted that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, endorsed by the Council in its resolution 2231 (2015), was legally binding and should be effectively

<sup>62</sup> S/2020/821. Details of related communications of the Council containing references to Article 25 are provided in subsection C below.

<sup>63</sup> See S/2020/837.

<sup>64</sup> For further details, see part I, sects. 21 and 32.B.

<sup>65</sup> See S/2020/1324.

<sup>66</sup> See also case 8 above and subsection C below.

<sup>67</sup> See S/2020/1324.



implemented. The representative of the Russian Federation stated that, in the context of the Plan, the Council acted exactly as it should by remaining committed to international law and its obligations to strengthen international peace and security, strictly following the letter and spirit of resolution 2231 (2015). He noted that, since there had been no snapback, the international legal regime established by resolution 2231 (2015) remained fully in place and the document itself continued to be implemented in accordance with the previously agreed parameters and time frames. The representative of South Africa called upon all parties to the Plan and all Council members to uphold and implement resolution 2231 (2015), which was essential for the Council's fulfilment of its mandate to maintain international peace and security. According to the representative of the United States, the failure of the Islamic Republic of Iran to abide by its Council obligations should be met with continued diplomatic and economic pressure and the further isolation of the Iranian regime. In response, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran noted that, by brazenly threatening other States to either violate resolution 2231 (2015) or face punishment, the United States had not only failed to honour its own commitments under that resolution but also substantively obstructed the implementation of commitments by other Member States.

### C. Communications featuring Article 25

In 2020, 10 explicit references to Article 25 were made in seven communications of the Council. With the exception of the letter dated 3 August from the representative of Pakistan,<sup>68</sup> all other communications in 2020 containing a reference to Article 25 were submitted in connection with the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.<sup>69</sup>

According to the letter dated 16 March 2020 from the representative of the Russian Federation to the Secretary-General,<sup>70</sup> the United States “withdrew” from the full implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), thus violating its obligations under Article 25

of the Charter of the United Nations. In a subsequent communication dated 27 May 2020 on the same topic,<sup>71</sup> the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation stated that, in accordance with Article 25, the United States side was obliged to carry out the decisions of the Council, “rather than undermine them through its unlawful actions”. It was noted in the letter that the position of the United States, which had taken up the path of violation, openly challenged the Council and begun to impede the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) by other States, deserved universal condemnation. In a communication dated 20 August 2020 transmitting a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding the intended inadmissible submission of a “notification” by the United States in relation to resolution 2231 (2015),<sup>72</sup> the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that abusing and violating the provisions of paragraphs 10 and 11 of resolution 2231 (2015) by sending a simple notification – while the United States had already breached its obligations under resolution 2231 (2015) and Article 25 of the Charter by its reimposition of unilateral and unlawful sanctions – set an extremely dangerous precedent which must be clearly and vociferously rejected by the Council and its members. In a letter dated 20 August 2020 pertaining to the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the United States notification to trigger a snapback mechanism,<sup>73</sup> the Russian Federation affirmed that resolution 2231 (2015) unequivocally endorsed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which was annexed to the resolution, thus making it an inseparable part of a single text. The letter further stated that resolution 2231 (2015) specifically referred to Article 25 of the Charter, which was a way to establish the legally binding character of the resolution without invoking Chapter VII of the Charter, as recognized by the International Court of Justice. In the same letter, the Russian Federation noted that all those cumulative conditions, including the reference to Article 25 in the preamble of the resolution, the unconditional endorsement of the Plan by resolution 2231 (2015) and the attachment of the Plan to the resolution, made the Plan legally binding, without prejudice to the issue of the legal nature of the Plan before the adoption of resolution 2231 (2015). In a letter dated 21 August 2020 containing an explanation of the legal basis for the right of the United States to

<sup>68</sup> S/2020/772.

<sup>69</sup> For the background and more information on the discussion on Article 25 in connection with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, see also case studies 8 and 9 in sect. II.B above. For more information on the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”, see part I, sect. 21; for more information on the item entitled “Non-proliferation”, see part I, sect. 32.B.

<sup>70</sup> See S/2020/212.

<sup>71</sup> See S/2020/451.

<sup>72</sup> See S/2020/814.

<sup>73</sup> See S/2020/816.

initiate snapback under resolution 2231 (2015),<sup>74</sup> the United States asserted that, when the Council imposed obligations under Chapter VII of the Charter, as was the case for resolution 2231 (2015), it did not mean that all of the provisions contained therein were legally binding. In the same letter, the United States explained that, because Article 25 of the Charter required Member States to “accept and carry out” the “decisions” of the Council, and Article 41 of Chapter VII of the Charter authorized the Council to “decide” to impose certain measures, it was generally understood that, when the Council used other verbs, such as “calls upon” or “urges” or even “demands”, it was not imposing legally binding obligations. In response to the United States,<sup>75</sup> the Islamic Republic of Iran, in a letter dated 12 October 2020,<sup>76</sup> recalled that the Council, in its resolution 2231 (2015), “underscoring that Member States are obligated under Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations to accept and carry out the Security Council’s decisions”, called upon them to “support the implementation of the [Plan]” and “refrain from actions that undermine implementation of commitments under the [Plan]”. All

communications submitted in connection with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in 2020 are listed in table 2.

During the period under review, one other communication of the Council, submitted in connection with the item entitled “The India-Pakistan question”, contained three explicit references to Article 25 of the Charter. Supplementing an earlier letter dated 3 August 2020,<sup>77</sup> a letter of the same date was submitted by the representative of Pakistan and included, in an annex, a legal appraisal of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.<sup>78</sup> In that document, under the rubric “Legally binding effect of Security Council resolutions”, it was submitted that India had made a disingenuous attempt to erode the legally binding nature of Council resolutions and that, over the years, India had attempted to argue that the Council resolutions on Kashmir were only of a “recommendatory” nature. Citing the International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion on the *Namibia* case, which contained multiple references to Article 25 of the Charter, the document stated that Council resolutions were immutable and that they could be invalidated only by fulfilment of the obligation, consent of the parties or a subsequent resolution or decision by the Council itself. Since none of that had happened with regard to Jammu and Kashmir, according to the document, the obligations arising from the Council resolutions on the dispute could not be unilaterally annulled or renounced by India.

<sup>74</sup> See S/2020/822. In addition to the communications relating to the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action cited above, the following communications were issued in connection with the same matter but do not explicitly invoke Article 25: S/2020/921, S/2020/922, S/2020/923, S/2020/924, S/2020/927, S/2020/928 and S/2020/931.

For further details, see table 2.

<sup>75</sup> See S/2020/927.

<sup>76</sup> See S/2020/1000.

<sup>77</sup> S/2020/771.

<sup>78</sup> S/2020/772, annex I.

Table 2  
Communications submitted in connection with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in 2020

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Document title</i>	<i>Explicit reference to Article 25 of the Charter</i>
S/2020/212	Letter dated 16 March 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General	✓
S/2020/451	Letter dated 27 May 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council	✓
S/2020/814	Letter dated 20 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	✓
S/2020/816	Letter dated 20 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	✓



<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Document title</i>	<i>Explicit reference to Article 25 of the Charter</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/822</a>	Letter dated 21 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General	✓
<a href="#">S/2020/921</a>	Letter dated 19 September 2020 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council	
<a href="#">S/2020/922</a>	Letter dated 19 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council	
<a href="#">S/2020/923</a>	Letter dated 20 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	
<a href="#">S/2020/924</a>	Letter dated 20 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	
<a href="#">S/2020/927</a>	Letter dated 21 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	
<a href="#">S/2020/928</a>	Letter dated 21 September 2020 from the Permanent Representatives of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	
<a href="#">S/2020/931</a>	Letter dated 21 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council	
<a href="#">S/2020/1000</a>	Letter dated 12 October 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council	✓

### III. Responsibility of the Security Council to formulate plans to regulate armaments under Article 26

#### *Article 26*

*In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee referred to in Article 47, plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments.*

#### **Note**

Section III covers the practice of the Council concerning its responsibility for formulating plans for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments, as stipulated in Article 26 of the Charter.

In 2020, continuing with past practice, the Council did not refer explicitly to Article 26 in any of

its decisions. However, Article 26 was expressly invoked once during the 8733rd meeting, held on 26 February in connection with the item entitled “Non-proliferation”.<sup>79</sup> At the meeting, the President-designate of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, invited under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure, noted that it was clear that issues concerning disarmament and arms control had been an important part of the United Nations since its inception, citing the example of Article 26, which conferred upon the Council the responsibility for disarmament and the “regulation of armaments”. In addition, two explicit references to Article 26 were made in the context of open videoconferences. In a statement submitted for an open videoconference held on 15 May 2020 in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the

<sup>79</sup> See [S/PV.8733](#).

Security Council (S/2017/507)”,<sup>80</sup> the representative of Morocco stated that Articles 24, 25 and 26 provided the Council with important powers and prerogatives, which it could not exercise without adopting an effective and efficient approach. Furthermore, in a statement submitted in the context of an open videoconference held on 24 July 2020 in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international

<sup>80</sup> See [S/2020/418](#).

peace and security”,<sup>81</sup> the representative of Costa Rica called for the implementation of Article 26 of the Charter and for the Council to ensure that the world’s already scarce resources were not diverted to armaments. In 2020, there were no explicit references to Article 26 of the Charter in any of the communications of the Council.

<sup>81</sup> See [S/2020/751](#).

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## **Part VI**

### **Consideration of the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter**

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## Introductory note

Part VI of the present Supplement covers the practice of the Security Council with regard to the peaceful settlement of disputes within the framework of Chapter VI (Articles 33 to 38) and Articles 11 and 99 of the Charter of the United Nations. It is divided into four main sections.

Section I provides an illustration of how States brought disputes or situations to the attention of the Council during the period under review, pursuant to Article 35 of the Charter. It also provides a survey of the practice of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, under Articles 11 (3) and 99, respectively, in drawing the attention of the Council to situations which are likely to threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. Section II contains a description of investigative and fact-finding activities performed by the Council and other bodies that may be deemed to fall under the scope of Article 34, including Council missions. Section III provides an overview of the decisions of the Council taken with regard to the pacific settlement of disputes, specifically illustrating recommendations of the Council to parties to a conflict and its support for the efforts of the Secretary-General in the peaceful settlement of disputes. Section IV contains a reflection of constitutional discussions on the interpretation or application of the provisions of Chapter VI and Article 99.

As described in further detail in part II of the present Supplement, during 2020, the work of the Council was significantly affected by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Faced with the absence of meetings in the Security Council Chamber, Council members initiated the practice of holding videoconferences and, starting from 14 July, the Council developed a hybrid model, which involved alternating in-person meetings with videoconferences. Part VI of the present Supplement therefore features discussions of constitutional relevance to Chapter VI of the Charter held in the context of both in-person meetings and videoconferences.

As in previous supplements, the practice of the Council with respect to the pacific settlement of disputes is not discussed in an exhaustive manner in part VI, which is focused instead on selected materials aimed at highlighting the interpretation and application of the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter in the decisions and deliberations of the Council. Actions with regard to the pacific settlement of disputes in the context of the United Nations field missions authorized under Chapter VII are covered in the relevant sections of parts VII and X. Joint or parallel efforts undertaken by the Council and regional arrangements or agencies in the pacific settlement of disputes are covered in part VIII.

As described in section I, during 2020, Member States brought various matters to the attention of the Council, including matters of which the Council had not been seized. This notwithstanding, the Council did not convene any meetings under a new item on its agenda. Furthermore, although the Council did not convene any formal meetings in response to a communication from a Member State, Council members held two open videoconferences pursuant to such letters, in connection with the items entitled “The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela” and “Peace and security in Africa”. Council members also discussed the situations in the Syrian Arab Republic and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in informal consultations of the whole and in closed videoconferences. The Secretary-General continued to draw the attention of the Council to situations already on its agenda that were deteriorating, including the Palestinian question and the conflicts in the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. The Secretary-General also drew the attention of the Council to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international peace and security.

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As described in section II, owing to the health and safety and travel restrictions in place during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council did not dispatch any missions in 2020. The Council acknowledged and deliberated on the investigative functions of the Secretary-General and the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Human Rights Council and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in connection with the situations in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

As described in section III, the Council highlighted the importance of the inclusion of women and youth in the peaceful settlement of disputes and sustaining peace and consideration, in that regard, of the interests of children. The Council called upon parties to conflicts to cease hostilities and establish permanent ceasefires, to fully implement peace agreements, to ensure peaceful and inclusive political dialogue and transitions and to engage in dialogue for the resolution of outstanding disputes. The Council recognized the good offices work of the Secretary-General, as well as that of his special representatives and envoys, in support of efforts to end violence in conflict, implement peace agreements, conduct political transitions and resolve outstanding disputes.

As described in section IV, during 2020, discussions in the Council were focused on the importance of and the need for greater use of peaceful means in the settlement of disputes, with an emphasis on the importance of upholding the Charter and the application of Chapter VI thereof and the tools provided to the Council thereunder, the meaningful participation of young people and women and the inclusion of the interests of children in peace processes and in the peaceful resolution of disputes. In their discussions, Council members also addressed the need for cooperation between the Council and the International Court of Justice in the maintenance of international peace and security and the role of the Secretary-General and his special envoys and representatives, through their good offices, in the peaceful settlement of disputes.



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## I. Referral of disputes or situations to the Security Council

### Article 11

...

3. *The General Assembly may call the attention of the Security Council to situations which are likely to endanger international peace and security.*

### Article 35

1. *Any Member of the United Nations may bring any dispute, or any situation of the nature referred to in Article 34, to the attention of the Security Council or of the General Assembly.*

2. *A state which is not a Member of the United Nations may bring to the attention of the Security Council or of the General Assembly any dispute to which it is a party if it accepts in advance, for the purposes of the dispute, the obligations of pacific settlement provided in the present Charter.*

3. *The proceedings of the General Assembly in respect of matters brought to its attention under this Article will be subject to the provisions of Articles 11 and 12.*

### Article 99

*The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.*

### Note

Within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations, Articles 35 (1) and (2) are generally regarded as the basis on which Member States and States that are not members of the United Nations may refer disputes to the Council. Under Articles 11 (3) and 99, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, respectively, may also bring to the attention of the Council situations that are likely to threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.

The practice of the Council in this regard is described below in three subsections. Subsection A provides an overview of the referrals of disputes or situations by States to the Council pursuant to Article 35. Subsections B and C deal with referrals to the Council by the Secretary-General and the General Assembly, respectively, of matters likely to endanger international peace and security.

In 2020, the Council did not convene any meetings under a new item on its agenda. Furthermore, although the Council did not convene any formal meetings in response to a communication from a Member State,<sup>1</sup> Council members held two open videoconferences pursuant to letters submitted to the Council by Member States in connection with existing items, namely, “The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela” and “Peace and security in Africa”. In addition, Council members held informal consultations of the whole and one closed videoconference on the situations in the Syrian Arab Republic and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, respectively, pursuant to communications from Member States.

No State that was not a member of the United Nations brought any dispute or situation to the attention of the Council during the period under review. Neither the General Assembly nor the Secretary-General explicitly referred to the Council any matters likely to endanger international peace and security.

### A. Referrals by States

During the period under review, certain situations were referred to the Council pursuant to Article 35 (1) of the Charter by individual Member States and groups of affected or concerned Member States. Most of those situations were referred to the Council by Member States without including an explicit reference to Article 35. However, Article 35 was explicitly mentioned in three communications from Member States: one from Egypt<sup>2</sup> and one from Ethiopia,<sup>3</sup> both regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, and one from Namibia,<sup>4</sup> in connection with the situation concerning Western Sahara.

In a letter dated 19 June 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>5</sup> the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt drew the attention of the Council to the situation regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which he indicated was a matter of the greatest consequence for Egypt, and which he stated continued to gain urgency as Ethiopia remained insistent on unilaterally commencing the filling of the Dam in contravention of its legal obligations. Recalling the provisions of Article 35 of the Charter, the Minister

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<sup>1</sup> For information on the procedures and working methods of the Council developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>2</sup> S/2020/566.

<sup>3</sup> S/2020/567.

<sup>4</sup> S/2020/633.

<sup>5</sup> S/2020/566.

stated that, given the gravity of the situation, he was requesting the Council to address this matter urgently. In a letter dated 22 June 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>6</sup> the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia stressed that the Dam did not cause significant harm to Egypt and the Sudan, that it was a national project designed to help to extricate his country's people from abject poverty and that it was by no means a threat to peace and security justifying the invocation of the mandate of the Council under Article 35.

In a letter dated 1 July 2020 addressed to the President of the Security Council,<sup>7</sup> the representative of Namibia referenced a letter dated 29 June 2020 from the representative of Morocco to the President of the Council<sup>8</sup> and categorically rejected any attempt to hamper or obstruct the full exercise by Namibia of its sovereign rights in accordance with Article 35 of the Charter and rule 6 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

In 2020, the Council did not convene any meetings under a new item further to communications from Member States. As set out in part II of the present Supplement, the functioning of the Council was profoundly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Faced with the impossibility of holding in-person meetings in the Security Council Chamber, Council members developed the practice of holding

videoconferences. As shown in table 1, Council members convened two open videoconferences under two items of which the Council was already seized, pursuant to communications from Member States.

Specifically, on 20 May, Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela" pursuant to a letter dated 13 May 2020 from the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council,<sup>9</sup> regarding what he described as the illegal entry into his country on 3 and 4 May of "armed groups of mercenaries and terrorists, organized, trained, financed and protected by the Governments of the Republic of Colombia and the United States of America". The open videoconference followed a closed videoconference held on 22 April, on the same item, pursuant to a letter dated 3 April 2020 from the same representative addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council,<sup>10</sup> regarding the announcement by the United States, made on 1 April, of the deployment of warships to the waters of the western Caribbean, near the Venezuelan coast.

On 29 June, pursuant to the letter dated 19 June 2020 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt to the President of the Council<sup>11</sup> regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "Peace and security in Africa".

<sup>6</sup> S/2020/567.

<sup>7</sup> S/2020/633.

<sup>8</sup> S/2020/621. In his letter, the representative of Morocco objected to the circulation to the Council, by the representative of Namibia, of a letter from the Secretary-General of the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y de Río de Oro concerning the situation in Western Sahara (S/2020/611, annex).

<sup>9</sup> S/2020/399.

<sup>10</sup> S/2020/277.

<sup>11</sup> S/2020/566.

Table 1

**Communications bringing disputes or situations to the attention of the Security Council that resulted in a Council meeting, a videoconference or informal consultations of the whole, 2020**

<i>Communication</i>	<i>Action requested of the Security Council</i>	<i>Meeting record and date</i>
<b>The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela</b>		
Identical letters dated 13 May 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2020/399)	For the Council to urgently hold the necessary discussions in order to: (a) recognize that the aggression perpetrated by the Governments of Colombia and the United States against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on 3 and 4 May 2020 was an armed attack that threatened the peace and security of his nation and the region; and (b) issue a clear statement condemning and prohibiting the use or threat of use of force in all its forms and manifestations against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in accordance with the powers conferred upon the Council under Article 39 of the Charter of the United Nations	S/2020/435 20 May 2020 <sup>a</sup>

Communication	Action requested of the Security Council	Meeting record and date
<b>Peace and security in Africa</b>		
Letter dated 19 June 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council ( <a href="#">S/2020/566</a> )	For the Council to urgently consider the situation regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam at the earliest possible opportunity, under the item titled “Peace and security in Africa”	<a href="#">S/2020/636</a> 29 June 2020

<sup>a</sup> See also the letter dated 3 April 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Council ([S/2020/277](#)), pursuant to which Council members held a closed videoconference on 22 April 2020 (see [S/2020/558](#)).

### Other communications from Member States

Member States also brought other matters to the attention of the Council. In some cases, the communications concerned matters of which the Council was not seized; in most cases, those communications did not result in a meeting of the Council. For example, in a letter dated 14 August 2020 addressed to the President of the Security Council,<sup>12</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation transmitted a statement by the President of his country, in which the latter noted that debates around the “Iranian issue” within the Council were becoming increasingly strained and that tensions were running high. The President of the Russian Federation stated that his Government maintained its unwavering commitment to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action of 2015, which he described as a landmark political and diplomatic achievement that helped to fend off the threat of an armed conflict and reinforced nuclear non-proliferation. The President of the Russian Federation proposed convening an online meeting of the Heads of State of the permanent members of the Council, with the participation of the Heads of State of Germany and the Islamic Republic of Iran, as soon as possible, in order to outline steps that could prevent confrontation or a spike in tensions within the Council.

In a letter dated 11 August 2020 addressed to the Secretary-General,<sup>13</sup> the representative of Greece drew the attention of the Council to a “significant escalation” of tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean following the dispatching by Turkey of the *Oruç Reis*, a research and survey vessel, for seismic activities to an area falling, as alleged in the letter, within the Greek continental shelf. The representative described the dispatching of the vessel as a violation of the law of the sea that seriously endangered peace and security in the region and violated the sovereign rights of Greece. In a letter dated 21 August 2020 addressed to

the Secretary-General,<sup>14</sup> the representative of Turkey maintained that the area in question lay entirely within the Turkish continental shelf and that the Turkish naval presence was in no way aimed at an escalation. The representative reiterated his country’s readiness to support any initiative that could safeguard a just, peaceful and equitable solution to the existing issues in the Eastern Mediterranean in accordance with international law. In a subsequent letter dated 4 September 2020 addressed to the President of the Security Council,<sup>15</sup> the Prime Minister of Greece stressed that his country remained committed to the principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes as set out in the Charter and that it was ready to resume its dialogue with Turkey.

The representatives of Armenia and Azerbaijan brought the situation on the border of their two countries to the attention of the Council in letters dated 16 and 22 July 2020, respectively, addressed to the President of the Council.<sup>16</sup> Subsequently, letters dated 27 and 28 September 2020 from the representatives of Azerbaijan and Armenia, respectively, were addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>17</sup> also in reference to the recrudescence of the situation at the border. In a statement annexed to the first letter, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan referred to the launching of “another aggression” by the armed forces of Armenia against Azerbaijan, “blatantly violating the ceasefire regime”,<sup>18</sup> while, in the second letter, the representative of Armenia made reference to a “pre-planned large-scale military offensive” by Azerbaijan along the entire line of contact between that country and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh), accompanied by deliberate targeting of the civilian population and infrastructure.<sup>19</sup> On 29 September 2020,

<sup>14</sup> [S/2020/826](#).

<sup>15</sup> [S/2020/888](#), annex.

<sup>16</sup> [S/2020/719](#) and [S/2020/732](#).

<sup>17</sup> [S/2020/948](#) and [S/2020/955](#).

<sup>18</sup> See [S/2020/948](#), annex.

<sup>19</sup> See [S/2020/955](#).

<sup>12</sup> [S/2020/804](#).

<sup>13</sup> [S/2020/795](#).

Council members met in informal consultations of the whole, under “Other matters”, to discuss the situation arising from the outbreak of heavy fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh.<sup>20</sup>

## B. Referrals by the Secretary-General

Article 99 of the Charter provides that the Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. Like Article 35, Article 99 does not specify the means by which the Secretary-General may bring such a matter to the attention of the Council. During the period under review, the Secretary-General did not invoke Article 99, either directly or by implication. A discussion of relevance to Article 99 is featured in case 11 below.

In 2020, the Secretary-General continued to draw the attention of the Council to situations on its agenda that were deteriorating or to instances with respect to which he had requested the Council to take urgent action.

In his letters transmitting the monthly reports of the Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of resolution 2118 (2013), on the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic,<sup>21</sup> the Secretary-General reiterated that the use of chemical weapons was intolerable and that impunity in that regard was equally unacceptable. He also emphasized that it was imperative to identify and hold accountable all those who had used chemical weapons and that unity in the Council was essential to achieving that urgent obligation. Furthermore, by his letter dated 15 April 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>22</sup> the Secretary-General transmitted to the Council the first report by the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team on the alleged use of chemical weapons in Lataminah, Syrian Arab Republic, on 24, 25 and 30 March 2017. Noting that any use of chemical weapons posed a serious threat to international peace and security, he stated in his letter that it was appropriate that the report be shared with Council members.

During meetings and videoconferences, Council members also heard briefings by the Secretary-General and other senior Secretariat officials on evolving situations relating to, among other issues, the conflicts in the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, the Palestinian question and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international peace and security. In that regard, at the 8707th meeting of the Council, held on 29 January under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator expressed alarm about the dire and deteriorating humanitarian situation affecting women and children, in particular in the north-west of the Syrian Arab Republic, owing to intense bombing, shelling and other fighting in the Idlib area. He stated that, in order to avoid an even greater humanitarian catastrophe, the parties to the conflict and those with influence must stop the fighting; he expressed the hope that the Council would take every step to avert that.<sup>23</sup>

In connection with the same item, during an open videoconference held on 15 July, Council members heard briefings by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator on the developments regarding the FSO *Safer* oil tanker, located off the coast of Yemen.<sup>24</sup> The Executive Director cautioned that the Red Sea environment and its people were seriously exposed to the risk of a massive oil leakage from the vessel. Should the situation get out of control, it would directly affect millions of people in a country that was already enduring the world’s largest humanitarian emergency and would destroy entire ecosystems for decades and extend beyond borders. The Under-Secretary-General emphasized that the risk from the FSO *Safer* was by no means strictly environmental and would have a direct and severe threat to the well-being, and potentially the survival, of millions of Yemenis. He expressed the hope that the official request to the Houthi (also known as Ansar Allah) authorities for the deployment of a United Nations assessment mission would be quickly approved and emphasized that those authorities had an important opportunity to take steps that would spare millions of their fellow citizens from yet another tragedy.

Subsequent to that videoconference, in a letter dated 18 August 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>25</sup> the Secretary-General updated the Council

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<sup>20</sup> See S/2020/1333.

<sup>21</sup> S/2020/82, S/2020/164, S/2020/262, S/2020/348, S/2020/456, S/2020/620, S/2020/769, S/2020/871, S/2020/961, S/2020/1056, S/2020/1152 and S/2020/1300.

<sup>22</sup> S/2020/310.

<sup>23</sup> See S/PV.8707.

<sup>24</sup> See S/2020/721.

<sup>25</sup> S/2020/808.

on the status of efforts being undertaken by the United Nations to assist with the increasing environmental and humanitarian risks posed by the FSO *Safer* oil tanker. Noting that the United Nations mission remained ready to deploy pending authorization by the Houthis, the Secretary-General stated that averting the calamity posed by the oil tanker should not be politicized and that it was a solvable problem that did not need to be added to the many other burdens of the Yemeni people.

On 24 June, at an open videoconference held in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”,<sup>26</sup> the Council heard briefings by the Secretary-General and the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General regarding the announcement by Israel of its intention to annex parts of the occupied West Bank. The Secretary-General expressed a deep sense of concern over the evolving situation in Israel and the State of Palestine. He stated that, if implemented, annexation would constitute a most serious violation of international law, grievously harm the prospect of a two-State solution and undercut the possibilities of a renewal of negotiations. He added that any unilateral steps hampered efforts to advance regional peace and to maintain international peace and security. He called on the Government of Israel to abandon its annexation plans and urged Israeli and Palestinian leaders to commit themselves to meaningful dialogue, with the support of the international community.

The Secretary-General also gave briefings to Council members on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international peace and security at open videoconferences held on 2 July and 24 September. In his remarks at the open videoconference held on 2 July in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and focused on the implications of COVID-19,<sup>27</sup> the Secretary-General stated that the COVID-19 pandemic continued to profoundly affect peace and security across the globe, but that the impacts were especially apparent in

countries already experiencing conflict or emerging from it and that they could soon engulf others. The Secretary-General stated that the Council had an important role to play in bringing its voice and influence to bear on those situations, and he welcomed its support, as expressed in Council resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) of 1 July.<sup>28</sup> At the open videoconference held on 24 September in connection with the same item and with a focus on global governance after COVID-19,<sup>29</sup> the Secretary-General stated that the COVID-19 pandemic was the number one threat in the world and that it was unfolding against a backdrop of high geopolitical tensions and other global threats in unpredictable and dangerous ways.

In 2020, Council members and other delegations made reference to horizon-scanning briefings during several videoconferences of Council members in connection with the items entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council of 30 August 2017 ([S/2017/507](#))” and “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”.<sup>30</sup>

### C. Referrals by the General Assembly

Under Article 11 (3) of the Charter, the General Assembly may call the attention of the Council to situations that are likely to endanger international peace and security. During the period under review, the Assembly did not refer any such situations to the Council under that Article.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), para. 1.

<sup>29</sup> See [S/2020/953](#).

<sup>30</sup> See [S/2020/340](#) (United Kingdom); [S/2020/418](#) (United Kingdom and Australia); [S/2020/751](#) (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Development Cooperation of Belgium); [S/2020/897](#) (United Kingdom); and [S/2020/1090](#) (Minister of Development Cooperation and Urban Policy of Belgium, European Union and United Arab Emirates). For more information on horizon-scanning briefings, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2010–2011 to 2019*.

<sup>31</sup> For more information regarding the relations between the Council and the General Assembly, see part IV, sect. I.

<sup>26</sup> See [S/2020/596](#).

<sup>27</sup> See [S/2020/663](#).



## II. Investigation of disputes and fact-finding

### Article 34

*The Security Council may investigate any dispute, or any situation which might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute, in order to determine whether the continuance of the dispute or situation is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security.*

### Note

Article 34 of the Charter of the United Nations provides that the Council may investigate any dispute or any situation which might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute. On that basis, the Council may determine whether the continuation of the dispute or situation is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. Article 34 does not prevent the Secretary-General or other organs from performing investigative functions, nor does it limit the Council's general competence to obtain knowledge of the relevant facts of any dispute or situation by dispatching a fact-finding or investigative mission.

Section II provides an overview of the practice of the Council relating to fact-finding and investigation in accordance with Article 34 of the Charter, in three subsections. Subsection A relates to Council missions; subsection B to investigative and fact-finding functions of the Secretary-General; and subsection C to other instances of investigative functions acknowledged by the Council.

In a letter dated 20 February 2020 addressed to the President of the Security Council,<sup>32</sup> the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela referred to Article 34 of the Charter and requested the Council to investigate the empirical grounds for the threat of the use of force and the misleading use of the principle of self-defence provided for in Article 51 by the Governments of both the United States and Colombia to justify the use of armed force against his country. In a subsequent letter dated 3 April 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>33</sup> the same representative alerted the Council to the “dangerous actions” being taken by the Government of the United States, namely, the announced deployment of United States warships to the waters of the western Caribbean, near the Venezuelan coast, which threatened “the peace and security of Venezuela and the entire region”. The

representative noted that his Government had, in prior communications and under less pressing circumstances, asked the Council to use its powers under Article 34 to open an investigation into the situation, which it considered was “likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security”. The representative expressed regret that there had been no effective response from the Council.<sup>34</sup>

In 2020, owing to health and safety concerns and travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council did not dispatch any missions to the field. In its decisions, the Council acknowledged the investigative functions of the Secretary-General and findings of investigations related to serious violations and abuses of international human rights and violations of international humanitarian law in the Central African Republic; violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law by the Malian Defence and Security Forces in the conduct of counter-terrorism operations; and conflict-related sexual violence in Northern Unity, South Sudan. The Council also took note of the finalization of the work of the International Commission of Inquiry on Mali and called for a follow-up on its recommendations. The Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD), established pursuant to resolution 2379 (2017). The Council also recognized the investigative work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Human Rights Council in connection with the situations in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and South Sudan. In addition, Council members deliberated on the investigative functions of the Secretary-General, the Human Rights Council and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in relation to the situations in Iraq, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic.

### A. Security Council missions

In 2020, owing to health and safety concerns and travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council did not dispatch any missions to the field. Council missions were, however, referenced in communications submitted to the Council by Member

<sup>32</sup> See [S/2020/130](#).

<sup>33</sup> See [S/2020/277](#).

<sup>34</sup> For more information concerning actions undertaken by the Council in response to these and other communications, see sect. I above.



States and discussed in Council meetings and videoconferences during the period under review.

In a letter dated 11 February 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>35</sup> the representative of Finland transmitted the report of the seventeenth annual workshop for the newly elected members of the Council, which had been held on 7 and 8 November 2019. According to the report, one view expressed was that the Council's visiting missions had proven to be very useful in bringing Council members closer to the people affected by conflicts and to the actors involved and that they were especially productive when properly targeted and prepared. In a separate comment, it was underscored that penholders should make more use of the insights and information gained through visits. It was also pointed out that it was no longer regular practice to prepare a written report following visiting missions.

Similarly, in a letter dated 3 March 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>36</sup> the representatives of Kuwait and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, as the outgoing and incoming Chairs of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, respectively, transmitted a report on the informal retreat held on 17 to 19 January on the working methods of the Council. As indicated in the report, Council members discussed the effectiveness of visiting missions, as they were understood to allow for a better assessment of certain situations. Council members noted the value of such visits and called for careful consideration of their number and impact. Council members highlighted the importance of follow-up action after visits and suggested involving political coordinators in the missions, either separately or in addition to permanent representatives, deputy permanent representatives and sanctions experts.

Council members also discussed the value of and ways to enhance Council missions during an open videoconference held on 15 May in connection with the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the President of 30 August 2017 (S/2017/507)" (see case 1).

### Case 1

#### **Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)**

On 15 May, at the initiative of Estonia, which held the presidency of the Council for the month, jointly with the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, as Chair of the Informal

Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions,<sup>37</sup> Council members held an open videoconference on the working methods of the Council in connection with the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)".<sup>38</sup> In her briefing to the Council, the Executive Director of Security Council Report, an independent think tank, noted that the Council had actively sought to strengthen its interaction with the field, including through the visiting missions that had become an effective Council tool in the early 1990s. Although five such missions a year were typical, the COVID-19 pandemic had halted them. She recalled the call made by former Council members for the Council to ensure that its members were not just speaking about the countries concerned but were also speaking to them and observed that technology made that more possible. She added that there was potential for a more dynamic engagement with the field and noted that virtual meetings with Heads of Government, parliamentarians, government ministers and a range of civil society representatives, virtual meetings with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes on the ground and virtual visits to hard-to-reach field locations were all potentially available, freed from the severe constraints of time, security and logistics that were part and parcel of most Council field visits. Virtual discussions with actors in the field and with troop- and police-contributing countries could be held at various points of the mandate cycle in order to actively mitigate against the risks of "adopt and forget", a phenomenon she said had been described in 2019 by the then Permanent Representative of France to explain the relatively fleeting attention the Council was able to devote to the mandating of peace operations.

On behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, the representative of Switzerland stated that the Council could explore conducting virtual visits to the field as a complementary instrument to existing and established physical visits.<sup>39</sup> The representative of El Salvador stated that field visits were valuable, as they gave Council members a broader view of the local situation, enabling them to make sound decisions and to discharge their mandate more effectively. She underscored the importance of considering the participation of other relevant parties in the proceedings, including Member States that contributed military, police and civilian contingents to peace operations. With a view to coordinating efforts

<sup>35</sup> See S/2020/116.

<sup>36</sup> See S/2020/172.

<sup>37</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/374).

<sup>38</sup> See S/2020/418.

<sup>39</sup> See S/2020/418.

and strengthening the dynamics of the United Nations, missions could also be carried out among the various subsidiary bodies of the Council, including the Peacebuilding Commission, and by the Economic and Social Council, which would enhance greater strategic effectiveness while reducing overall costs. The delegation of Canada suggested that the Council also consider inviting the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission or those of its country-specific configurations to join missions to countries where both bodies were engaged, as a means of further institutionalizing the linkages between the Commission and the Council. The delegation of Egypt called for the briefings to the wider membership on the monthly programme of work to provide an overview of the most important meetings, activities and visits carried out by the Council.

## B. Investigative and fact-finding functions of the Secretary-General

### Decisions of the Council

In its decisions adopted during the period under review, the Council acknowledged the investigative and fact-finding functions of the Secretary-General in connection with the situations in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Mali and South Sudan and with the thematic item entitled “Threats to international peace and security”. The relevant provisions of those decisions are set out in table 2.

In connection with the situation in the Central African Republic, the Council called on the authorities to follow up on the recommendations set out in the report of the mapping project conducted pursuant to resolution 2301 (2016) by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, in which serious violations and abuses of international human rights and violations of international humanitarian law were documented within the territory of the Central African Republic between January 2003 and December 2015.<sup>40</sup>

With regard to the investigations into the killing, in March 2017, of two members of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the four Congolese nationals accompanying them, the Council welcomed the work of the United Nations team deployed to assist the Congolese authorities in their investigations and the commitment of the Secretary-General that the United Nations would do everything possible to ensure that the perpetrators were

brought to justice.<sup>41</sup> The Council also welcomed in that regard the continued cooperation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the United Nations team and called on them to ensure that all perpetrators were brought to justice and held accountable.<sup>42</sup>

In relation to the situation concerning Iraq, the Council mandated the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to promote accountability and the protection of human rights and judicial and legal reform and to support the work of UNITAD.<sup>43</sup> In connection with the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security”, the Council reaffirmed its resolution 2379 (2017), by which UNITAD had been established, and extended its mandate until 18 September 2021.<sup>44</sup>

Regarding the situation in Mali, the Council took note of the finalization of the work of the International Commission of Inquiry on Mali, established by the Secretary-General in accordance with the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali of 2015 and as requested by the Council in its resolution 2364 (2017), and called upon the Malian parties to follow up on its recommendations once they were conveyed.<sup>45</sup> The Council requested the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to support the follow-up on those recommendations.<sup>46</sup> Expressing serious concern about repeated allegations of violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law by the Malian Defence and Security Forces in the conduct of counter-terrorism operations, the Council urged the Government of Mali to effectively implement the measures announced in response to those allegations, especially in relation to the allegations documented by the Human Rights Division of MINUSMA.<sup>47</sup>

In connection with South Sudan, the Council expressed grave concern at the ongoing reports of sexual

<sup>41</sup> Resolution 2528 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph. For more information on the matter, see S/2017/917 and *Repertoire, Supplement 2016–2017*, part VI, sect. II.B.

<sup>42</sup> Resolution 2556 (2020), para. 7.

<sup>43</sup> Resolution 2522 (2020), para. 2 (d). For more information on the mandate of UNAMI, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>44</sup> Resolution 2544 (2020), paras. 1 and 2. For more information on the mandate of UNITAD, see part IX, sect. III.

<sup>45</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), sixteenth preambular paragraph and para. 11.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 28 (a) (iv). For more information on the mandate of MINUSMA, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>47</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), para. 34.

<sup>40</sup> Resolution 2552 (2020), para. 22.

and gender-based violence, including the findings set out in the report of the Secretary-General to the Council on sexual violence in conflict (S/2019/280) with regard to the use of sexual violence by parties to the conflict as a tactic against the civilian population. The Council also referred to the report of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and OHCHR, issued in February 2019, on conflict-related sexual violence in northern Unity in the period between September and December 2018, in which the normalization and continuation of violence against women and girls was documented, despite the suspension of most military offensives.<sup>48</sup> The Council also expressed grave concern

regarding the reports on the human rights situation in South Sudan issued by UNMISS and the Secretary-General, emphasized its hope that those and other credible reports would be duly considered by any transitional justice mechanisms for South Sudan, stressed the importance of the collection and preservation of evidence for eventual use by the Hybrid Court for South Sudan and other accountability mechanisms, and encouraged efforts in that regard.<sup>49</sup> In addition, the Council took note of the joint report of UNMISS and OHCHR on freedom of expression in South Sudan.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Resolution 2514 (2020), twentieth preambular paragraph. For more information on the mandate of UNMISS, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>49</sup> Resolution 2514 (2020), twenty-third preambular paragraph.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, twenty-fifth preambular paragraph.

Table 2

**Decisions relating to investigative and/or fact-finding activities by the Secretary-General, 2020**

*Decision and date*

*Provision*

**The situation in the Central African Republic**

Resolution 2552 (2020)  
12 November 2020

Calls on the Central African Republic authorities to follow up on the recommendations of the report of the Mapping Project describing serious violations and abuses of international human rights and violations of international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Central African Republic between January 2003 and December 2015 (para. 22)

**The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Resolution 2528 (2020)  
25 June 2020

Reiterating the need for the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to swiftly and fully investigate the killing of the two members of the Group of Experts and the four Congolese nationals accompanying them and bring those responsible to justice, welcoming the Secretary General's commitment that the United Nations will do everything possible to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice, further welcoming the work of the United Nations team deployed to assist the Congolese authorities in their investigations, in agreement with the Congolese authorities, and welcoming their continued cooperation (fifth preambular paragraph)

Resolution 2556 (2020)  
18 December 2020

Welcomes the cooperation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the team of international experts on the situation in the Kasai regions mandated by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 45/34, recognizes the improvements in cooperation since President Tshisekedi's election, requests the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to implement all the recommendations made by the team of international experts in its report, and to cooperate with the team of two international human rights experts charged with monitoring, evaluating, providing support and reporting on the implementation by the Democratic Republic of the Congo of those recommendations, further welcomes the continued cooperation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the United Nations team deployed, as agreed, to assist the Congolese authorities' investigations into the deaths of the two United Nations experts in March 2017, and calls on them to ensure all perpetrators are brought to justice and held accountable (para. 7)

### The situation concerning Iraq

Resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#)  
29 May 2020

Decides further that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), at the request of the Government of Iraq, and taking into account the letter from the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq to the Secretary-General ([S/2020/448](#), annex), shall:

...

(d) promote accountability and the protection of human rights, and judicial and legal reform, with full respect for the sovereignty of Iraq, in order to strengthen the rule of law and improve governance in Iraq, in addition to supporting the work of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) in Iraq and the Levant established in resolution [2379 \(2017\)](#) (para. 2 (d))

### The situation in Mali

Resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#)  
29 June 2020

Reiterating, in this regard, the importance of holding accountable all those responsible for such acts and that some of such acts referred to in the paragraph above may amount to crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, taking note that, acting upon the referral of the transitional authorities of Mali dated 13 July 2012, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court opened on 16 January 2013 an investigation into alleged crimes committed on the territory of Mali since January 2012, and further taking note of the finalization of the work of the International Commission of Inquiry established in accordance with the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and as requested in resolution [2364 \(2017\)](#) (sixteenth preambular paragraph)

Calls upon the Malian parties to follow up on the recommendations of the International Commission of Inquiry on Mali once they are conveyed (para. 11)

Decides that the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) shall include the following priority tasks:

(a) *Support to the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali*

....

(iv) To support the implementation of the reconciliation and justice measures of the Agreement, especially in its part V, including to support the operations of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission and the follow-up of the recommendations of the International Commission of Inquiry (para. 28 (a) (iv))

Expresses serious concerns about repeated allegations of violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law by the Malian Defence and Security Forces in the conduct of counter-terrorism operations, takes positive note of the measures announced by the Government of Mali in response to these allegations, and urges the Government of Mali to effectively implement these measures, notably by carrying out transparent, credible and timely investigations and holding accountable those responsible, especially as it relates to the allegations documented by the MINUSMA Human Rights Division (para. 34)

### Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#)  
12 March 2020

Expressing grave concern at ongoing reports of sexual and gender-based violence, including the findings in the report of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in conflict to the Security Council ([S/2019/280](#)) of the use of sexual violence as a tactic by parties to the conflict against the civilian population in South Sudan, including the use of rape and gang rape of women and girls, and abduction, forced marriage and sexual slavery, and where persistent levels of conflict-related sexual violence and other forms of violence against women and girls have become normalized and continued after the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and despite the suspension of most military offensives, as documented in the February 2019 report of the United Nations Mission in South

Decision and date

Provision

Sudan (UNMISS) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on conflict-related sexual violence in northern Unity between September and December 2018, underlining the urgency and importance of timely investigations and the provision of assistance and protection to victims of sexual and gender-based violence (twentieth preambular paragraph)

Expressing grave concern regarding the reports on the human rights situation in South Sudan issued by UNMISS and the Secretary-General, further expressing grave concern that, according to the report of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan, released on 27 October 2015, and the reports of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, released on 23 February 2018, 20 February 2019 and 20 February 2020, war crimes and crimes against humanity may have been committed, emphasizing its hope that these and other credible reports will be duly considered by any transitional justice mechanisms for South Sudan, including those established pursuant to the Revitalized Agreement, stressing the importance of the collection and preservation of evidence for eventual use by the Hybrid Court for South Sudan and other accountability mechanisms, and encouraging efforts in this regard (twenty-third preambular paragraph)

Taking note of the joint UNMISS and OHCHR report on the freedom of opinion and expression in South Sudan since the July 2016 crisis issued in February 2018, expressing ongoing concern at the severe restriction of freedoms of opinion, expression and association, condemning the use of media to broadcast hate speech and transmit messages instigating violence against a particular ethnic group, a practice that has the potential to lead to widespread violence and exacerbate armed conflict, and calling on the Government of South Sudan to immediately condemn and counter increasing hate speech and ethnic violence and to promote reconciliation among its people (twenty-fifth preambular paragraph)

### Threats to international peace and security

Resolution [2544 \(2020\)](#)  
18 September 2020

Reaffirms its resolution [2379 \(2017\)](#), by which UNITAD, headed by a Special Adviser, was established, and recalls the terms of reference approved by the Council (see [S/2018/119](#)) (para. 1)

Takes note of the request from the Government of Iraq contained in its letter dated 16 September 2020 ([S/2020/909](#), annex) and decides to extend until 18 September 2021 the mandate of the Special Adviser and UNITAD, with any further extension to be decided at the request of the Government of Iraq, or any other government that has requested the Team to collect evidence of acts that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide, committed by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) in its territory, in accordance with its resolution [2379 \(2017\)](#) (para. 2)

Requests the Special Adviser to continue to submit and present reports to the Council on the Team's activities every 180 days (para. 4)

### Communications submitted to the Council

The Secretary-General did not undertake any new investigative action during the reporting period. With respect to ongoing investigations, in a letter dated 6 April 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>51</sup> the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chief Administrative Officer of the United Nations, transmitted a summary of the report of the United Nations Headquarters Board of Inquiry established in 2019 to investigate a number of incidents that were reported to have occurred in the north-west of the

Syrian Arab Republic since the signing of the Memorandum on the Stabilization of the Situation in the Idlib De-escalation Area by the Russian Federation and Turkey on 17 September 2018. The investigation encompassed incidents in which facilities that were on the United Nations deconfliction list, or that were receiving support from the Organization, were reported to have been hit or to have otherwise sustained damage in the course of military operations. In his letter, the Secretary-General stated that his aim in establishing the Board of Inquiry was to develop a clear record of the facts of the incidents, their causes and the persons or entities to which they could be attributable,

<sup>51</sup> [S/2020/278](#).



emphasizing in that regard that the Board was not mandated to make legal findings or consider questions of legal liability or legal responsibility. The Secretary-General added that such a record would make it possible for him, *inter alia*, to identify any gaps or shortcomings in the Organization's procedures and to take any measures and put in place any arrangements that might be needed to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future or at least minimize their number and mitigate their effects. Lastly, the Secretary-General stated that he would appoint a senior independent adviser in order to help to determine how best to address the recommendations of the Board.

In a letter dated 30 June 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>52</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation transmitted the findings of the Ministry of Defence of his country with respect to the summary of the report of the United Nations Headquarters Board of Inquiry. In his letter, the representative underscored that the Russian Federation considered the establishment of the Board to be illegitimate, noting that it had gone beyond its announced goal of finding whether reports of United Nations-supported facilities in the Syrian Arab Republic being damaged were true and had, in fact, made assertions in the form of "highly probable" with regard to which parties those incidents might be attributable. He added that the investigation experts of his country's Ministry of Defence had failed to find traces of either aerial bombing or artillery shelling on the objects in question and presented their specific conclusions in that regard.

In a letter dated 29 July 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>53</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation expressed serious concern about references made to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction at the open videoconference held on 2 July in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security" and focused on the implications of COVID-19.<sup>54</sup> In his letter, the representative pointed to the need for institutional and operational strengthening of the Convention and called on the Secretariat to take necessary practical measures to facilitate the strengthening of the regime, including its investigation capacities in accordance with article VI of the Convention.<sup>55</sup> The representative expressed his

delegation's conviction that any investigative efforts in the field of the alleged use of biological weapons should be based primarily on the procedures and instruments envisaged under the Convention and that the principles and procedures of the Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of the Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons, established in 1988, should be updated.

By a letter dated 17 December 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>56</sup> the Secretary-General transmitted the report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Mali, established by the Secretary-General in 2018. As noted in the report, the Commission was mandated to investigate allegations of abuses and serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including allegations of conflict-related sexual violence, committed throughout the territory of Mali between 1 January 2012 and the date of the establishment of the Commission; to establish the facts and circumstances concerning the commission of such abuses and violations, including those that could constitute international crimes; and to identify those allegedly responsible for such abuses and violations. After completing its investigations, the Commission was able to conclude that abuses and serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, some of which constituted war crimes and crimes against humanity, were committed by the main parties to the conflict that began in 2012. In accordance with its mandate, the Council presented recommendations on the fight against impunity in the light of the abuses, violations and crimes identified.

In accordance with existing practice, by his letters dated 11 May and 11 November 2020 addressed to the President of the Council,<sup>57</sup> the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General and Head of UNITAD transmitted the fourth and fifth reports, respectively, on the activities of the Investigative Team.

### Meetings of the Council

In meetings of the Council, Council members and other speakers referred to the investigative authority of the Council and the role of the Secretary-General. For example, at the 8699th meeting of the Council, held on 9 January under the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security",<sup>58</sup> the Secretary-General recalled that many tools available to the Council for the pacific settlement of disputes were outlined in Chapter VI. In that regard, he called on the

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<sup>52</sup> S/2020/629.

<sup>53</sup> S/2020/756.

<sup>54</sup> See S/2020/663.

<sup>55</sup> See S/2020/756.

<sup>56</sup> S/2020/1332.

<sup>57</sup> S/2020/386 and S/2020/1107.

<sup>58</sup> See S/PV.8699.



Council to further utilize the powers granted to it under the Charter, including the investigation of disputes in accordance with Chapter VI.

Council members also discussed the investigations of the Council and the Secretary-General in connection with the findings of the United Nations Headquarters Board of Inquiry into certain incidents in the north-west of the Syrian Arab Republic, in the context of the situation in the Middle East (see case 2). They also discussed the mandate and work of UNITAD in connection with threats to international peace and security (see case 3).

## **Case 2** **The situation in the Middle East**

At an open videoconference held on 29 April in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”,<sup>59</sup> Council members discussed the findings of the United Nations Headquarters Board of Inquiry into certain incidents in the north-west of the Syrian Arab Republic since 17 September 2018 involving facilities on the United Nations deconfliction list and United Nations-supported facilities.<sup>60</sup> While welcoming the report of the Board of Inquiry, the representative of Germany underscored that there had to be follow-up to its findings and that impunity for those responsible for serious violations of international law was not an option.<sup>61</sup> The representative of the United Kingdom stated that, even though the Russian Federation was not explicitly identified in the report as the “regime’s ally” responsible for some of the attacks on civilian infrastructure, it was clear which country was meant when there was only one that was flying military aircraft over Idlib alongside the “regime”. That conclusion, he added, was supported by the findings of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, which had been established by the Human Rights Council. Noting that the Council had to hold those who threatened the peace and stability of the Syrian Arab Republic accountable, the representative of the United States stressed the need for the Board’s evidence to be shared with the Commission of Inquiry and with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011, which had been established by the General Assembly. The representatives of South Africa and the United States

welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to appoint a senior independent adviser to address the Board’s recommendations.

The representative of the Russian Federation recalled that his delegation did not recognize the Board of Inquiry, which the Secretary-General had established “in excess of his authority”. Nevertheless, the representative pointed out that the Board could not establish a single civilian death caused by alleged shelling by the Syrian air force or its allies. He further stated that the Board had uncovered victims of shelling by terrorists and noted that, according to the report, not a single medical facility had been destroyed, with only minor damage reported.

## **Case 3** **Threats to international peace and security**

On 10 December, at an open videoconference held in connection with the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security”,<sup>62</sup> the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General and Head of UNITAD presented his fifth report on the activities of the Investigative Team.<sup>63</sup> The Special Adviser confirmed that progress continued to be made in the Team’s key lines of investigation and reported that that continued momentum allowed the Team to envisage the finalization, in the first half of 2021, of the first thematic case briefs on crimes committed against the Yazidi community in Sinjar, Iraq, and the massacre of unarmed air cadets and other personnel in Tikrit.<sup>64</sup> At the same time, UNITAD had continued to expand its lines of investigations, with rapid progress made on investigations in relation to crimes committed against the Christian, Kaka’i, Shabak, Sunni and Turkmen Shia communities. The Special Adviser underscored that, faced with the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, UNITAD had further strengthened its cooperation with Iraqi authorities and those of the Kurdistan region. He was encouraged by the efforts made by the Council of Representatives of Iraq to take forward legislation that would allow for the prosecution of crimes committed by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da’esh) under domestic law as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. The Special Adviser confirmed his continued engagement with the Government of Iraq, with a view to establishing modalities for the sharing of evidence with competent Iraqi authorities in accordance with the Team’s terms of reference. UNITAD had also reinforced its engagement with

<sup>59</sup> See [S/2020/353](#).

<sup>60</sup> [S/2020/278](#), annex.

<sup>61</sup> See [S/2020/353](#).

<sup>62</sup> See [S/2020/1193](#).

<sup>63</sup> [S/2020/1107](#), annex.

<sup>64</sup> See [S/2020/1193](#).

national authorities in other jurisdictions through the provision of support for ongoing proceedings, in line with its mandate. The Special Adviser noted the engagement of UNITAD with all parts of the Iraqi society, including civil society and the religious leadership. He concluded by noting that the unique partnership underpinning the Team's mandate – between independent investigations based on close collaboration with national authorities and international standards adapted to domestic context – was working and served as an innovative model of criminal accountability that had been developed by the Council.

In the discussion that followed, the representative of Belgium commended UNITAD for the considerable progress made in the implementation of its mandate, including through exchanges with all segments of Iraqi society and the entering of a significant number of its investigative priorities into the phase of evidentiary consolidation and legal analysis. The representative of Indonesia affirmed that all elements of Iraqi society had to be engaged and empowered and involved in the Investigative Team's activities. The representative of South Africa stated that the Team's engagement with Iraqi religious leaders and civil society could only bolster important gains it had made in establishing credibility in the fractured country. Several delegations stressed the importance of protection measures and psychosocial support for both witnesses and victims,<sup>65</sup> as well as of the investigation of sexual and gender-based crimes and crimes against children.<sup>66</sup>

Most Council members welcomed the progress made through cooperation between UNITAD and the Government of Iraq, with some also reiterating the importance of national ownership and respect for the country's sovereignty.<sup>67</sup> The representative of South Africa expressed his country's belief that the cooperation between UNITAD and the Government of Iraq could serve as a model of best practice from which important lessons could be drawn in similar situations. The representative of the United Kingdom urged the Investigative Team, the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to collaborate closely on securing an evidence-sharing mechanism that provided assurances on the use of the death penalty. The representative of France recalled the position of the United Nations regarding the non-transmission of

evidence in judicial proceedings that could result in the death penalty. The representative of Germany stated that it was very important to engage in training the Iraqi judiciary so that the necessary legislation would be adopted with the objective of achieving fair and independent criminal proceedings, consistent with international law. The representative of the United States said that for Iraq to hold evidence-based trials would not only serve to establish the clear culpability of ISIL (Da'esh) and its members, but would also help to showcase the country's justice system and its commitment to the rule of law. The representative of France underscored the importance of cooperation between UNITAD and the UNAMI and the representative of South Africa emphasized their complementary and reinforcing roles.

The representative of China stated that, given that pursuant to resolution 2379 (2017) Iraq was the main recipient of the evidence collected, UNITAD should hand over that evidence in a timely and comprehensive manner. He added that the prior consent of Iraq should be obtained before information was shared with other Member States and that the principles of transparency and non-discrimination should be followed. Noting that UNITAD had refrained from handing over to Iraqi authorities the evidence required to launch legal proceedings against terrorists until the Iraqi parliament approved a special law on international crimes, the representative of the Russian Federation underscored that that holding pattern should not negatively affect the implementation of the main part of the Investigative Team's mandate. He further stressed that, under resolution 2379 (2017), Iraq was not obliged to criminalize any particular form of act but that the Iraqi authorities were clearly defined as the main recipients of evidence collected by the Team. The representative also recalled the importance for UNITAD to receive information first-hand and that excessive dependence on information sourced from non-governmental organizations could result in a distorted image of the crimes committed and steer the activity of the Team.

The representative of the United States underscored that Iraq should not have to continue to shoulder responsibility for foreign terrorist fighters and associated family members alone, and noted the valuable support that UNITAD could provide to other Member States in conducting such investigations and prosecutions. The representative of Belgium stressed that support for the national authorities of third States in response to their requests for assistance was essential, given that many procedures were under way in those countries, in particular in Europe, and that the resulting cooperation between the Iraqi judicial

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<sup>65</sup> Belgium, Estonia, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

<sup>66</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and United Kingdom.

<sup>67</sup> China, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Viet Nam.

authorities and those of third countries would most certainly contribute, in the longer term, to the opening of specific cases in Iraq.

### C. Other instances of investigative functions acknowledged by the Security Council

#### In decisions of the Council

During the period under review, the Council also recognized the investigative functions of other bodies

of the United Nations, notably OHCHR and the Human Rights Council, in relation to the situations in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and South Sudan.<sup>68</sup> Table 3 contains the provisions of Council decisions referring to such functions.

<sup>68</sup> For further information on relations with other United Nations organs, see part IV.

Table 3

#### Decisions relating to investigation and inquiry by United Nations bodies and related organizations, 2020

<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Provision</i>
<b>The situation in the Central African Republic</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a> 12 November 2020	Calls on the Central African Republic authorities to follow up on the recommendations of the report of the Mapping Project describing serious violations and abuses of international human rights and violations of international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Central African Republic between January 2003 and December 2015 (para. 22)
<b>The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a> 18 December 2020	Welcomes the cooperation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the team of international experts on the situation in the Kasai regions mandated by the Human Rights Council in its resolution <a href="#">45/34</a> , recognizes the improvements in cooperation since President Tshisekedi's election, requests the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to implement all the recommendations made by the team of international experts in its report, and to cooperate with the team of two international human rights experts charged with monitoring, evaluating, providing support and reporting on the implementation by the Democratic Republic of the Congo of those recommendations, further welcomes the continued cooperation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the United Nations team deployed, as agreed, to assist the Congolese authorities' investigations into the deaths of the two United Nations experts in March 2017, and calls on them to ensure all perpetrators are brought to justice and held accountable (para. 7)
<b>The situation in Mali</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a> 29 June 2020	Expresses serious concerns about repeated allegations of violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law by the Malian Defence and Security Forces in the conduct of counter-terrorism operations, takes positive note of the measures announced by the Government of Mali in response to these allegations, and urges the Government of Mali to effectively implement these measures, notably by carrying out transparent, credible and timely investigations and holding accountable those responsible, especially as it relates to the allegations documented by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali Human Rights Division (para. 34)

**Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan**

Resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#)  
12 March 2020

Expressing grave concern at ongoing reports of sexual and gender-based violence, including the findings in the report of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in conflict to the Security Council ([S/2019/280](#)) of the use of sexual violence as a tactic by parties to the conflict against the civilian population in South Sudan, including the use of rape and gang rape of women and girls, and abduction, forced marriage and sexual slavery, and where persistent levels of conflict-related sexual violence and other forms of violence against women and girls have become normalized and continued after the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and despite the suspension of most military offensives, as documented in the February 2019 report of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) report on conflict-related sexual violence in northern Unity between September and December 2018, underlining the urgency and importance of timely investigations and the provision of assistance and protection to victims of sexual and gender-based violence (twentieth preambular paragraph)

Expressing grave concern regarding the reports on the human rights situation in South Sudan issued by UNMISS and the Secretary-General, further expressing grave concern that according to the report of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan, released on 27 October 2015, and the reports of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, released on 23 February 2018, 20 February 2019 and 20 February 2020, war crimes and crimes against humanity may have been committed, emphasizing its hope that these and other credible reports will be duly considered by any transitional justice mechanisms for South Sudan, including those established pursuant to the Revitalised Agreement, stressing the importance of the collection and preservation of evidence for eventual use by the Hybrid Court for South Sudan and other accountability mechanisms, and encouraging efforts in this regard (twenty-third preambular paragraph)

Taking note of the joint UNMISS and OHCHR report on the freedom of opinion and expression in South Sudan since the July 2016 crisis issued in February 2018, expressing ongoing concern at the severe restriction of freedoms of opinion, expression and association, condemning the use of media to broadcast hate speech and transmit messages instigating violence against a particular ethnic group, a practice that has the potential to lead to widespread violence and exacerbate armed conflict, and calling on the Government of South Sudan to immediately condemn and counter increasing hate speech and ethnic violence and to promote reconciliation among its people (twenty-fifth preambular paragraph)

**In communications of the Council**

The investigative functions of other bodies of the United Nations and related organizations were also raised in several communications submitted to the Council by the Russian Federation. In a letter dated 4 February 2020 addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Council,<sup>69</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation transmitted a moderator’s summary of the Arria-formula meeting held on 20 January to discuss the report of the OPCW fact-finding mission on the alleged use of chemical weapons in Duma, Syrian Arab Republic, on 7 April 2018. Furthermore, in letters dated 15 April and

19 June 2020 addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Council,<sup>70</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation transmitted two aides-memoires concerning the investigations of the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team on the alleged use of chemical weapons in Lataminah, Syrian Arab Republic, on 24, 25 and 30 March 2017. In the aides-memoires, the Russian Federation questioned the basis for the establishment of the Team and its methodology, impartiality and findings, opining that the body was encroaching on the exclusive powers of the Council.

In a letter dated 12 May 2020 addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council,<sup>71</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation expressed regret that, despite his delegation’s genuine

<sup>69</sup> [S/2020/96](#). See also [S/2019/208](#), annex. For more information on the OPCW fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2018*, part VI, sect. II.B.

<sup>70</sup> [S/2020/311](#) and [S/2020/565](#). See also [S/2020/310](#), annex.  
<sup>71</sup> [S/2020/390](#).

attempts to hold a frank and candid discussion on 12 May with the Director General of OPCW in the format of an open videoconference of the Council, some Council members had insisted on conducting the interaction behind closed doors as an “informal informal” discussion. In his letter, the representative recalled what he described as the “illicit and illegitimate nature” of the Investigation and Identification Team, which had been established in violation of article XV of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and undermined the goals and principles of that Convention.

### **In meetings of the Council**

During 2020, the Council discussed the investigations of other bodies of the United Nations and related organizations, namely, the Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya established by the Human Rights Council to investigate human rights violations throughout Libya since the beginning of 2016, the Investigation and Identification Team established by OPCW to look into the alleged use of chemical weapons in Lataminah, Syrian Arab Republic, on 24, 25 and 30 March 2017 and the OPCW fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic. Those investigations were discussed in the context of videoconferences held in connection with the items entitled “The situation in Libya” (see case 4) and “The situation in the Middle East” (see case 5).

#### **Case 4**

##### **The situation in Libya**

On 8 July, Council members held a high-level open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “The situation in Libya”.<sup>72</sup> In his statement, the Secretary-General noted that, after the Government of National Accord had retaken control of Tarhunah from the Libyan National Army in June, numerous mass graves had been discovered. He therefore welcomed the decision by the Human Rights Council to establish an international fact-finding mission to Libya to look into human rights violations since the beginning of 2016 and to promote accountability. He also noted that the International Criminal Court had announced that it would not hesitate to investigate possible war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Secretary-General further informed the Council that, on 19 June, the United Nations had responded to a written request from the Prime Minister of Libya, Faiez Mustafa Serraj, to support the investigation into the

<sup>72</sup> See [S/2020/686](#).

mass graves and noted that the Organization stood ready to advise on the conduct of investigations, the securing of the mass graves and the establishment of national mechanisms to assist the victims.

Council members and non-Council members alike<sup>73</sup> expressed support for the establishment of the Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya by the Human Rights Council to investigate violations and abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law in Libya. The representative of Belgium noted in his statement that the fact-finding mission was also mandated to preserve evidence, with a view to ensuring that perpetrators were held accountable. Maintaining that the persistent climate of impunity in Libya needed to be addressed, the Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa of the United Kingdom called on all parties to allow the Fact-Finding Mission access to the entire country. Also emphasizing the need for access, the representative of the United States added that such access needed to include the ability to speak freely with witnesses.

#### **Case 5**

##### **The situation in the Middle East**

On 10 September, Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”, regarding the implementation of resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#) on the elimination of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.<sup>74</sup> In her briefing, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs noted that the OPCW fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to study all available information related to allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the country and continued its engagement with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and other States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention with regard to a variety of incidents. She added that further deployments of the mission would be subject to the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on OPCW activities. The High Representative stated that, following its first report, dated 8 April 2020,<sup>75</sup> the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team was continuing its investigations into incidents in which the Team had determined that chemical weapons had been or had likely been used and that it would issue further

<sup>73</sup> South Africa, United Kingdom, Belgium, Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United States, Turkey, Netherlands and Switzerland.

<sup>74</sup> See [S/2020/902](#).

<sup>75</sup> See [S/2020/310](#), annex.



reports in due course.<sup>76</sup> She added that the Technical Secretariat of OPCW had yet to receive a response from the Syrian Arab Republic to a letter dated 20 July 2020 from the Director General of OPCW addressed to its Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, in which the Director General outlined the obligations of the Syrian Arab Republic under OPCW Executive Council decision EC-94/DEC.2, entitled “Addressing the Possession and Use of Chemical Weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic” of 9 July 2020,<sup>77</sup> which were to be completed within 90 days of the adoption of the decision. The High Representative stated that ensuring accountability for the use of chemical weapons was a collective responsibility and expressed her sincere hope that Council members would unite on the issue.<sup>78</sup>

Council members<sup>79</sup> condemned the use of chemical weapons, noting that their use constituted a violation of international law and a threat to international peace and security, with several speakers<sup>80</sup> stressing the need for accountability in this regard. The representative of France expressed her delegation’s full confidence in the unassailable professionalism, integrity and impartiality of the OPCW investigation teams. The representative of the United Kingdom welcomed the robust, proportionate and reasonable action taken by the OPCW Executive Council in its decision of 9 July 2020, in which it accepted the findings set out by the Investigation and Identification Team in its report, provided a deadline by which the Syrian Arab Republic was to comply with its obligations and recommended that the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction take action, should it fail to comply. The representative of the Dominican Republic called on the Syrian Arab Republic to fulfil its obligations emanating from the Executive Council’s decision.

With regard to the decision to establish the Investigation and Identification Team, the representative of China emphasized that OPCW should comply strictly with the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention in the conduct of its work. The representative of the Russian Federation criticized the

methodology and findings of prior investigations by the OPCW fact-finding mission and the former OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism and of the more recent Investigation and Identification Team. Specifically, he maintained that the investigations of the fact-finding mission and the Joint Investigative Mechanism had been focused on a number of doubtful, handpicked incidents, with total disregard for evidence of fact manipulation and of the staging of those incidents. Moreover, by disregarding the so-called chain of custody, under which evidence was required to be collected on site and exclusively by OPCW specialists, the investigative mechanisms had conducted their investigations in clear violation of the Convention. The representative added that the Team’s gaps, inconsistencies, discrepancies and inherent bias logically followed on from the illegitimacy of the Team itself, coupled with the managerial, infrastructural and policy flaws of the OPCW Technical Secretariat.

At an open videoconference held on 11 December in connection with the same item,<sup>81</sup> the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs reiterated her full support for the integrity, professionalism, impartiality, objectivity and independence of the work of OPCW. In his remarks, the Director General of OPCW recalled that, in its report of 8 April 2020, the Investigation and Identification Team had concluded that there were reasonable grounds to believe that individuals belonging to the Syrian Arab Air Force had used chemical weapons in Lataminah on three occasions in March 2017. On 14 October 2020, he had reported to the Executive Council of OPCW that the Syrian Arab Republic had not completed any of the requirements set out in the Executive Council’s decision of 9 July. He recalled that, while the Technical Secretariat had had the authority to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic since June 2018, it was the States parties to the Convention who had the tools to proceed further on the basis of the information received, as did the Security Council and, more broadly, the United Nations. Lastly, the Director General informed the Council that the Technical Secretariat had also released the reports of the OPCW fact-finding mission regarding the alleged use of chemical weapons in Saraqib in August 2016 and in Aleppo in November 2018;<sup>82</sup> in which the mission outlined its conclusions that it was not possible to establish whether chemicals had been, or had likely been, used as a weapon in either incident.

<sup>76</sup> See [S/2020/902](#).

<sup>77</sup> See [S/2020/724](#), annex.

<sup>78</sup> See [S/2020/902](#).

<sup>79</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>80</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, United States and Turkey.

<sup>81</sup> See [S/2020/1202](#).

<sup>82</sup> See [S/2020/1082](#), annex.



Several delegations<sup>83</sup> expressed their full support and confidence regarding the work and impartiality of the investigations conducted by OPCW, including its Investigation and Identification Team.<sup>84</sup> The representative of Belgium urged the Syrian Arab Republic to guarantee the Team access to its territory. The representative of Estonia stated that, given that OPCW and the Council shared the same objectives of upholding the prohibition on the use of chemical weapons and supporting chemical disarmament, it was important to ensure close collaboration between them in order to move things forward on the file. Some speakers<sup>85</sup> stressed the need for the work of OPCW to be free from politicization. The representative of Indonesia further underscored that OPCW investigations had to function in a balanced, impartial and transparent manner. The representative of Viet Nam similarly emphasized that investigations must be carried out in a comprehensive, conclusive, objective, and impartial manner. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines said that it was fundamentally important for the work of OPCW and its various facets and subsidiary bodies to be impartial and independent, recalling also the need for constructive communication to resolve any gaps or inconsistencies. The representative of the Niger added that the investigation teams had to be inclusive and participatory.

The representative of China noted that many independent experts had raised doubts about recent OPCW reports on the use of chemical weapons in the

Syrian Arab Republic from a technical standpoint and highlighted contradictions in those reports, to which OPCW should provide professional, science-based and convincing responses. He described the working methods of the Investigation and Identification Team as opaque and added that its reports did not reflect the integrity of the chain of custody, which meant that they were highly controversial. The representative of the Russian Federation outlined a number of concerns regarding the working methods, including evidentiary practices, and the findings of the Investigation and Identification Team and fact-finding mission, as well as regarding the readiness of the Technical Secretariat to engage with the Syrian Arab Republic in that regard.

Several delegations<sup>86</sup> underscored the responsibility of the Council to take measures to hold the Syrian Arab Republic accountable for the use of chemical weapons in response to the investigations of OPCW. The representative of Estonia expressed hope that the Council would not stand by in the face of clear evidence that chemical weapons had been used by the Syrian Arab Republic and that it would take action to uphold its resolutions and the Charter of the United Nations. The representative of Belgium stated that it was not in the Council's interest to "espouse conspiracy theories", which served only to weaken its role in the maintenance of international peace and security, and emphasized the need to preserve the Council's mandate as envisioned in the Charter. Several delegations<sup>87</sup> also stressed the importance of unity in the Council in the collective endeavour to prevent the recurrence and address the issue of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

<sup>83</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam and Turkey.

<sup>84</sup> See [S/2020/1202](#).

<sup>85</sup> Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Viet Nam.

<sup>86</sup> Belgium, United Kingdom, United States and Turkey.

<sup>87</sup> Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Tunisia, Turkey and Viet Nam.

### III. Decisions of the Security Council concerning the pacific settlement of disputes

#### *Article 33*

1. *The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.*

2. *The Security Council shall, when it deems necessary, call upon the parties to settle their dispute by such means.*

#### *Article 36*

1. *The Security Council may, at any stage of a dispute of the nature referred to in Article 33 or of a situation of like nature, recommend appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment.*

2. *The Security Council should take into consideration any procedures for the settlement of the dispute which have already been adopted by the parties.*

3. *In making recommendations under this Article the Security Council should also take into consideration that legal disputes should as a general rule be referred by the parties to the International Court of Justice in accordance with the provisions of the Statute of the Court.*

*Article 37*

1. *Should the parties to a dispute of the nature referred to in Article 33 fail to settle it by the means indicated in that Article, they shall refer it to the Security Council.*

2. *If the Security Council deems that the continuance of the dispute is in fact likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, it shall decide whether to take action under Article 36 or to recommend such terms of settlement as it may consider appropriate.*

*Article 38*

*Without prejudice to the provisions of Articles 33 to 37, the Security Council may, if all the parties to any dispute so request, make recommendations to the parties with a view to a pacific settlement of the dispute.*

**Note**

Article 33 (1) of the Charter of the United Nations expressly provides the framework for parties to settle their disputes by peaceful means. According to Article 33 (2), the Council shall call upon the parties to settle their disputes by such peaceful means as provided for in Article 33 (1). The Council may recommend appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment for the settlement of disputes under Article 36 (1). According to Article 36 (2) and (3), the Council should take into consideration procedures for the settlement of the dispute already adopted by the parties and that legal disputes should, as a general rule, be referred by the parties to the International Court of Justice. Under Article 37 (2), following a referral, the Council is to decide whether to take action under Article 36 or to recommend such terms of settlement as it may consider appropriate. Article 38 provides that the Council may make recommendations to the parties with a view to a pacific settlement of the dispute.

In Section III, the decisions of the Council in 2020 are examined in connection with the peaceful settlement of disputes within the framework of Chapter VI of the Charter. Decisions explicitly adopted under Chapter VII have not been considered for the

purposes of the present section. Subsections A to C feature decisions of the Council in which the pacific settlement of disputes was addressed in the context of, respectively: thematic issues; country-specific and regional situations; and the settlement of disputes involving the Secretary-General. In subsection D, reference is made to decisions of the Council in support of the pacific settlement of disputes by regional organizations, arrangements and agencies, which are covered in detail in Part VIII.

**A. Decisions of the Security Council concerning thematic issues**

The present subsection provides an overview of the decisions adopted by the Council on thematic issues that relate to the pacific settlement of disputes. During the period under review, the decisions of the Council served to highlight the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes and sustaining peace, including the role of the International Court of Justice, and the importance of the inclusion of women, youth and the interests of children in security sector reform. A more detailed description of the decisions of the Council relating to these subjects is set out below.

**Peaceful settlement of disputes and sustaining peace**

In 2020, on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, the Council recalled its commitment to bring about, by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, the adjustment or settlement of international disputes that might lead to a breach of the peace.<sup>88</sup> The Council stressed the importance of all the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations regarding the peaceful settlement of disputes and the International Court of Justice, including those pertaining to the interaction between the two organs.<sup>89</sup> While recognizing the positive contribution of the Court to the rule of law at the international level and its key role in adjudicating disputes among States, the Council also recognized the need to enhance efforts aimed at capacity-building and at assisting Member States, upon their request, in the implementation of their respective obligations under the Charter,

<sup>88</sup> S/PRST/2020/13, fourth paragraph, in connection with the item entitled “The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security”. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 31.

<sup>89</sup> S/PRST/2020/13, third paragraph.

including the obligation to settle disputes by peaceful means.<sup>90</sup>

The Council reaffirmed that sustaining peace should be broadly understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population were taken into account, which encompassed activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development.<sup>91</sup> The Council also reaffirmed the primary responsibility of national Governments and authorities in identifying, driving and directing priorities, strategies and activities for peacebuilding and sustaining peace and, in that regard, emphasized that inclusivity was key to advancing those processes and objectives.<sup>92</sup> The Council reiterated its commitment to working with the Secretary-General to pursue all possible avenues to prevent and end armed conflicts, including through addressing their underlying root causes in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable manner by promoting dialogue, mediation, consultations, political negotiations and other peaceful means while enhancing humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts.<sup>93</sup>

The Council reaffirmed the importance of security sector reform in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, including conflict prevention, and in the stabilization and reconstruction of States in the aftermath of conflict.<sup>94</sup> The Council encouraged the special representatives of the Secretary-General in United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions to fully integrate security sector governance and reform, where and as mandated, into their good offices and to consider the role of such reform in mission efforts to advance peace processes, extend State authority and strengthen a proactive environment for civilians.<sup>95</sup>

### **Inclusion of women, youth and the interests of children in the pacific settlement of disputes**

In 2020, the Council reaffirmed the important role of women and youth in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, as well as in post-conflict situations.<sup>96</sup> The Council recognized the significance of the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as momentum for Member States to commit themselves to implementing the women and peace and security agenda and its priorities, by ensuring and promoting the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peace processes, and to remain committed to increasing the number of civilian and uniformed women in peacekeeping at all levels and in all positions, including senior leadership positions.<sup>97</sup>

The Council called upon all relevant actors to consider ways to increase the inclusive representation of youth for the prevention and resolution of conflict, as well as in peacebuilding, including when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, and to ensure the full, effective and meaningful participation of youth, recognizing that their marginalization was detrimental to building sustainable peace.<sup>98</sup> The Council encouraged the Peacebuilding Commission to continue to support the important peacebuilding role that young people played, and the participation and views of youth-led organizations, in planning and stabilization efforts in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and to continue to bring its observations and advice to the attention of the Council.<sup>99</sup> In that regard, the Council recognized the role of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth and her Office and the work of relevant entities of the United Nations, rapporteurs, special envoys, special representatives of the Secretary-General and resident coordinators in the implementation of the youth and peace and security agenda, as outlined in resolution 2250 (2020), including by ensuring that the essential role of young people in advancing peace and security was fully

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., sixth and eighth paragraphs.

<sup>91</sup> Resolution 2558 (2020), fourth preambular paragraph, in connection with the item entitled, “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 33.

<sup>92</sup> Resolution 2558 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph.

<sup>93</sup> S/PRST/2020/6, twelfth paragraph, in connection with the item entitled “Protection of civilians in armed conflict”. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 26.

<sup>94</sup> Resolution 2553 (2020), para. 1, in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 35.

<sup>95</sup> Resolution 2553 (2020), para. 20 (d).

<sup>96</sup> S/PRST/2020/11, sixteenth paragraph, in connection with the item entitled, “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations”. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 36.

<sup>97</sup> Resolution 2538 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph, in connection with the item entitled “United Nations peacekeeping operations”. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 23.

<sup>98</sup> Resolution 2535 (2020), para. 1, in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., para. 15.

recognized and supported.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, the Council requested the Secretary-General and his special envoys to include the views of youth in relevant discussions pertinent to the maintenance of peace and security, peacebuilding and sustaining peace and to facilitate the full, effective and meaningful participation of youth at all decision-making levels, paying particular attention to the inclusion of young women and without distinction or discrimination of any kind.<sup>101</sup>

The Council renewed its call to Member States, United Nations entities, the Peacebuilding Commission and other parties concerned to integrate child protection provisions, from the early stages of all peace processes, taking into account children's views, where possible, in those processes, and ensuring that the specific needs of girls and boys, as well as children with disabilities, were addressed.<sup>102</sup> Commending the development of the practical guidance on the integration of child protection issues in peace processes, entitled *Practical Guidance for Mediators to Better Protect Children in Situations of Armed Conflict*, the Council encouraged mediators, facilitators and other negotiators, including Member States, regional and subregional organizations and all other relevant actors involved in peace and mediation processes, to use that guidance as a tool, as much as possible, in peace and mediation processes.<sup>103</sup> In that regard, the Council also acknowledged the importance of education in preventing violent conflict and sustaining peace.<sup>104</sup>

## **B. Recommendations of the Security Council concerning country-specific and regional situations**

Article 33 (2) of the Charter provides that the Council call upon the parties to settle disputes by the means established in Article 33 (1), when deemed necessary. In addition, Article 36 (1) provides that the Council may recommend appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment. In Article 37 (2), it is further established that, if the Council deems that the continuance of the dispute is in fact likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, it shall decide whether to take action under Article 36 or

to recommend such terms of settlement as it may consider appropriate. Article 38 provides that, without prejudice to Articles 33 to 37, the Council may make recommendations to the parties with a view to a pacific settlement of the dispute, if all the parties so request.

The present subsection provides an overview of the practice of the Council relating to the pacific settlement of disputes in situations specific to a country or region. In dealing with complex situations in which the Council determined the existence of a threat to international peace and security, the Council utilized the tools available under Chapter VII of the Charter in parallel with those available under Chapter VI, with a view to restoring peace and to recommending procedures or methods for the pacific settlement of disputes. The decisions featured in the present overview do not include those adopted expressly under Chapter VII, which are covered in parts VII and X. The section also does not include the wide variety of good offices, mediation and political support tasks of peacekeeping operations and special political missions specifically mandated by the Council in 2020, which are covered in part X.

During the period under review, the Council made a wide range of recommendations with regard to the peaceful settlement of conflicts that were primarily intra-State in nature. As described in the overview below, the Council called for the cessation of hostilities and engagement on establishing permanent ceasefires; the full implementation of peace agreements, peaceful and inclusive political dialogue, transitions and elections; and dialogue for the resolution of longer-term outstanding disputes.

### **Cessation of hostilities and permanent ceasefire**

In 2020, in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and recognizing the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire, the Council demanded a general cessation of hostilities and humanitarian pause with respect to all situations on its agenda. The Council welcomed the opening of negotiations towards permanent ceasefires in Afghanistan and Libya and called on the parties to undertake confidence-building measures in support of those processes. The Council reiterated its call for an end to the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic and its support for achieving a political solution to the conflict. The Council also reiterated its call on Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic to prevent any further breaches of the ceasefire in the Golan Heights, and on Israel and Lebanon specifically to respect the cessation of

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 19.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 20.

<sup>102</sup> S/PRST/2020/3, seventh paragraph, in connection with the item entitled "Children and armed conflict". For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 25.

<sup>103</sup> S/PRST/2020/3, ninth and thirteenth paragraphs.

<sup>104</sup> S/PRST/2020/8, twenty-fifth paragraph, in connection with the item entitled "Children and armed conflict".



hostilities, support a permanent ceasefire and find a long-term solution to their dispute.

In connection with the maintenance of international peace and security, a thematic item, the Council demanded a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda. The Council further called upon all parties to armed conflict to engage immediately in a durable humanitarian pause for least 90 consecutive days, in order to enable the safe, unhindered and sustained delivery of humanitarian assistance.<sup>105</sup>

Regarding the situation in Afghanistan, the Council welcomed the significant steps taken towards ending the war and opening the door to intra-Afghan negotiations enabled by the Joint Declaration between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the United States of America for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan, signed on 29 February 2020.<sup>106</sup> Following the launch of the intra-Afghan negotiations in Doha on 12 September 2020, the Council strongly encouraged the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban to continue to pursue confidence-building measures, including additional reductions in violence, and to engage in good faith, with the aim of achieving a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire and an inclusive political settlement to end the conflict.<sup>107</sup> The Council further emphasized the importance of the effective and meaningful participation of women, youth and minorities.<sup>108</sup>

With respect to the situation in the Golan Heights, the Council stressed the obligation of both Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic to scrupulously and fully respect the terms of the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian Forces of 1974.<sup>109</sup> The parties were called upon to exercise maximum restraint and prevent any breaches of the ceasefire and the area of separation and encouraged to take full advantage of the liaison function of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) to

address issues of mutual concern and to prevent any escalation of the situation across the ceasefire line.<sup>110</sup>

In relation to the situation in Lebanon, the Council reiterated its call for Israel and Lebanon to support a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution based on the principles and elements set out in paragraph 8 of resolution 1701 (2006).<sup>111</sup> The Council condemned all violations of the Blue Line, both by air and ground, and strongly called upon all parties to respect the cessation of hostilities, to prevent any violations of the Blue Line and respect it in its entirety, and to cooperate fully with the United Nations and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).<sup>112</sup>

In connection with the situation in Libya, the Council welcomed the Berlin Conference convened on 19 January 2020, emphasized the vital importance of making progress towards achieving a political solution to end the conflict and endorsed the Conference conclusions, noting that they represented an important element of a comprehensive solution to the situation in the country.<sup>113</sup> The Council also welcomed the nomination of representatives to the 5+5 Joint Military Commission and called for the continuation of its meetings with full participation and without delay in order to agree to a permanent ceasefire, the separation of forces, confidence-building measures and the establishment of associated working groups supported by the United Nations.<sup>114</sup>

With respect to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Council recalled its demand for the full and immediate implementation of resolution 2254 (2015) to facilitate a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political transition, in accordance with the Action Group for Syria Final Communiqué as set forth in the statements of the International Syria Support Group, in order to end the conflict.<sup>115</sup>

In relation to the situation in Yemen, the Council reaffirmed its endorsement of the Agreement on the City of Hudaydah and the Ports of Hudaydah, Salif, and Ra's Isa of 2018 and reiterated its call on the

<sup>105</sup> Resolution 2532 (2020), paras. 1 and 2, in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security".

<sup>106</sup> Resolution 2513 (2020), para. 1, in connection with the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan". See also S/2020/185, annex. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 16.

<sup>107</sup> Resolution 2543 (2020), para. 4, in connection with the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan".

<sup>108</sup> Resolution 2513 (2020), para. 3.

<sup>109</sup> Resolutions 2530 (2020) and 2555 (2020), para. 2, in connection with the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East". For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 20.

<sup>110</sup> Resolutions 2530 (2020) and 2555 (2020), para. 2. For more information on the mandate of UNDOF, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>111</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), para. 4, in connection with the item entitled, "The situation in the Middle East".

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 11. For more information on the mandate of UNIFIL, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>113</sup> Resolution 2510 (2020), paras. 1 and 2, in connection with the item entitled, "The situation in Libya". See also S/2020/63, annex. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 11.

<sup>114</sup> Resolution 2510 (2020), para. 4.

<sup>115</sup> Resolution 2504 (2020), para. 5, in connection with the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East".

Government of Yemen and the Houthis to implement it.<sup>116</sup>

**Peace agreements, peaceful and inclusive political dialogue, transitions and elections**

In 2020, the Council emphasized the importance of peaceful, inclusive, civilian-led political transitions in Mali and the Sudan, leading to elections, and, in the case of Mali, a return to constitutional order. The Council also called for the full and immediate implementation of the peace agreements addressing the conflicts in the two countries, as well as further sustained progress on the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia. Furthermore, the Council underscored the importance of peaceful and inclusive political dialogue and reconciliation, the consolidation of peace through governance reform and peaceful elections and the resolution of post-electoral disputes in Burundi, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Somalia and in West Africa and the Sahel.

Regarding the situation in Burundi, the Council took note of the improved security situation following the broadly peaceful elections, which marked a new phase for the country.<sup>117</sup> The Council stressed that there was important work ahead to advance national reconciliation, the promotion of the rule of law and of an independent and effective judiciary, the preservation of democratic space, respect for fundamental freedoms, peacebuilding, social cohesion and development. The Council called on the Government of Burundi to cooperate with the United Nations in addressing those challenges.<sup>118</sup>

Welcoming the progress made towards peace across Colombia since the adoption of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, the Council urged the parties to work together to sustain progress and address challenges, in particular the continued violence in conflict-affected areas, through the comprehensive implementation of the peace agreement.<sup>119</sup>

Addressing the situation in Guinea, the Council called on all political stakeholders, regardless of their political affiliation, to resume dialogue without delay, with the view to ensuring that both electoral processes and political reforms were conducted with broad consensus.<sup>120</sup>

Regarding Guinea-Bissau, the Council welcomed the generally peaceful conduct of the presidential election in 2019 and urged all national stakeholders to ensure the peaceful implementation of the results.<sup>121</sup> The Council called on all political stakeholders to refrain from actions and statements that could disrupt the political process, escalate tensions or incite discrimination, hatred or violence and urged them to call upon their constituencies to do likewise.<sup>122</sup> The Council further called upon the Government, the organizing commission of the national conference and relevant political stakeholders and civil society organizations to organize an inclusive national conference for peace, stability and reconciliation.<sup>123</sup> In addition, the Council called on the Government to implement urgent reforms in accordance with the Conakry Agreement on the Implementation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Road Map for the Resolution of the Political Crisis in Guinea-Bissau and the six-point road map itself.<sup>124</sup>

Regarding the situation in Mali, the Council expressed its deep concern regarding political tensions in Mali and urged the Malian stakeholders to prioritize the use of dialogue to resolve them, without delay, to take into account the recommendations made by ECOWAS on 19 July, to refrain from any action likely to fuel further tensions and to work inclusively and constructively to preserve the rule of law.<sup>125</sup> Following the establishment of a transitional body in the country, the Council welcomed the appointment of a transitional president, vice-president, prime minister and Government, the issuance of a transition charter and the release of all the officials detained.<sup>126</sup> The Council underlined that the transition be conducted in accordance with the Transition Charter, leading to constitutional order and elections, within 18 months.

<sup>116</sup> Resolutions 2505 (2020) and 2534 (2020), fourth preambular paragraph, in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”.

<sup>117</sup> S/PRST/2020/12, first paragraph, in connection with the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., second paragraph.

<sup>119</sup> Resolution 2545 (2020), third preambular paragraph, in connection with the item entitled “Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)”. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 14.

<sup>120</sup> S/PRST/2020/2 and S/PRST/2020/7, fifteenth paragraph, in connection with the item entitled “Peace consolidation in West Africa”. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 9.

<sup>121</sup> S/PRST/2020/2, sixteenth paragraph, in connection with the item entitled “The situation in Guinea-Bissau”. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 6.

<sup>122</sup> Resolution 2512 (2020), para. 9.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., para. 12.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., para. 10.

<sup>125</sup> S/PRST/2020/7, thirteenth paragraph.

<sup>126</sup> S/PRST/2020/10, first paragraph, in connection with the item entitled “The situation in Mali”. For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 12.



It called on all Malian stakeholders to prioritize building trust, engaging in dialogue and being willing to compromise, in order to conduct a civilian-led, consensual and inclusive transition. The Council further reiterated the importance of ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in the political processes in Mali.<sup>127</sup> Beyond the political transition, the Council called for the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali of 2015 to resume without delay and called on the transitional authorities to take ownership of the agreement and on the signatory armed groups to fulfil their commitments to its implementation.<sup>128</sup>

Noting the responsibilities of all parties to improve cooperation and engage in discussions led by the Federal Government of Somalia in Dhuusamarreeb, the Council called upon the Federal Government and the federal member states to enhance, as a matter of urgency, broad-based consultations and consensus-building on key national priorities, including the implementation of the national security architecture, the delivery of the Somali-led Transition Plan, further economic reform, the review of the Constitution and timely elections.<sup>129</sup>

Regarding the situation in the Sudan, the Council welcomed the signing of the Constitutional Document on 17 August 2019 on the establishment of a new civilian-led transitional Government and transitional institutions and called upon all stakeholders to remain committed to the transition in order for the aspirations of the Sudanese people for a peaceful, stable, democratic and prosperous future to be realized.<sup>130</sup> With the signing of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan on 3 October 2020, the Council encouraged the Government of the Sudan, the Sudanese Revolutionary Front and the Sudan Liberation Movement-Minni Minawi to begin the process of implementation swiftly, in particular key provisions pertaining to security arrangements and addressing the root causes of the conflict in Darfur and the Two Areas, and to ensure the full, effective and meaningful participation of women.<sup>131</sup> The Council further urged

those who had yet to join the peace process with the Government of the Sudan to do so immediately, constructively and without preconditions.<sup>132</sup>

In relation to West Africa and the Sahel, the Council emphasized the need for national stakeholders in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, the Niger, Mali and Togo to work together to facilitate the timely preparation for, and the holding of, genuinely free and fair, credible, timely and peaceful elections, and to take all appropriate steps to prevent violence.<sup>133</sup> The Council also urged national stakeholders to ensure a level playing field for all candidates and to work towards the full, effective and meaningful participation of women.<sup>134</sup>

### **Peaceful resolution of outstanding disputes through dialogue**

The Council called for the peaceful resolution of outstanding disputes related to the situations in Cyprus, in the Abyei Area and along the border between South Sudan and the Sudan and in Western Sahara, through dialogue and with a view to achieving a lasting political solution.

In that regard, the Council urged the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides and all involved participants to renew their political will and commitment to a settlement under United Nations auspices, including by engaging actively and with a sense of urgency with the Secretary-General and the senior United Nations official.<sup>135</sup> The Council also called for a reduction of tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean over hydrocarbon exploration and called upon the leaders of the two Cypriot communities and all involved parties to refrain from any actions and rhetoric that may damage the chances of success for a settlement of the dispute.<sup>136</sup> In connection with the situation in Varosha, the Council expressed its deep concern regarding the announcement by Turkey on 6 October 2020 on the opening of the coastline and called for the reversal of that course of action and for the avoidance of any unilateral actions that could raise the tensions on the island.<sup>137</sup> The Council reaffirmed its

<sup>127</sup> S/PRST/2020/10, third paragraph.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., fourth paragraph.

<sup>129</sup> Resolution 2540 (2020), tenth preambular paragraph and para. 6, in connection with the item entitled "The situation in Somalia". For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 2.

<sup>130</sup> Resolution 2524 (2020), third preambular paragraph, in connection with the item entitled "Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan". For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 8.

<sup>131</sup> Resolution 2559 (2020), eighth and ninth preambular paragraphs, in connection with the item entitled "Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan".

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., tenth preambular paragraph.

<sup>133</sup> S/PRST/2020/2 and S/PRST/2020/7, fourteenth paragraph.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Resolutions 2506 (2020) and 2537 (2020), para. 2, in connection with the item entitled, "The situation in Cyprus". For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 17.

<sup>136</sup> Resolutions 2506 (2020) and 2537 (2020), para. 3; see also fourth preambular paragraph.

<sup>137</sup> S/PRST/2020/9, second paragraph, in connection with the item entitled "The situation in Cyprus".

commitment to an enduring, comprehensive and just settlement and called on the Cypriot sides and the guarantor Powers to engage in dialogue constructively and with a sense of urgency following the electoral process in the Turkish Cypriot community.<sup>138</sup>

With respect to the Abyei Area, the Council reiterated that any territorial disputes between States must be settled exclusively by peaceful means and underscored that the future status of Abyei would be resolved by negotiations between South Sudan and the Sudan in a manner consistent with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Sudan People's Liberation Army.<sup>139</sup> The Council urged continued progress towards the establishment of temporary administrative and security arrangements and the implementation and facilitation of confidence-building measures among the respective communities in the Area.<sup>140</sup> The Council expressed concern that women remained absent from the leadership of local peace committees and called upon all parties to promote the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, including at all levels of intercommunity dialogue, to ensure a credible and legitimate process.<sup>141</sup> The Council further determined that South Sudan and the Sudan should continue to demonstrate measurable progress on border demarcation.<sup>142</sup>

With regard to the situation concerning Western Sahara, the Council emphasized the need to achieve a realistic, practicable and enduring political solution based on compromise.<sup>143</sup> The Council called upon Morocco, the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y de Río de Oro, Algeria and Mauritania to resume negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General without preconditions and in good faith with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.<sup>144</sup> Emphasizing the importance of a renewed commitment by the parties to

advancing the political process in preparation for further negotiations, the Council also encouraged the neighbouring countries to make important and active contributions to that process.<sup>145</sup>

### **C. Decisions involving the Secretary-General in the Council's efforts at the pacific settlement of disputes**

While Article 99 of the Charter provides that the Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Council any matter which, in his opinion, may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security, the Charter does not specifically define the role of the Secretary-General in relation to matters of peace and security. The work of the Council regarding conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes has, however, required the involvement of the Secretary-General in all relevant aspects of that agenda.

During the period under review, the Council recognized the good offices work of the Secretary-General, as well as that of his special representatives and envoys, in support of efforts to end violent conflict, of peace agreements and political transitions and of the resolution of outstanding disputes.

#### **Good offices to end violence**

The Council expressed support for the call of the Secretary-General for an immediate global ceasefire following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. With respect to specific country situations, the Council highlighted the role of the Secretary-General, as well as his special envoys and representatives, in efforts to ensure respect for the ceasefire in the Golan Heights and to achieve a permanent ceasefire in Lebanon and Libya.

The Council recognized the efforts and measures proposed by the Secretary-General concerning the response to the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to conflict-affected countries, in particular his appeal for a global ceasefire.<sup>146</sup> The Council also expressed support for the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General and his special representatives and special envoys in ensuring a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on the Council's agenda.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., fourth paragraph.

<sup>139</sup> Resolution 2550 (2020), third preambular paragraph, in connection with the item entitled "Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan".

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., paras. 9 and 17.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., para. 18.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., para. 3.

<sup>143</sup> Resolution 2548 (2020), para. 2, in connection with the item entitled, "The situation concerning Western Sahara". For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 1.

<sup>144</sup> Resolution 2548 (2020), para. 4.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., para. 8.

<sup>146</sup> Resolution 2532 (2020), eighth preambular paragraph.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., para. 1.

In connection with the situation in Lebanon, the Council expressed its strong support for the continued efforts of UNIFIL to engage with Israel and Lebanon to facilitate liaison, coordination and practical arrangements on the ground.<sup>148</sup> It also urged all parties to cooperate fully with the Council and the Secretary-General to make tangible progress towards a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution as envisioned in resolution 1701 (2006).<sup>149</sup> Regarding the Golan Heights, the Council encouraged both Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic to take full advantage of the liaison function of UNDOF to regularly to address issues of mutual concern and to prevent any escalation across the ceasefire line.<sup>150</sup>

With respect to the situation in Libya, the Council expressed its strong support for the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and underscored the importance of the central role of the United Nations in facilitating a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned inclusive political process and in achieving a lasting ceasefire.<sup>151</sup>

#### **Good offices in support of peace agreements and political transitions**

The Council highlighted the good offices role of the Secretary-General in support of the implementation of peace agreements and political transitions, including conflict prevention, political dialogue, governance reform, peaceful and credible elections and peacebuilding in Guinea, Iraq, Somalia and the Sudan and in West Africa and the Sahel.

With regard to Guinea, while calling on all political stakeholders to resume dialogue without delay, with the view to ensuring that both electoral processes and political reforms were conducted with broad consensus, the Council encouraged the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel to continue carrying out good offices in the country.<sup>152</sup> Concerning the situation in West Africa and the Sahel more generally, the Council recognized that responsible and credible mediation by the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) required, inter alia, national ownership, the consent of the parties to a particular dispute or conflict and respect for national sovereignty,

as set out in General Assembly resolution 70/304 of 9 September 2016.<sup>153</sup>

On the situation concerning Iraq, the Council commended the efforts of the Government of Iraq to plan and execute genuinely free and fair Iraqi-led and Iraqi-owned elections and welcomed its request for further United Nations advice, support and technical assistance in that regard, including through the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).<sup>154</sup>

Regarding the situation in Somalia, the Council expressed its deep appreciation for the support provided by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) to the Federal Government of Somalia, in particular with regard to the development of an inclusive political settlement and preparation for the elections in 2021, the constitutional review process, mediation, the prevention and resolution of conflicts, the development of a federal police and justice system, the strengthening of the rule of law and security sector reform and the coordination of capacity-building support on anti-corruption issues.<sup>155</sup>

Regarding the political transition in the Sudan, the Council requested the Secretary-General to appoint expeditiously a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), who would, inter alia, perform a good offices, advisory and advocacy role at the political level and coordinate efforts of the international community in support of the strategic objectives of the UNITAMS mandate.<sup>156</sup> The Council requested the Secretary-General, in partnership with all relevant actors, including international financial institutions, to support the Government of the Sudan in conducting a comprehensive assessment to define the country's longer-term conflict prevention, recovery and

<sup>148</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), para. 12.

<sup>149</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), para. 17.

<sup>150</sup> Resolutions 2530 (2020) and 2555 (2020), para. 2.

<sup>151</sup> Resolutions 2510 (2020), third preambular paragraph, and 2542 (2020), fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs. For more information on the mandate of UNSMIL, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>152</sup> S/PRST/2020/2 and S/PRST/2020/7, fifteenth paragraph.

<sup>153</sup> S/PRST/2020/2, seventh paragraph, and S/PRST/2020/7, sixth paragraph. See also General Assembly resolution 70/304, para. 4. For more information on the mandate of UNOWAS, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>154</sup> Resolution 2522 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph, in connection with the item entitled "The situation concerning Iraq". For more information on the item, see part I, sect. 22. For more information on the mandate of UNAMI, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>155</sup> Resolution 2540 (2020), para. 4. For more information on the mandate of UNSOM, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>156</sup> Resolution 2524 (2020), para. 3. For more information on the mandate of UNITAMS, see part X, sect. II.

peacebuilding needs and in developing relevant strategies to address those needs.<sup>157</sup>

### **Good offices in support of the resolution of outstanding disputes**

The Council expressed support for the efforts of the Secretary-General to address longer-term disputes with regard to Cyprus, to the Abyei Area and the border between the Sudan and South Sudan and to Western Sahara.

Regarding Cyprus, the Council welcomed the agreement of the Secretary-General to extend his efforts to achieve terms of reference to serve as a consensus starting point for phased, meaningful and results-oriented negotiations at the earliest feasible opportunity.<sup>158</sup> The Council further called for the establishment of an effective mechanism for direct military contact between the sides and the relevant involved parties and encouraged full engagement with the proposal on the establishment of such a mechanism presented by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and for its timely implementation.<sup>159</sup> The Council called upon the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities to consider the advice of the good offices mission of the Secretary-General regarding further ways to empower the technical committees and improve their performance.<sup>160</sup> The Council reiterated its support for the Secretary-General and his intention to convene a meeting as had been agreed between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot sides in their meeting with the Secretary-General in November 2019.<sup>161</sup>

With respect to the situation in the Abyei Area and relations between the Sudan and South Sudan, the Council encouraged the African Union, its High-level Implementation Panel and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa to continue coordinating efforts to establish temporary administrative and security arrangements for Abyei and to achieve a political solution on its status.<sup>162</sup> The

Council encouraged the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) to coordinate with the African Union, the Implementation Panel and the Special Envoy on reconciliation, community sensitization and political peace processes and reiterated its requests for the Secretary-General to consult with relevant parties on enhancing the role played by the Special Envoy to support the above-mentioned efforts.<sup>163</sup> The Council further welcomed the initiatives by UNISFA to support community dialogue and efforts by the Misseriya, Ngok Dinka and all other communities to strengthen intercommunal relationships and facilitate stability and reconciliation in the Abyei Area.<sup>164</sup>

The Council expressed its full support for the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General and his incoming Personal Envoy for Western Sahara to sustain the renewed negotiations process in order to achieve a solution to the question of Western Sahara.<sup>165</sup> The Council called upon the parties to resume negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General, to implement their commitments to the Personal Envoy and to refrain from any actions that could undermine the United Nations-facilitated negotiations or further destabilize the situation in Western Sahara.<sup>166</sup>

## **D. Decisions involving regional arrangements or agencies**

During the period under review, pursuant to Article 52 of the Charter, the Council expressed support for the crucial role of regional and subregional organizations and other arrangements in the pacific settlement of disputes and encouraged them to continue with those efforts and to enhance their cooperation and coordination with the United Nations in that regard. The Council's decisions regarding joint or parallel efforts undertaken by the Council and regional organizations, arrangements or agencies in the pacific settlement of disputes during the period under review are covered in part VIII.

<sup>157</sup> Resolution 2524 (2020), para. 6.

<sup>158</sup> Resolutions 2506 (2020) and 2537 (2020), para. 2.

<sup>159</sup> Resolution 2537 (2020), para. 6. For more information on the mandate of UNFICYP, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>160</sup> Resolutions 2506 (2020) and 2537 (2020), para. 5 (b).

<sup>161</sup> S/PRST/2020/9, fifth paragraph.

<sup>162</sup> Resolution 2550 (2020), para. 10.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.* For more information on the mandate of UNISFA, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>164</sup> Resolution 2550 (2020), para. 16.

<sup>165</sup> Resolution 2548 (2020), para. 3.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 4 and 6.



## IV. Discussion on the interpretation or application of the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter

### Note

Section IV features the main discussions in the Security Council in 2020 with regard to the interpretation of specific provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the role of the Council and the Secretary-General in the peaceful settlement of disputes. It excludes those that concern regional organizations, which are covered in part VIII.

During the period under review, explicit references were made to Article 33,<sup>167</sup> Article 36,<sup>168</sup> Article 38,<sup>169</sup> Article 99<sup>170</sup> and Chapter VI<sup>171</sup> of the

Charter during the Council's deliberations, although not all cases resulted in a constitutional discussion. No explicit references were made to Article 37.

The section is divided into three subsections: A. Reference to peaceful means of settlement in the light of Article 33 of the Charter; B. Referral of legal disputes to the International Court of Justice in the light of Article 36 (3) of the Charter; and C. Utilization of Article 99 of the Charter by the Secretary-General for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The section features cases in which there were relevant constitutional discussions during the period under review.

### A. Reference to peaceful means of settlement in the light of Article 33 of the Charter

Article 33 of the Charter stipulates that any dispute that is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security should first be addressed through negotiation, mediation or other peaceful means, and that the Council can call upon the parties to settle their disputes by such means. During the period under review, discussions with respect to Article 33 were held in connection with the following items: (a) "Maintenance of international peace and security" (see cases 6 and 8); (b) "Children and armed conflict" (see case 7); and (c) "Women and peace and security" (see case 9).

<sup>167</sup> In connection with the maintenance of international peace and security, see [S/PV.8699](#) (South Africa and Brazil) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#) (Djibouti); in connection with peacebuilding and sustaining peace, see [S/PV.8723](#) (Germany); in connection with the letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2014/264](#)), see [S/PV.8726](#) (Indonesia and Tunisia); and, in connection with the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security, see [S/2020/1286](#) (Russian Federation, United States and Denmark).

<sup>168</sup> In connection with the maintenance of international peace and security, see [S/PV.8699](#) (Egypt) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#) (Djibouti and Austria); and, in connection with the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security, see [S/2020/1286](#) (President of the International Court of Justice, Estonia, Niger, Tunisia, Austria (on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Rule of Law, as well as Cyprus), Bangladesh, Japan, Liechtenstein, Peru and Portugal).

<sup>169</sup> In connection with the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security, see [S/2020/1286](#) (President of the International Court of Justice).

<sup>170</sup> In connection with the maintenance of international peace and security, see [S/PV.8699](#) (United Kingdom, Italy, and Singapore), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Slovenia, Canada and United Arab Emirates) and [S/2020/663](#) (Mexico); and, in connection with peacebuilding and sustaining peace, see [S/2020/1090](#) (Minister of Development Cooperation and Urban Policy of Belgium).

<sup>171</sup> In connection with the maintenance of international peace and security, see [S/PV.8699](#) (Secretary-General, Chair of The Elders, Republic of Korea, Brazil, Egypt, Guatemala, Philippines (on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and Romania), [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Slovenia, Kuwait, Peru, Oman and Greece) and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#) (Angola and

Senegal); in connection with the reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan, see [S/2020/336](#) (Russian Federation, South Africa (also on behalf of the Niger and Tunisia) and Sudan); in connection with the implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#)), see [S/2020/418](#) (Bahrain); in connection with cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security, see [S/PV.8711](#) (Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger and South Africa)); in connection with peacebuilding and sustaining peace, see [S/PV.8723 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Slovenia); and, in connection with the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security, see [S/2020/1286](#) (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Brazil and Peru).

**Case 6**  
**Maintenance of international peace and security**

On 9, 10 and 13 January, at its 8699th meeting, convened at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>172</sup> Council members held a high-level open debate under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and the sub-item entitled “Upholding the United Nations Charter”.<sup>173</sup> At the outset of the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, in which it reaffirmed its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, including the purposes and principles of the Charter.<sup>174</sup>

In his briefing, the Secretary-General stated that there was ample evidence to suggest that the tools available under Chapter VI of the Charter, including negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement, could be effective when applied with purpose and unity.<sup>175</sup> The Secretary-General called on the Council to further utilize the investigation of disputes in accordance with Chapter VI and the referral of legal questions to the International Court of Justice for advisory opinions in accordance with Article 96 of the Charter. The Chair of the Elders recalled in her briefing that, under Chapter VI, parties to any dispute that threatened international peace and security were required to hold negotiations or use other peaceful means to resolve their conflict.

During the discussion, speakers underscored their strong support for multilateralism and a rules-based international order, as enshrined in the Charter, as the framework for addressing evolving challenges and threats to international peace and security, including the principle of the peaceful resolution of disputes and the duty of States with regard thereto. The representative of South Africa stated that, while the Charter reinforced respect for the sovereignty of nations, its Article 33 also contained a call upon all nations to collectively pursue a non-antagonistic and mutually beneficial approach to international relations. Similarly, the representative of Brazil stated that the duty of parties to seek peaceful solutions to their disputes under Article 33 went hand-in-hand with the prohibition of the use of force. The representative of Indonesia underscored the need to stop unilateral

actions and promote dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Also noting the duty of States to resolve disputes through peaceful means, the representatives of Greece and Myanmar stressed that it should be done in accordance with international law.<sup>176</sup> The representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia stated that all countries should exhaust all peaceful means of resolving disputes before employing the use of force as a last resort.<sup>177</sup>

The representative of Egypt called on States to cooperate in accordance with the principles of good neighbourliness, the peaceful settlement of disputes, mediation with sincere intentions and mediation by the international community in various disputes.<sup>178</sup> The representative of Argentina argued that any method of peaceful settlement was equally valid for resolving conflicts and achieving fair solutions, with negotiations serving as the primary and fundamental means of doing so. Moreover, parties to a dispute had the obligation to behave in such a way that the negotiations had meaning and to refrain from behaviour that could frustrate the process, while States outside the dispute must refrain from acting in any way that could thwart those efforts. The representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia stressed that dialogue required a dynamic, inclusive and participatory process that promoted mutual understanding and cooperation.<sup>179</sup> The representative of Romania called for the increased use of conflict prevention and the political settlement of disputes through early warning, mediation, coordination and strategic communication.<sup>180</sup>

Speakers widely underscored the need for the Council to utilize all the tools at its disposal under the Charter, including those provided for the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention as provided under its Article 33 of Chapter VI. The representative of Kenya recalled that the Charter had provided a tool to facilitate the prevention of war in its recommendations that solutions to any dispute be found, first and foremost, through negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement, among other means, which the representative of Djibouti described as some of the most effective for resolving disputes.<sup>181</sup> The representative of the Republic of Korea stated that the Council must do more to overcome divisions, embrace prevention and make greater use of mediation and

<sup>172</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 31 December 2019 (S/2020/1).

<sup>173</sup> See S/PV.8699, S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1) and S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2).

<sup>174</sup> S/PRST/2020/1, first paragraph.

<sup>175</sup> See S/PV.8699.

<sup>176</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1).

<sup>177</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2).

<sup>178</sup> See S/PV.8699.

<sup>179</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2).

<sup>180</sup> See S/PV.8699.

<sup>181</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Kenya); and S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2) (Djibouti).



other tools set out in Chapter VI.<sup>182</sup> The representative of Slovenia encouraged the Council to use Chapter VI more often and to explore ways of analysing crises and risks as early as possible in order to address them head-on and, if necessary, take collective action.<sup>183</sup>

The representative of France stated that, when circumstances so required, the Council had to make use of the full range of tools at its disposal, in particular peacekeeping operations and sanctions.<sup>184</sup> The representative of Kenya highlighted the challenge of finding an efficient workable balance between the pacific settlement of disputes and provisions relating to actions in support of the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression, and the involvement of regional arrangements and agencies. That balance would ensure that peacekeeping mandates also involved, and provided for, a transition to peacebuilding, including efforts to ensure the sustainability of peace and development. The representative of Egypt expressed the view that the Council rushed to use Chapter VII of the Charter instead of Chapter VI, which contained a call for taking pre-emptive and preventive diplomatic steps and activating the role of the International Court of Justice in accordance with Articles 36 and 96. The representative of Eritrea stressed the need for transparent rules and procedures for invoking Chapters VI and VII.<sup>185</sup> The representative of Senegal stated that the success of the United Nations depended more on its ability to apply Chapter VI rather than the more difficult and challenging Chapter VII.

The representative of the Russian Federation expressed his delegation's opposition to the use of unilateral coercive measures in the absence of Council resolutions or in addition to measures taken by the Council.<sup>186</sup> Doing so undermined the role of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security and was incompatible with the Charter and the universally recognized principles of international law, including the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Similarly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua stated that exceptionalist policies involving the use or threat of the use of force in international relations, in violation of international law, did not help to resolve conflicts peacefully, but aggravated and subjected the international situation to further stress.

Speakers also addressed the need to focus on preventive action by focusing on both the root causes of conflict and on engagement with civil society, in

particular women and youth. The representative of Albania stressed the need for collective mobilization to prevent the deterioration of situations by addressing the root causes of conflict long before they escalated into violence. The representatives of both Albania and the Netherlands highlighted the importance of the participation of women in decision-making, which resulted in stronger peace agreements and more resilient societies.<sup>187</sup> Echoing that view, the representative of Italy also pointed to the need to give young people a voice and space in which to participate.<sup>188</sup> Concurring with respect to the need to address the root causes of conflict, the representative of Slovenia stated that gross human rights violations were an alarming indicator that a larger conflict might be under way.<sup>189</sup> The representative of Costa Rica stated that, when Governments failed to comply with their responsibility to protect their citizens, the international community, in particular the Council, must use means such as preventive diplomacy, good offices and mediation. The representative of Angola opined that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a direct and commendable product of the conflict-prevention tools provided under the Charter to address the economic and social drivers of conflict.<sup>190</sup>

### Case 7 Children and armed conflict

On 12 February, at its 8721st meeting, convened at the initiative of Belgium, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>191</sup> Council members held a high-level meeting under the item entitled "Children and armed conflict" and the sub-item entitled "Integrating child protection into peace processes".<sup>192</sup> At the outset of the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement in which it renewed its call to Member States, United Nations entities, the Peacebuilding Commission and other parties concerned to integrate child protection provisions from the early stages of all peace processes.<sup>193</sup> Commending the development of a United Nations practical guidance on the integration of child protection into peace processes, the Council encouraged the Secretary-General to

<sup>187</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#) (Albania); and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Netherlands).

<sup>188</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>189</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>190</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>191</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 5 February 2020 ([S/2020/97](#)).

<sup>192</sup> See [S/PV.8721](#).

<sup>193</sup> [S/PRST/2020/3](#), seventh paragraph.

<sup>182</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>183</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>184</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

<sup>185</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>186</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

ensure its broad dissemination.<sup>194</sup> The Council also encouraged mediators, facilitators and other negotiators to use the guidance as a tool in peace and mediation processes.<sup>195</sup>

In his remarks, the Secretary-General stated that children under the age of 18 made up more than half of the population in countries affected by war and were among the most vulnerable.<sup>196</sup> According to the Secretary-General, the practical guidance for mediators being launched by the Secretariat was the next step in the overall strategy to put children at the heart of protection, peacebuilding and prevention efforts. In the guidance, it was recognized that children's needs and rights must be considered in all phases of conflict, from prevention to mediation and recovery, through sustainable inclusive development. The guidance provided the means for mediators and negotiators to conduct a children's rights-based analysis of conflict, including through the welcome involvement and participation of children with the appropriate support. The Secretary-General added that, as important as the guidance was, it was not enough and urged all Member States to take concrete action to prioritize the protection of children at the national, regional and global levels.

The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union stated that it was integral to sustainable peace that violations of children's rights be not only prevented but also addressed before, during and after conflicts. It was therefore critical that all actors engaged in mediation and peace processes incorporate child protection language and provisions in peace agreements. Over the years, the African Union and the regional economic communities and mechanisms had invested time and resources in ensuring that peace processes and peace agreements systematically addressed and prevented violations of children's rights and provided for the meaningful participation of children in peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts. He described the practical guidance as an invaluable tool for African Union mediators, special envoys and member States engaged in peace processes.

In her statement, the Chair of the Advisory Board of Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, a global network of human rights and humanitarian organizations, observed that peace agreements that addressed child protection remained the exception, not the norm. She explained that her network had prepared a checklist of provisions related to children and armed conflict for ceasefire and peace agreements, which had

inspired the guidance being launched by the United Nations and its Member States. Some of the key components identified included prioritizing child protection on the agendas of peace talks from the very beginning; ensuring that all parties explicitly agreed to end the six grave violations against children; including provisions in peace agreements that cover disarmament, demobilization and reintegration for children associated with armed forces, education, post-conflict programming, transitional justice, accountability and reparations; and ensuring the monitoring of child protection provisions. The Chair urged the Council to take a series of steps, including to ensure that the impact of armed conflict on children was dealt with at the beginning of any peace effort; to ensure that country-specific resolutions on peace processes emphasized the need for explicit and comprehensive provisions for child protection; and to urge mediators, the United Nations, parties to conflict and other stakeholders to ensure the meaningful participation of affected children.

Council members welcomed the launching of the practical guidance for mediators, which they described as a useful tool for promoting child protection in peace processes. They agreed that the inclusion of child protection considerations in peace processes increased the chances of achieving sustainable peace. Council members also called for the broad dissemination of the guidance and encouraged its use by mediators, negotiators and other relevant actors in peace processes. The representative of South Africa, also on behalf of the Niger and Tunisia, stated that the protection of children should be addressed at all levels, including in preventive diplomacy, in the mediation of peace processes and in peacekeeping, and stressed that it was imperative for all concerned parties to ensure that the protection, rights and well-being of children were integrated into peace processes, peace agreements and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction phases. The representative of the United Kingdom opined that the integration of child protection into mediation and peace processes was essential in order to ensure that negotiating parties committed themselves to upholding their international, regional and national child protection obligations, to guarantee that the special needs of children and young people were taken into consideration and embedded in efforts to build and sustain peace and to improve the sustainability and success of peace efforts. The representative of China stated that the fundamental approach to protecting children was to stop and resolve armed conflicts. He stressed that disputes should be resolved through dialogue and negotiation on an equal footing and that the use or threat of the use of force must be avoided.

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid., ninth and tenth paragraphs.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., thirteenth paragraph.

<sup>196</sup> See [S/PV.8721](#).

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia stated that all actors involved in peace processes, including parties to conflict, mediators, negotiators, child advisers and humanitarian actors, should develop capacities, sensitivity and awareness with regard to the needs of children. The representative of the Dominican Republic said that it was paramount for mediators to have an expert on the issue of child protection on their team. The representative of Germany stressed the importance of child protection advisers in United Nations peace operations. The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia stated that the integration of child protection into peace processes needed to be gender-sensitive and take into account the needs of girls and boys. The representative of the Russian Federation expressed hope that, with the new guidance, there would be more examples of the successful reintegration of child combatants.

The King of the Belgians observed that, at times, parties to conflict could agree more easily on measures to assist children than on other issues, a focus that could build trust and serve as a springboard and catalyst for broader agreements. The representative of South Africa, also on behalf of the Niger and Tunisia, added that the realization on the part of warring parties and mediators of the importance of integrating child protection into peace processes and agreements could be instrumental in fostering dialogue, building confidence and assisting in bringing immediate and long-term benefits for children. The representative of France stated that the guidance served to illustrate what successful mediation should look like, namely, combining short-term diplomacy to pacify tense situations with long-term stabilization, which was essential for sustainable peace.

### **Case 8 Maintenance of international peace and security**

On 27 April, at the initiative of the Dominican Republic, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>197</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and focused on the implementation of the youth and peace and security agenda.<sup>198</sup> In his remarks, the Secretary-General welcomed the opportunity to present his first report on youth and peace and security.<sup>199</sup> He stated that, just five years after the adoption of Council

resolution 2250 (2015) on the youth and peace and security agenda, and despite challenges, encouraging steps were being taken to enable young people to play their essential role in building peace and just societies.<sup>200</sup> From prevention to mediation and from humanitarian assistance to post-conflict healing and reconciliation, young people were stepping up through formal and informal mechanisms, using both traditional platforms and new technologies. Notwithstanding that progress, youth participation still faced formidable challenges, with opportunities remaining inadequate, especially for young women. The Secretary-General expressed his sense of encouragement in seeing the global networks that had emerged to support young peacebuilders and noted that the United Nations, for its part, was striving to integrate the youth and peace and security agenda across the Organization, guided by the United Nations Youth Strategy. Across its work, the efforts of the international community needed to reflect the fundamental understanding that young people were not subjects to be protected, but should be seen as citizens with equal rights, as full members of societies and as powerful agents for change.

The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Youth stressed the need for the meaningful participation of young people in building sustainable peace, which would include a wide range of actions, from formal participation in political, electoral or peace processes, to informal participation at the community level and in digital spaces. Although inclusion had been shown to have a positive impact on the sustainability of peace agreements, young people continued to be excluded from decisions that directly affected their present and prospects for peace. She urged the Council to put young people at the heart of its efforts to bring about global peace and security.

Council members and other delegations acknowledged the important role of young people in conflict prevention, peace processes, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The representative of the Dominican Republic stated that the meaningful participation of youth in peacebuilding and sustaining peace and security was not only essential to achieving just, inclusive and peaceful societies, but was also their right. The representative of China stated that young people should be enabled to participate in conflict prevention and resolution, contribute to social stability and development and take an active part in post-conflict reconstruction. The representative of Indonesia stated that the participation of young people could increase the legitimacy and sustainability of peace

<sup>197</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 13 April 2020 (S/2020/302).

<sup>198</sup> See S/2020/346.

<sup>199</sup> S/2020/167.

<sup>200</sup> See S/2020/346.

efforts and that leaving them out of the equation led to an imbalanced approach to peace and could create a perception of injustice and deepen existing challenges. Several participants<sup>201</sup> noted the important role of youth and the need to engage them in the prevention of violent extremism.

Council members and other delegations noted, however, that the meaningful participation of youth in matters of peace and security remained a challenge owing to a number of factors, such as marginalization, gender discrimination, a lack of security and human rights violations and abuses, including sexual and gender-based violence, restrictions on the freedom of expression, a lack of access to education, socioeconomic circumstances and inadequate resources for local initiatives. The delegation of Liechtenstein observed that, even in situations where a ceasefire was possible and efforts towards broader agreements could begin, young people were often left on the sidelines of negotiations, even though they made up the majority of the population in most of the places with situations on the Council's agenda.

The representative of China stated that it was important to fully take into consideration youth-related factors in the political settlement of hotspot issues, ensure the constructive participation of young people in the peace processes of their home countries, draw on their strengths and listen to their views. The representative of Armenia expressed the view that young people could play a key role at all stages of conflict resolution, in particular in promoting dialogue and confidence-building across the dividing lines. The delegation of Liechtenstein stated that efforts to integrate young people into peace negotiations should harness their long-term perspective on peace, as they would be responsible for the long-term implementation of peace agreements. The representative of the Russian Federation stated that the involvement of young people in any political activity should be meaningful and based on their professional knowledge and skills and that young people should not be drawn into such activities until they reached the legal age to do so. The delegation of Slovenia suggested that mediation techniques should be part of a comprehensive education for young people, to empower them in helping to make mediation processes inclusive, effective and efficient. Underscoring the crucial importance of education and a culture of peace, the representative of Viet Nam stated that all initiatives on conflict prevention and resolution and national

reconciliation came primarily from the understanding of the values of peace, tolerance and moderation.

The representative of the Niger expressed regret that only 20 per cent of peace agreements signed between 1990 and 2018 contained special provisions for women. A gender-based approach to conflict prevention would enlarge and consolidate the civic space for the participation of young women. The representative of Germany stated that conflict prevention and peacebuilding had to include diverse perspectives and involve young people from all backgrounds, including young women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and young persons with disabilities.

Regarding the role of the United Nations in promoting the participation of youth, the representative of Hungary emphasized that the Council, through its resolutions, should mandate their meaningful participation and inclusion in mediation, peace processes and wider decision-making structures and in the implementation of ceasefires and peace agreements. The delegation of Ireland, the delegation of Norway (on behalf of the Nordic countries) and the representative of Tunisia suggested adding specific language to mission mandates to encourage or require the meaningful participation of youth in peace and security efforts, including mediation and peace negotiations, the monitoring and implementation of ceasefires and the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements, and to integrate a gender- and youth-sensitive peace and security analysis in their reporting. To promote youth participation, the representatives of the Dominican Republic and Tunisia and the delegations of Fiji, Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates proposed increasing the participation of young briefers in the Council. The representative of the Niger expressed support for the designation of a youth focal point in each peacekeeping mission to ensure the participation of young people in peace processes. The representative of the Dominican Republic stated that the creation of a regional young mediators network and a focal point network within the United Nations system, including in peacekeeping and political missions, was essential. The delegation of Canada encouraged the Council to include youth and peace and security as a standing agenda item and to consult young people and take into account their perspectives and advice in Council decisions.

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<sup>201</sup> Indonesia, United States, Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Djibouti, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malta and Morocco.

### Case 9 Women and peace and security

On 29 October, at the initiative of the Russian Federation, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>202</sup> Council members held a high-level open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Women and peace and security” and focused on the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and its better implementation.<sup>203</sup>

In his remarks, the Secretary-General stated that, 20 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), despite some progress having been made, power structures remained dominated by men, with women leading only 7 per cent of countries and men making up three quarters of the members of COVID-19 pandemic task forces and still overwhelmingly making decisions about international peace and security. He noted that the disproportionate negative impact of the pandemic on women and girls would contribute to their continued marginalization from political decision-making and peace processes. Furthermore, even as the representation of women in United Nations mediation teams was improving, women remained largely excluded from delegations to peace talks and negotiations. The Secretary-General maintained that the meaningful and effective participation of women in mediation broadened the prospects for peace, stability, social cohesion and economic advancement. He added that ensuring the full participation of women in peace processes also required stronger partnerships among the United Nations, regional organizations, Member States and civil society and that the United Nations and Member States consider how to create conditions for the equal representation and participation of women in peace talks. Lastly, the Secretary-General reported that, at the beginning of 2020, the United Nations leadership had achieved gender parity, including resident coordinators in countries affected by conflict, and reaffirmed his determination to push for parity at all levels, including field missions and special political missions.

Council members and other delegations largely concurred that insufficient progress had been made in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the women and peace and security agenda over the past 20 years and noted that women remained excluded from peace processes and political decision-making. They outlined several obstacles to such progress, including insecurity, human rights abuses and violations, sexual

and gender-based violence, insufficient access to education and health care, discrimination and other forms of marginalization, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and insufficient funding for civil society organizations.

Several Council members and other delegations<sup>204</sup> emphasized that the participation of women was key to ensuring the sustainability of peace processes. The representatives of Belgium and Viet Nam called for the full involvement of women as equal partners from the earliest stages of every political and peace process. The delegation of the Netherlands expressed the view that gender inequality was in itself a driver of instability and conflict and should therefore be addressed as a root cause of conflict. A number of delegations<sup>205</sup> called for the greater involvement of women as mediators and negotiators. The delegation of Poland stressed that the meaningful participation of women was not just about the number of women “at the table”, but also about their leadership. The delegations of Jordan and Morocco recognized the contribution of women to early warning mechanisms. The delegation of Liechtenstein opined that achieving peaceful, just and inclusive societies required increased access for women to justice, the development of gender-responsive legal and judicial systems and the promotion of greater participation by women in the justice sector, including transitional justice mechanisms and reparations processes.

Delegations also referred to the means of implementing the women and peace and security agenda at the local level, emphasizing the importance of national ownership and regional cooperation. The representative of Japan underscored the principle of national ownership of the women and peace and security agenda. On behalf of the Group of Friends of the African Women Leaders Network, the representative of Ghana recognized the urgent need to support a bottom-up approach at the local and national levels in order to ensure long-term gains for peace and security. She stressed the need to ensure that women’s rights, needs and experiences were heard and reflected in peace outcome documents and reconstruction

<sup>204</sup> Dominican Republic, Estonia, Indonesia, Albania, Argentina, Canada (on behalf of the Group of Friends on Women and Peace and Security), Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Peru, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay.

<sup>205</sup> France, Indonesia, South Africa, Albania, Brazil, Czechia, Poland, Qatar and Spain.

<sup>202</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 14 October 2020 (S/2020/1014).

<sup>203</sup> See S/2020/1084.



processes. A number of delegations<sup>206</sup> called for the protection of women civil society representatives and human rights defenders. The representative of Kenya highlighted regional frameworks and mechanisms as being vital in reinforcing national peacebuilding policies and projects.

Regarding the role of the United Nations, the delegation of Canada, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, and the representative of Denmark, on behalf of the Nordic countries, called on the Organization to aim to make the full, equal and meaningful participation of women a requirement in all mediation teams and political transitions the United Nations would lead or co-lead. Several delegations expressed support for the Secretary-General's system-wide strategy on gender parity<sup>207</sup> and the uniformed gender parity strategy 2018–2028 of the Department of Peace Operations,<sup>208</sup> while many called for the greater and more effective participation of women in peacekeeping.<sup>209</sup> The representative of Bangladesh, the delegation of Switzerland and the observer for the League of Arab States called for greater representation by women in senior leadership positions in the United Nations system.

A number of Council members and other delegations<sup>210</sup> mentioned the need for the Council to ensure that issues related to the women and peace and security agenda were considered across all of its deliberations and outcomes and to increase its engagement with women representatives of civil society. On behalf of the Group of Friends on Women and Peace and Security, the delegation of Canada underscored that the recommendations of civil society activists to the Council must be translated into informed decisions for action. The representative of the United States called for more language promoting the meaningful participation of women in peace negotiations in Council decisions on mandates of peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

<sup>206</sup> Dominican Republic, South Africa, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada (on behalf of the Group of Friends on Women and Peace and Security), Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), European Union (also on behalf of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Ukraine and Turkey) and Uruguay.

<sup>207</sup> South Africa, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Egypt, Qatar and Senegal.

<sup>208</sup> South Africa, Bangladesh, Brazil and Ecuador.

<sup>209</sup> Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Niger, United States, Bangladesh, India, Lebanon, Mexico, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Switzerland and Uruguay.

<sup>210</sup> Estonia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Albania, Denmark, Ireland, Mexico and Switzerland.

In addition to mainstreaming the agenda into peace operations mandates, the representative of El Salvador suggested increasing the number of Arria-formula meetings on women and peace and security. The delegation of Ireland stated that Council field visits, be they virtual or in-person, must be used as an opportunity to engage with women affected by conflict and with those who were working to build peace, including at the grass-roots level. The delegation added that the important work of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security and the Peacebuilding Commission should inform Council discussions and outcomes. In that regard, the delegation of Mexico suggested inviting the Co-Chairs of the Informal Expert Group to review specific situations and the Council's thematic agenda.

## **B. Referral of legal disputes to the International Court of Justice in the light of Article 36 (3) of the Charter**

Article 36 (3) of the Charter provides that, in making recommendations under Article 36, the Council should also take into consideration that legal disputes should, as a general rule, be referred by the parties to the International Court of Justice in accordance with the provisions of the Statute of the Court. During the period under review, a discussion with respect to Article 36 (3) was held in connection with the item entitled "The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security" (see case 10).

### **Case 10**

#### **The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security**

On 18 December, at the initiative of South Africa, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>211</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security" and focused on strengthening cooperation between the Security Council and the International Court of Justice.<sup>212</sup>

In his briefing, the President of the International Court of Justice stated that the partnership between the Council and the Court was strong, but that it could be

<sup>211</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 11 December 2020 (S/2020/1194).

<sup>212</sup> See S/2020/1286.



further strengthened. He recalled that the Council had only once exercised its powers under Article 36 (3) of the Charter to recommend that disputing parties settle their dispute through the Court,<sup>213</sup> namely, in the *Corfu Channel case (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland v. Albania)*. The Council had also only once requested an advisory opinion from the Court under Article 96,<sup>214</sup> namely, in the case of *Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 (1970)*.

In terms of suggestions on how to further reinforce cooperation between the two organs, the President of the International Court of Justice highlighted a distinction between the two possibilities available to the Council under the Charter.<sup>215</sup> He acknowledged the reluctance of the Council to recommend the referral of a dispute by the parties concerned to the Court unless it was clear that both parties were ready for it, in particular given the reference in Article 36 (3) of the Charter to “recommendations” by the Council, which would be legally non-binding. The Council could not, therefore, establish the jurisdiction of the Court over a dispute without the consent of the parties. However, the request for an advisory opinion from the Court would be a different matter, as it would not be binding and would not be addressed directly to States, but rather rendered for the benefit of the Council to clarify a specific legal issue. Citing the Declaration on the Prevention and Removal of Disputes and Situations Which May Threaten International Peace and Security and the Role of the United Nations in this Field, set out in the annex to General Assembly resolution 43/51 of 5 December 1988, the President of the Court recalled the Assembly’s view that a request for an advisory opinion from the Court could play an important role in the Council’s work on preventing situations or disputes from becoming a threat to international peace and security. In addition, noting that only 74 Member States had done already so, the President suggested that the Council periodically issue presidential statements in which it called upon States that had not yet done so to consider accepting the jurisdiction of the Court. Without a court of law to which disputes could be referred for peaceful resolution, the existence of the international rule of law could be called into question.

In their statements, Council members and other delegations acknowledged the shared role of the

Council and the International Court of Justice in the maintenance of international peace and security and the peaceful settlement of disputes. In that regard, some delegations<sup>216</sup> stressed the important connection between the rule of law and justice, conflict prevention and sustainable peace. The representative of South Africa stated that, although the Council played a significant role in ensuring international peace and security, the role of the Court in settling disputes before they escalated into threats to international peace and security remained one of the most important cornerstones of the international system. Several delegations<sup>217</sup> also expressed the view that the increasing number of cases before the Court reflected the trust and recognition placed by Member States in the Court as a means for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Most delegations called for greater cooperation between the Council and the International Court of Justice in the areas of conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of disputes, including through more frequent referrals to the Court by the Council under Article 36 of the Charter<sup>218</sup> and the use of the Court’s advisory functions under Article 96.<sup>219</sup> The delegation of Brazil noted that promoting the peaceful settlement of a dispute through institutionalized and reliable means was at the core of prevention and should therefore be considered more often. Similarly, the delegation of Peru stated that recourse to the peaceful settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the Charter was an underutilized tool with a real capacity to offer positive alternatives for action before, during and after conflicts. Among those tools, the submission of legal disputes to the Court on the recommendation of the Council, as a visible element of the rules based international system, was certainly worth emphasizing. The representative of Estonia called on the Council to consider a stricter application of Article 36 (3), so that legal disputes would, as a general rule, be referred to the Court. Several delegations<sup>220</sup> also called on

<sup>216</sup> South Africa, Austria (on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Rule of Law, as well as Cyprus), Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries) and Morocco.

<sup>217</sup> Belgium, China, United Kingdom, United States, Austria (on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Rule of Law, as well as Cyprus), Bangladesh and Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries).

<sup>218</sup> Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, South Africa, Tunisia, Austria, Bangladesh, Peru and Portugal.

<sup>219</sup> Germany, Tunisia, Bangladesh, Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Mexico, Peru and Portugal.

<sup>220</sup> Estonia, Germany, United Kingdom, Austria (on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Rule of Law, as well as Cyprus), Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Japan, Liechtenstein and Mexico.

<sup>213</sup> See resolution 22 (1947).

<sup>214</sup> See resolution 284 (1970).

<sup>215</sup> See S/2020/1286.

Member States that had not yet done so to accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court.

The representative of the Russian Federation stated that a key element of the principle of commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes, as enshrined in Article 33 of the Charter, was the freedom of each State to choose its own peaceful means of settlement, including those set out in the Charter. The representative of the United States underscored that, as situations developed into matters requiring the Council's attention, Council members must remain mindful of where the International Court of Justice could play a role, while preserving the fundamental principle of State consent to the judicial settlement of disputes enshrined in the Statute of the Court. He added that many disputes were successfully resolved through other peaceful means, thereby never reaching the Council or the Court. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines called on parties to disputes to pursue dialogue and mediation, including through suitable regional mechanisms and without prejudice to their rights to seek a judicial settlement. The representative of France said that the Court's decisions contributed most to the pacification of relations between States when other means of peaceful settlement of disputes had failed. As a first step, the delegation of Portugal encouraged the Council to draft a road map on specific ways to implement the tools that were available to the Council under the Charter.

Addressing the limited number of instances when States in dispute resorted to the Council to address non-compliance with the decisions of the International Court of Justice in accordance with Article 94 of the Charter, the delegation of Brazil encouraged reflection on whether issues of non-compliance would fall under Chapter VI of the Charter, thus requiring a party to a dispute to abstain from voting on the matter. Similarly, the representative of Estonia encouraged parties to a dispute to recuse themselves from voting in the Council, in accordance with the Charter, and echoed the plea for Council members not to use the votes of other members to block any recommendations regarding the judicial settlement of disputes by the Council.

### **C. Utilization of Article 99 of the Charter by the Secretary-General for the pacific settlement of disputes**

Article 99 of the Charter stipulates that the Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Council any matter which, in his opinion, may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.

The multiple tools available to the Secretary-General under Article 99 were discussed in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security" (see case 11).

#### **Case 11 Maintenance of international peace and security**

On 9, 10 and 13 January, at its 8699th meeting, convened at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>221</sup> Council members held a high-level open debate under the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security" and the sub-item entitled "Upholding the United Nations Charter".<sup>222</sup> As part of the discussion, several speakers addressed the good offices role of the Secretary-General in conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Several speakers<sup>223</sup> recognized the importance of the good offices role conferred upon the Secretary-General under Article 99 of the Charter. The representatives of Canada and Slovenia encouraged the Secretary-General to make use of the article more frequently.<sup>224</sup> The representative of Belgium further recognized that the Secretary-General, through his good offices, facilitated the peaceful settlement of conflicts.<sup>225</sup> The representative of Lithuania expressed the view that the Secretary-General's efforts and contribution to conflict resolution, preventive diplomacy, peacebuilding and sustaining peace were of the utmost importance in enabling the international community and the United Nations to develop the capacity for a swift and effective response to conflict. She added that preventive diplomacy, early action and mediation were vital measures in preventing conflicts and mass atrocities and that a decisive element of conflict-prevention involved putting an end to impunity and ensuring justice for all. The representative of Singapore stated that, while preventive diplomacy might be time-consuming, it was an effective way to enhance prospects for peace and reconciliation; his delegation applauded the Secretary-General's pledge to make prevention a "priority of the priorities". The representative of France welcomed the establishment by the Secretary-General of the High-

<sup>221</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 31 December 2019 (S/2020/1).

<sup>222</sup> See S/PV.8699, S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1) and S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2).

<sup>223</sup> See S/PV.8699 (United Kingdom, Italy and Singapore); and S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1) (Slovenia, Canada and United Arab Emirates).

<sup>224</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1).

<sup>225</sup> See S/PV.8699.

Level Advisory Board on Mediation. The representative of Norway, on behalf of the Nordic countries, echoed by the representative of Yemen, stated that special political missions and special envoys of the Secretary-General played a crucial role in reducing tensions, in many instances through creative

and persistent diplomacy, while peacekeeping operations proved critical in halting violence and creating an enabling environment for peace.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#) (Norway); and [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Yemen).



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## **Part VII**

### **Actions with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression (Chapter VII of the Charter)**

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## Introductory note

Part VII of the present Supplement deals with action taken by the Security Council with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace or acts of aggression, within the framework of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, including Articles 39 to 51. This part is divided into 10 sections, each focusing on selected material to highlight the interpretation and application of the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter by the Council in its deliberations and decisions.

Sections I to IV cover material related to Articles 39 to 42, which regulate the power of the Council to determine threats to international peace and security and to take the appropriate action in response to those threats, including the imposition of sanctions measures or the authorization of the use of force. Sections V and VI focus on Articles 43 to 47, regarding the command and deployment of military forces. Sections VII and VIII address, respectively, the obligations of Member States under Articles 48 and 49, while sections IX and X address, respectively, the practice of the Council with regard to Articles 50 and 51.

The sections contain subsections on discussions held within the Council regarding the proper interpretation and implementation of the Articles governing the Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. As described in further detail in part II of the present Supplement, during the year 2020, the work of the Council was significantly affected by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Faced with the absence of meetings in the Security Council Chamber as of March 2020, Council members initiated the practice of holding videoconferences, and, as at 14 July, the Council had developed a hybrid model, alternating in-person meetings with videoconferences. Part VII of the present Supplement therefore features discussions of constitutional relevance to Chapter VII of the Charter held in the context of both meetings and videoconferences.

During the period under review, and similar to previous periods, the Council adopted 45.6 per cent of its resolutions (26 out of 57 resolutions) explicitly under Chapter VII of the Charter. Most of those resolutions concerned the mandates of United Nations and regional peacekeeping missions or multinational forces, and the imposition, extension, modification or termination of sanctions measures.

As discussed in section I, while the Council did not determine the existence of new threats to international peace and security or acts of aggression in 2020, it considered that the unprecedented extent of the COVID-19 pandemic was likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. Throughout the reporting period, the Council also reaffirmed that the situations in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan (including Abyei), and Yemen continued to constitute threats to regional and/or international peace and security. In connection with the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Council maintained its determination that the devastating humanitarian situation in the country continued to constitute a threat to peace and security in the region.

With regard to specific countries and regions, the Council recalled in its decisions past determinations of threats to international peace and security of significance in those situations. For example, in relation to Libya, the Council reaffirmed its determination that terrorism, in all forms and manifestations, constituted one of the most serious threats to peace and security. In connection with the situation in Somalia, the Council reiterated that incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, as well as the activity of pirate groups in Somalia, were an important factor exacerbating the situation in Somalia, which

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continued to pose a threat to international peace and security. The Council further expressed concern regarding the threat to the peace, security and stability of Somalia and the region posed by Al-Shabaab, including through its increased use of improvised explosive devices, and condemned the supply of weapons and ammunition supplies to and through Somalia as a serious threat to peace and stability in the region.

Consistent with its past practice, the Council continued to reaffirm in its decisions under thematic items that terrorism, terrorist groups and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as their means of delivery, continued to constitute threats to international peace and security. In 2020, the Council continued to discuss conventional threats to international peace and security, including terrorism, the proliferation of conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, illicit trade, the destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons and organized crime. Consistent with practice in preceding years, climate change as a threat to international peace and security was also discussed during the review period. The Council also addressed the link between environmental degradation and peace and security, the potential for the COVID-19 pandemic to become a threat to international peace and security or to exacerbate other security threats and the issue of conflict-related sexual violence as a threat to international peace and security.

The Council did not issue any provisional measures under Article 40 of the Charter during 2020.

As covered in section III, during the period under review, the Council renewed the existing sanctions measures concerning the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen, and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities. The Council modified the list of exemptions to the arms embargo on the Central African Republic as well as certain provisions regarding exemptions to the measures concerning the arms embargo on Somalia. Regarding the sanctions measures concerning Libya, the Council modified the designation period of vessels designated pursuant to resolution [2146 \(2014\)](#) from 90 days to one year. No changes were made to the measures concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Lebanon or the Sudan, nor to those concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) and Al-Qaida and associates. As far as judicial measures were concerned, no action was taken in 2020.

As described in section IV, the Council reiterated authorizations granted prior to 2020 to United Nations peacekeeping missions and multinational forces to use force under Chapter VII of the Charter, with regard to the maintenance or restoration of international peace and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan (including Abyei and Darfur). In that regard, the Council renewed the authorization on the use of force to discharge the protection-of-civilians mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the African Union Mission in Somalia and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. Moreover, the Council reiterated the authorization granted to the French forces in the Central African Republic and Mali to take "all necessary measures" to support MINUSCA and MINUSMA, respectively, in fulfilling the mandated tasks. With regard to the situation in Somalia, the Council also extended the authorization to States and regional organizations cooperating with the Somali

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authorities to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia. In relation to the situation in Libya, the Council renewed its authorization to Member States to take “all measures commensurate to the specific circumstances” when confronting migrant smugglers and when carrying out the inspection of vessels in the implementation of the arms embargo. With regard to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council renewed its authorization to Member States acting under the European Union military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR-Althea) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) presence, to take “all necessary measures” to effect the implementation of and ensure compliance with the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the rules and procedures governing command and control of airspace over Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to all civilian and military air traffic and, at the request of either EUFOR-Althea or NATO, to take “all necessary measures” in their defence.

As described in sections V to VIII, in the context of peacekeeping, the Council called upon Member States to contribute troops and other assets, including aerial force enablers, while Member States continued to call for greater interaction and enhanced consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries during the period under review. In addition, the Council frequently requested compliance with its decisions adopted under Chapter VII by States and non-State actors alike, as well as by regional and subregional organizations. As covered in section X, communications addressed to the Council containing explicit mentions of Article 51 continued to increase in 2020, and the principle of individual and/or collective self-defence was also cited abundantly in communications as well as in the discussions of the Council.

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## I. Determination of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter

### Article 39

*The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security.*

### Note

Section I concerns the practice of the Council with regard to the determination of the existence of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter. It provides information regarding the determination of the existence of a threat by the Council and examines instances in which a threat was debated. The section is divided into three subsections. Subsection A provides an overview of the decisions of the Council relating to the determination of a “threat to the peace”. Subsection B contains a series of case studies describing some of the arguments advanced during the Council’s deliberations in connection with the determination of a threat in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter and the adoption of some of the resolutions mentioned in subsection A. Subsection C contains an outline of the references to Article 39 of the Charter found in communications addressed to the Council in 2020.

### A. Decisions relating to Article 39

During the period under review, the Council did not determine the existence of any breach of the peace, act of aggression or new threat to international peace and security. This notwithstanding, in resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), the Council considered that the unprecedented extent of the COVID-19 pandemic was likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>1</sup>

#### Continuing threats

In 2020, the Council continued to monitor the evolution of existing and emerging conflicts and situations and to determine, reaffirm and recognize the existence of continuing threats. The relevant provisions of decisions in which the Council referred to

continuing threats to peace and security during the period under review are set out in tables 1 and 2, respectively.

In that regard, the Council determined that, in and of themselves, the situations in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan, including the Abyei area and along the border between the Sudan and South Sudan, and Yemen continued to pose threats to international peace and security and/or threats to international peace and security in the respective regions.

In addition, in Asia, with regard to the situation in Afghanistan, the Council expressed its deep concern about the threat posed by terrorism to Afghanistan and the region. In connection with the Middle East and specifically concerning the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Council determined that the devastating humanitarian situation in the country continued to pose a threat to peace and security in the region.

In Europe, in relation to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council reiterated its determination that the situation in the region continued to constitute a threat to international peace and security.

In Africa, and specifically in connection with the situation in Guinea-Bissau, the Council reiterated its call upon the authorities of Guinea-Bissau to implement and review national legislations and mechanisms to combat transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and money-laundering, which threatened security and stability in Guinea-Bissau and in the subregion.<sup>2</sup> Concerning the situation in Somalia, the Council condemned Al-Shabaab attacks in Somalia and beyond, expressing grave concern that Al-Shabaab continued to pose a serious threat to the peace, security and stability of Somalia and the region, particularly through its increased use of improvised explosive devices. To that end, the Council recognized that the threat posed by Al-Shabaab to peace, security and stability in Somalia and the region went beyond the group’s conventional military action and asymmetric warfare. The Council also determined that the incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, as well as the activity of pirate groups in Somalia, were an important factor exacerbating the situation in Somalia, which

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), last preambular paragraph.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#), para. 20.

continued to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region.

Under the item entitled “Peace and security in Africa”, the Council expressed its concern, strongly condemned terrorism in all forms and manifestations and noted the increasing threat posed to peace and security in Africa by terrorism, especially in the most affected regions of the Sahel, in particular the area where the three borders of Mali, the Niger and Burkina Faso met, the Lake Chad basin and the Horn of Africa.

In 2020, several decisions adopted in connection with thematic items also contained references to threats to international peace and security.

In connection with the item entitled “Non-proliferation/Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”, the Council determined that proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, continued to constitute a threat to international peace and security.<sup>3</sup>

With regard to the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security”, the Council recalled that ISIL (Da’esh) constituted a global threat to international peace and security through its terrorist acts, its violent extremist ideology, its continued gross, systematic and widespread attacks directed against civilians, its violations of international humanitarian

<sup>3</sup> Resolution 2515 (2020), seventh preambular paragraph.

law and abuses of human rights, particularly those committed against women and children, and including those motivated by religious or ethnic grounds, and its recruitment and training of foreign terrorist fighters whose threat affected all regions and Member States.<sup>4</sup> Under the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”, the Council expressed concern at the growing threat to peace and security posed by terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism on the African continent, and reaffirmed that terrorism in all forms and manifestations constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security.<sup>5</sup> The Council also reaffirmed, under the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts”, the need to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter and international law, including applicable international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, and stressed in that regard the important role the United Nations played in leading and coordinating that effort.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Resolution 2544 (2020), third preambular paragraph.

<sup>5</sup> S/PRST/2020/11, seventh paragraph.

<sup>6</sup> Resolution 2560 (2020), seventh preambular paragraph.

Table 1

**Decisions in which the Council referred to continuing threats to the peace, by region and country, in 2020**

<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Provision</i>
<b>Africa</b>	
<b>The situation in the Central African Republic</b>	
Resolution 2507 (2020) 31 January 2020	Determining that the situation in the Central African Republic continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region (penultimate preambular paragraph)
	<i>See also resolutions 2536 (2020) and 2552 (2020) (penultimate preambular paragraphs)</i>
<b>The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo</b>	
Resolution 2556 (2020) 18 December 2020	Determining that the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region (penultimate preambular paragraph)
<b>The situation in Libya</b>	
Resolution 2509 (2020) 11 February 2020	Determining that the situation in Libya continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security (penultimate preambular paragraph)



<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Provision</i>
Resolution <a href="#">2510 (2020)</a> 12 February 2020	Recalling its determination in its resolution <a href="#">2213 (2015)</a> that the situation in Libya continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security (last preambular paragraph)  <i>See also resolution <a href="#">2542 (2020)</a> (last preambular paragraph)</i>
<b>The situation in Mali</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2541 (2020)</a> 31 August 2020	Determining that the situation in Mali continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security (penultimate preambular paragraph)
<b>Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2508 (2020)</a> 11 February 2020	Determining that the situation in the Sudan continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security (second preambular paragraph)  <i>See also resolution <a href="#">2517 (2020)</a> (penultimate preambular paragraph)</i>
Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a> 12 March 2020	Determining that the situation in South Sudan continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region (penultimate preambular paragraph)
Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a> 12 November 2020	Recognizing that the current situation in Abyei and along the border between the Sudan and South Sudan continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security (last preambular paragraph)
<b>The situation in Somalia</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2551 (2020)</a> 12 November 2020	Condemning Al-Shabaab attacks in Somalia and beyond, expressing grave concern that Al-Shabaab continues to pose a serious threat to the peace, security and stability of Somalia and the region, particularly through its increased use of improvised explosive devices, and further expressing grave concern at the continued presence in Somalia of affiliates linked to Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) (sixth preambular paragraph)  Condemning the supply of weapons and ammunition supplies to and through Somalia in violation of the arms embargo, especially when they reach Al-Shabaab and affiliates linked to ISIL, and when they undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Somalia, as a serious threat to peace and stability in the region, and further condemning continued illegal supply of weapons, ammunition and improvised explosive device components from Yemen to Somalia (tenth preambular paragraph)  Recognizing that the threat posed by Al-Shabaab to peace, security and stability in Somalia and the region goes beyond the group's conventional military action and asymmetric warfare, expressing serious concern at Al-Shabaab's ability to generate revenue as documented in the final report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia ( <a href="#">S/2020/949</a> ), welcoming the Federal Government of Somalia's efforts to strengthen the Somali financial sector to identify and monitor money laundering risks and combat terrorist financing, noting the steps set out by the Federal Government of Somalia in the Somalia transition plan on institutional capacity-building, which seek to develop these capabilities, noting the importance of financial services in enabling Somalia's economic future, further welcoming efforts by the Federal Government of Somalia, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Panel to develop a plan to disrupt Al-Shabaab finances, and urging engagement from the Federal Government of Somalia, federal member states, Somali financial institutions, the private sector and the international community to support this process (eleventh preambular paragraph)  Determining that the situation in Somalia continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region (penultimate preambular paragraph)
Resolution <a href="#">2554 (2020)</a> 4 December 2020	Determining that the incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, as well as the activity of pirate groups in Somalia, are an important factor exacerbating the situation in Somalia, which continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region (penultimate preambular paragraph)

## Peace and security in Africa

[S/PRST/2020/5](#)  
11 March 2020

The Security Council expresses its concern at and strongly condemns terrorism in all forms and manifestations and notes the increasing threat posed to peace and security in Africa by terrorism, especially in the most affected regions of the Sahel, in particular the area of three borders (Mali - Niger-Burkina Faso), the Lake Chad basin and the Horn of Africa and expresses serious concern regarding the undermining impact of such attacks on peace and security in Africa (first paragraph)

## Asia

### The situation in Afghanistan

Resolution [2543 \(2020\)](#)  
15 September 2020

Further expressing its deep concern about the threat posed by terrorism to Afghanistan and the region, expressing serious concern over the continuing presence of Al-Qaida, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) as well as other international terrorist organizations and their affiliated groups in Afghanistan, condemning in the strongest terms all terrorist activity and all terrorist attacks, and reaffirming the importance of ensuring that the territory of Afghanistan should not be used by Al-Qaida, ISIL or other international terrorist groups to threaten or attack any other country, and that neither the Taliban nor any other Afghan group or individual should support terrorists operating on the territory of any country (ninth preambular paragraph)

Expressing concern over the cultivation, production, trade and trafficking of illicit drugs in Afghanistan which continue to pose a threat to peace and stability in the region and beyond, calling upon States to strengthen international and regional cooperation to counter this threat and recognizing the important role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in this context (penultimate preambular paragraph)

Resolution [2557 \(2020\)](#)  
18 December 2020

Recognizing that, notwithstanding accelerated efforts to make progress towards reconciliation, the situation in Afghanistan remains a threat to international peace and security, and reaffirming the need to combat this threat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including applicable human rights, refugee and humanitarian law, stressing in this regard the important role the United Nations plays in this effort (penultimate preambular paragraph)

## Europe

### The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Resolution [2549 \(2020\)](#)  
5 November 2020

Determining that the situation in the region continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security (penultimate preambular paragraph)

## Middle East

### The situation in the Middle East

Resolution [2504 \(2020\)](#)  
10 January 2020

Determining that the devastating humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic continues to constitute a threat to peace and security in the region (penultimate preambular paragraph)

*See also resolution [2533 \(2020\)](#) (penultimate preambular paragraph)*

Resolution [2511 \(2020\)](#)  
25 February 2020

Determining that the situation in Yemen continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security (penultimate preambular paragraph)

Resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#)  
28 August 2020

Determining that the situation in Lebanon continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security (last preambular paragraph)

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Table 2

**Decisions in which the Council referred to continuing threats to the peace, by thematic issue, in 2020**

<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Provision</i>
<b>Non-proliferation/Democratic People’s Republic of Korea</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2515 (2020)</a> 30 March 2020	Determining that proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security (penultimate preambular paragraph)
<b>Threats to international peace and security</b>	
Resolution <a href="#">2544 (2020)</a> 18 September 2020	Recalling that Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da’esh) constitutes a global threat to international peace and security through its terrorist acts, its violent extremist ideology, its continued gross, systematic and widespread attacks directed against civilians, its violations of international humanitarian law and abuses of human rights, particularly those committed against women and children, and including those motivated by religious or ethnic grounds, and its recruitment and training of foreign terrorist fighters whose threat affects all regions and Member States (third preambular paragraph)
<b>Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations</b>	
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/11</a> 4 December 2020	The Security Council expresses concern at the growing threat to peace and security posed by terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism on the African continent. The Security Council reaffirms that terrorism in all forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations, whenever and by whomever committed, and remains determined to contribute further to enhancing the effectiveness of the overall effort to fight this scourge on a global level in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and other obligations of States under international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law (seventh paragraph)

**B. Discussions relating to Article 39**

During the period under review, there were three explicit references to Article 39 made during the deliberations of the Security Council.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, several issues regarding the interpretation of Article 39 and the determination of threats to international peace and security arose during the deliberations of the Council on thematic items.

Marked by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the discussions among Council members in 2020 focused on the linkages between health crises and security. Council members held a high-level open videoconference on 2 July focusing specifically on the implications of COVID-19. As described in case 1, participants discussed the link between health emergencies, including pandemics, and threats to international peace and security. Similarly, on 12 August, in connection with the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, Council members focused on pandemics and the challenges of

sustaining peace (see case 2). On 3 November, in connection with the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, Council members held an open videoconference focused on contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity during which health crises were explored as drivers of conflict and threats to international peace and security (see case 3).

In addition to pandemics, climate change was another area of focus in 2020, which resulted in an increase in dedicated discussions and references to climate change as a threat to international peace and security. On 24 July, Council members held an open videoconference, in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, focused specifically on climate and security.<sup>8</sup> In connection with the same item, on 17 September, Council members and other Member States addressed the issue of the humanitarian effects of environmental degradation and peace and security in the context of an open videoconference.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Trinidad and Tobago) and [S/2020/1090](#) (Ireland and Portugal).

<sup>8</sup> See [S/2020/751](#).

<sup>9</sup> See [S/2020/929](#).

In addition to health crises and climate change, Council members discussed other potential threats. At an open videoconference held on 17 July, in connection with the item entitled “Women and peace and security”,<sup>10</sup> participants discussed conflict-related sexual violence no longer as a side effect of conflict but as a threat to international peace and security. On 18 December, Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security”<sup>11</sup> during which the President of the International Court of Justice noted that the Council had increasingly used international law as a parameter to identify threats to international peace and security. At the videoconference, some participants<sup>12</sup> suggested that non-compliance with Court decisions could threaten international peace and security.

As in previous years, Council members also continued to hold discussions on other threats to international peace and security, such as terrorism and the activities of terrorist organizations,<sup>13</sup> linkages between terrorism and organized crime,<sup>14</sup> the illicit transfer and accumulation of small arms and light weapons<sup>15</sup> and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>16</sup>

In 2020, the Council also discussed threats to international peace and security in the context of country- or region-specific situations and conflicts. In connection with the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Council members and other Member States deliberated on whether the circumstances affecting the country constituted a threat to international peace and security.<sup>17</sup> In addition, during various meetings and videoconferences in 2020, Council members considered the plans by Israel to annex parts of the West Bank and their potential ramifications for regional and

international peace and security in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question” (see case 4).

### Case 1 Maintenance of international peace and security

During a high-level open videoconference held on 2 July under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”<sup>18</sup> that focused on the implications of COVID-19, at the initiative of Germany, which held the presidency for the month,<sup>19</sup> Council members heard briefings by the Secretary-General and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross. All Council members delivered statements during the videoconference, and delegations of various non-Council members submitted written statements.<sup>20</sup>

The Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France stated that he was pleased that, at the initiative of Tunisia and France, the Council had effectively addressed the threat to international peace and security caused by the COVID-19 pandemic through resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), which had been adopted the day before, on 1 July. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia stated that the COVID-19 pandemic had reversed assumptions about the world order, demonstrating that the hierarchy of global security threats was changing rapidly. He underscored that, with the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, it was important to recognize that humanity was witnessing new types of threats to international peace and security, emanating not only from pandemics but also from climate change and cybercriminality. The representative of the Dominican Republic indicated that the potential and unprecedented magnitude of the COVID-19 outbreak constituted a threat to international peace and security and could critically harm human security across the world. The

<sup>10</sup> See [S/2020/727](#).

<sup>11</sup> See [S/2020/1286](#).

<sup>12</sup> Germany, Belgium, South Africa and Bangladesh.

<sup>13</sup> Under the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts”, see [S/PV.8716](#) and [S/2020/836](#); and in connection with the item entitled “Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council”, see [S/2020/1143](#).

<sup>14</sup> Under the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts”, see [S/2020/791](#).

<sup>15</sup> Under the item entitled “Small arms”, see [S/PV.8713](#).

<sup>16</sup> Under the item entitled “Non-proliferation”, see [S/2020/1324](#); under the item entitled “Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council”, see [S/2020/1143](#); and under the item “The situation in the Middle East” (concerning the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic), see, for example, [S/2020/902](#), [S/PV.8764](#), [S/2020/1088](#) and [S/2020/1202](#).

<sup>17</sup> See [S/2020/435](#).

<sup>18</sup> See [S/2020/663](#).

<sup>19</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 22 June 2020 ([S/2020/571](#)).

<sup>20</sup> The following delegations and entities submitted written statements in connection with the videoconference: Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark (also on behalf of Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), Ecuador, El Salvador, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea (on behalf of the Group of Friends of Solidarity for Global Health Security), Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and European Union.

representative of the United States stated that, as the last few months had been spent adapting lives and working methods to stopping the spread of the virus, the videoconference was an opportune time to reflect on what had been learned, discuss the ongoing threat that health emergencies pose to international security and reflect on how the obligations to protect the most vulnerable communities could be fulfilled.

The representative of Bahrain indicated that the health crisis posed a threat to international peace and security and had an impact on the least developed countries and the most vulnerable groups, especially those affected by conflicts. He further underscored that the unprecedented scope of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world threatened international peace and security, as the Council had affirmed in its resolution 2532 (2020). The representative of Kuwait welcomed the adoption of resolution 2532 (2020) on the global health crisis, which he believed constituted a threat to international peace and security.

The delegation of Qatar was pleased that the discussion was taking place as the Council strived to fulfil its responsibility by addressing the pandemic and its impact on international peace and security. The delegation further recalled that the discussion was not without precedent, as the Council had previously taken action when global health risks had undermined the stability of the affected countries and regions, for example in resolution 1308 (2000), which constituted the first Council resolution on a health issue as well as the first Council resolution on the impact of HIV/AIDS, and resolution 2177 (2014), which had determined that Ebola was a threat to world security. The representative of Armenia recognized that global health risks could undermine peace and security, in particular in regions already affected by conflicts and humanitarian crises, and also recalled resolution 2177 (2014), which had referred to the unprecedented extent of the Ebola outbreak in Africa as constituting a threat to international peace and security. The delegation of Canada also recalled the Council's responses to HIV/AIDS and Ebola and emphasized that the COVID-19 pandemic was a multifaceted threat that had significant international peace and security consequences, with sweeping implications for the Council. The delegation further emphasized that the Council must focus more attention on global health security, and that additional briefings on the implications of global health security challenges on international peace and security should be considered. The delegation of Mexico recalled that in recent years, the Council had explored various aspects of emerging challenges to international peace and security, including the health crises caused by

HIV/AIDS and the Ebola virus disease, including its determination in 2014 that the Ebola outbreak in West Africa constituted a threat to international peace and security. Among the elements that had led to that determination had been such considerations as the rapid spread of the virus and its mortality rate, the inability of health systems to react in a timely manner and the negative socioeconomic impacts and peacekeeping challenges in the region. The representative of the Netherlands also referred to the determination by the Council in resolution 2177 (2014) that the Ebola outbreak had constituted a threat to international peace and security by undermining the stability of the most-affected countries and that it could possibly lead to further instances of civil unrest, social tensions and the deterioration of the political and security climate. He indicated that it was therefore hard to understand why the Council had not been able to come earlier to a similar conclusion on the much more far-reaching coronavirus. The representative of Pakistan similarly recalled that the Council had pronounced in resolution 2177 (2014) that pandemics constituted a grave threat to international peace and security and that pandemics not only undermined the political, social and economic stability of the most-affected countries, but also vitiated the overall security environment, becoming drivers of instability in the concerned regions and beyond. The representative of Saudi Arabia pointed out that the pandemic posed a threat no less formidable than the security challenges that imperilled international peace and security.

The representative of Denmark, also on behalf of Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, stated that the COVID-19 pandemic posed a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security, explaining that the socioeconomic fallout of the crisis exacerbated the root causes as well as the consequences of conflict, and that the root causes of conflict also increased the risk of pandemics. The delegation of the Republic of Korea, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Solidarity for Global Health Security, similarly indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic posed a significant threat to the maintenance of international peace and security and global health security. The delegation of El Salvador also recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic was an unprecedented health, social and economic challenge, as well as a threat to international peace and security, which required innovative and supportive responses from all Members and relevant actors of the Organization. The representative of Nigeria suggested that, because pandemics were infectious diseases that could kill millions of people and cause trillions of dollars in economic damage in countries, regions and the world, they could become a threat to international peace and



security. The delegation of Italy underscored that global health was a fundamental precondition for peace, stability and prosperity, and noted that, besides its tragic impact on public health and the profound repercussions on human rights and socioeconomic conditions at the global level, the COVID-19 pandemic had seriously exacerbated ongoing threats to the maintenance of international peace and security. The representative of Lebanon expressed concern that the COVID-19 pandemic had spared no one and had acted as a catalyst in many countries and regions of the world, aggravating their situations and, thus, threatening peace and security.

The representative of Liechtenstein recognized that the holding of the debate was an important contribution to a much-needed effort in the Council to broaden its security paradigm, which had proven insufficient to embrace the full spectrum of security dimensions that determined current international relations and domestic policy and to deliver on the expectation of the membership that the Council act preventively against threats to international peace and security. He argued that the thematic agendas of the Council were an essential contribution towards implementing its mandate, and that they must include global health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The representative of Spain underscored that the open videoconference had come at an exceptional time during the efforts to overcome a global pandemic that had multidimensional effects. The representative pointed out that the impact of the pandemic had increased the risk of tension, conflict and division, and called upon the Council to play a key role in taking the decisions necessary to lay the foundations for a better future, free of conflicts and threats to peace and security. He also urged that United Nations peacekeeping missions be equipped with the material and human resources, especially with regard to adequate protection officers, necessary to provide agile support to local communities in responding to health threats.

The representative of Kenya suggested that existing fragility and conflict situations were some of the triggers that could transform a health crisis into a security threat. The pandemic's impact in fragile and conflict-affected countries, for example in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and other regions that were in protracted conflict situations, was proof that pandemics could be an evolving threat to peace. The delegation of Malta underscored that the world had had to contend with a threat that went beyond the conservative awareness of what was understood by threats to security. The world had been rudely awakened by the fact that pandemics could give rise to grave security and economic concerns

that were as equally widespread and devastating as any other commonly perceived major threat.

The delegation of Ukraine noted that, while there was no consensus as to how much pandemics constituted an immediate threat to international peace and security, there was hardly anyone who would sincerely question the existence of a correlation between severe health crises and a deterioration of the security environment. Even though a health crisis would not necessarily trigger a security crisis, the delegation argued that it would be an exacerbating factor in any security crisis. The delegation further underscored that while it remained to be determined whether the COVID-19 pandemic constituted a threat to international peace and security, not many other events could reshape and shake up people's lives on a global scale, and noted that the impact and consequences of a global pandemic were akin to a world war or a natural disaster of biblical proportions. From that perspective, a virus that could wipe out a large proportion of humankind, cause severe fluctuations in the global economy, overwhelm national health-care systems, disrupt the provision of services by national Governments, sow the seeds for civil unrest and aggravate existing security challenges definitely deserved attention as a potential threat to international peace and security. The delegation of Cyprus argued that, notwithstanding the clear primacy that should be afforded to "hard" security issues by the Council, factors beyond hard security that had become existential could not be overlooked. That fact compelled an adaptation to the nature of threats and the embracing of a more comprehensive concept of security.

The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela argued that in a world already shaken by armed conflicts, including those of a protracted nature, as well as by the threats posed by terrorism and climate change, among others, the human crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic represented an unprecedented challenge to the international system and, potentially, to the maintenance of international peace and security. The representative of Cuba noted that the pandemic posed a threat to sustainable development owing to its severe impact on the economy, trade and societies in general.

## **Case 2 Peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

On 12 August, at the initiative of Indonesia, which held the presidency for the month,<sup>21</sup> Council members held a high-level open videoconference in

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<sup>21</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 30 July 2020 (S/2020/765).



connection with the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace” focusing on pandemics and the challenges of sustaining peace.<sup>22</sup> At the videoconference, Council members were briefed by the Secretary-General, former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Director of the Center on International Cooperation of New York University. All Council members spoke. In addition, 36 Member States,<sup>23</sup> as well as the delegation of the European Union and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, submitted written statements.

The Director of the Center on International Cooperation of New York University emphasized that socioeconomic problems could become international threats to peace and security if they were not addressed, and the way to get them addressed and to raise their profile was to raise them in political and security terms as well as in developmental terms. She added that, while the Council often referred to issues such as pandemics as non-traditional issues, they were not really non-traditional: if one were to ask the world’s military agencies, most of them had planned for years for the impact of pandemics as potential security risks.

Some Council members acknowledged the unprecedented impact and challenges posed by the pandemic. The representative of Tunisia asserted that the pandemic caused by COVID-19 was a massive global crisis and an unprecedented challenge that posed a significant threat to international peace and security and entailed a health catastrophe, a profound economic downturn and a serious risk of instability. He further recalled that, together with France, Tunisia had initiated resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), adopted on 1 July, in which the Council stated that the unprecedented extent of the COVID-19 pandemic was likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. Similarly, the representative of France referred to the pandemic as an unprecedented crisis. The representative of the United Kingdom acknowledged that the pandemic presented a crisis of unprecedented scope and complexity, which had triggered health, humanitarian, economic, social, development, political

and security challenges with both immediate and long-term ramifications. The representative of the Niger stated that given the non-traditional nature of the pandemic as a threat to peace and security, thinking outside the box and transforming the approach to peacekeeping could yield positive results. While some Member States considered that the pandemic aggravated existing crises, others affirmed that the pandemic constituted a threat to international peace and security. The representatives of Azerbaijan and Romania referred to the recognition in resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) that the COVID-19 pandemic was likely to endanger international peace and security. The representative of Costa Rica noted that COVID-19 had had an impact on all sectors of society, creating multiple crises that threatened peace and stability. He further underscored that even though the Council had not recognized the new COVID-19 pandemic as a threat to international peace and security – which did not mean that it was not – the Council needed to ensure that the pandemic did not pose yet another threat to peace processes and undermine the gains already made.

The representative of Nigeria emphasized that the crisis created by the pandemic went beyond the immediate health impact and that issues such as food insecurity, job losses and deepening inequality could intensify pre-existing challenges to the social structure in countries, with the most vulnerable populations becoming more disproportionately affected. He added that in some situations, those issues created new threats to international peace and security, particularly when they took place across sensitive regional boundaries. The delegation of Guatemala underscored that pandemics could not be addressed solely as a health issue. Beyond its immediate health and humanitarian impact, COVID-19 risked deepening pre-existing social, economic and political fissures. The delegation added that the pandemic was leading to an increase in social violence and conflict, was a threat to the achievements made in the area of international peace and security and exacerbated existing grievances and inequalities, affecting in particular the most vulnerable in conflict-affected areas. The delegation of Italy stressed that in addition to its severe impact on public health, human rights and socioeconomic conditions, the pandemic had aggravated existing threats to the maintenance of international peace and security and hampered the delivery of humanitarian aid.

In addition, given its global impact, some Member States advocated for comprehensive and joint responses to the crisis. The representative of Liechtenstein stressed that in addressing the pandemic, the Council was taking an important but insufficient

<sup>22</sup> See [S/2020/799](#).

<sup>23</sup> The delegations of the following countries submitted written statements: Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark (also on behalf of Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), Ecuador, El Salvador, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand and United Arab Emirates.

step to revise the paradigm of peace and security, which had proved inadequate to deliver on the expectation of the membership that the Council act comprehensively and preventively against all threats to international peace and security. The representative of Qatar argued that COVID-19 was a global threat that was not confined to a single country and as such could not be addressed without a joint international effort. The delegation of Chile underscored that it was essential to work towards peacebuilding and sustaining peace in areas at risk, to appropriately tackle emerging threats and preserve the gains made through years of international efforts and United Nations presence on the ground and to lay the foundation for solid and comprehensive post-pandemic recovery, including preventing associated risks to international peace and security.

### **Case 3 Peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

On 3 November, at the initiative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which held the presidency for the month,<sup>24</sup> Council members held a high-level open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace” focused on contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity.<sup>25</sup> At the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Deputy Secretary-General, the Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency, the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies and the President of the Economic and Social Council. All Council members spoke during the videoconference. In addition, 38 delegations from non-Council members<sup>26</sup> and the European Union submitted their statements in writing.

During the videoconference, the Council heard briefings that addressed the linkages between peace, development and security as well as the impact of COVID-19 and climate on security. The Deputy Secretary-General noted that COVID-19 continued to exacerbate the risks and drivers of conflict and exposed

vulnerable people to new threats in pre-existing humanitarian crises. She also stated that the climate emergency was a major driver of inequality, insecurity and conflict and noted the links between climate and security challenges in the Sahel, the Lake Chad region, the Middle East and elsewhere. She added that in some cases, the climate crisis threatened the very existence of nations. The Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency stated that peace, security and development were inextricably interlinked. The President of the Economic and Social Council referred to climate change as an existential threat.

Some Council members and other participants focused on public health and pandemics as contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia noted that while the efforts of the United Nations had spared humankind a new world war and successfully restored peace and stability in many regions, the world today continued to face numerous challenges and threats to security, peace and stability. In this regard, he identified the global spread of epidemics as a threat to humankind as a whole. He underscored that COVID-19 stood as the best evidence of the danger that new threats and challenges could potentially pose to international security, peace and stability. The Minister of State in the Federal Foreign Office of Germany noted that the COVID-19 pandemic was a multidimensional challenge likely to increase insecurity and undermine peacebuilding efforts in conflict-affected countries and countries in transition, which endangered the maintenance of international peace and security. The delegation of Chile underscored that the multidimensional crisis caused by COVID-19 revealed the importance of institutional and multilateral preparedness in responding coherently to new global challenges and threats. The delegation of the European Union underscored that the COVID-19 pandemic and its potential implications were a tragic reminder of what constituted a threat to collective security, and added that, in the past, the Council had dealt with health crises with great potential impact for the security of fragile communities, such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic in 2000 or the Ebola outbreak in 2014, by declaring that the spread of the virus was a “threat to international peace and security”.

Council members and other participants also identified climate change as a threat to international peace and security, or as a factor exacerbating other threats to international peace and security, and encouraged its consideration by the Council. The Minister of State in the Federal Foreign Office of Germany stated that climate change was undoubtedly

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<sup>24</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 30 October 2020 (S/2020/1064).

<sup>25</sup> S/2020/1090.

<sup>26</sup> The delegations of the following countries submitted written statements: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark (also on behalf of Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sudan, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates.

one of the most relevant threats to stability and security in our time. The Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia of the United Kingdom, while identifying exclusion as a key contemporary driver of conflict, stated that the strains placed on societies grappling with public health emergencies or the impact of climate change could exacerbate threats. Specifically, he noted that climate change created structural conditions that multiplied conflict risks in countries around the world. The representative of the Dominican Republic described climate change as an unconventional threat to international peace and security with profound implications for everyone without exception. He added that the relationship between climate and security was undeniable and so too were the links among climate, development and security. The representative of Kenya affirmed that climate change constituted an existential threat among small island and developing States, as it touched on the very existence of statehood and territory. The representative of France stated that it was time for the international community to adopt a preventive approach to climate change by anticipating the humanitarian consequences of environmental disasters and called upon the Secretary-General to present, every two years, an assessment of the threats to international peace and security posed by climate change. The delegation of the European Union affirmed that in addition to pandemics, climate change and environmental degradation exacerbated situations of fragility and vulnerability. The representative of Ecuador stated that climate change was one of the greatest challenges because it affected the ability of all countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including Goal 16, on peace, justice and strong institutions.

The representative of Portugal emphasized that climate change was not only a sustainable development issue but also a security issue, and it was at the intersection between those areas where the threats exacerbated each other. The delegation of Canada acknowledged that the ways in which climate change exacerbated conflict drivers and increased vulnerability was only beginning to be understood. The delegation of Guatemala stated that climate change and security had an intrinsically symbiotic relationship where one threat exacerbated the other; therefore, meeting the challenge of climate change required thorough consideration by all members of the Council, permanent and non-permanent.

By contrast, some Council members and other Member States questioned the linkage between climate

change and global instability as well as the competence of the Council to address climate change. The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation delivered a statement on behalf of his country's Minister for Foreign Affairs that stated that his country did not view climate change as a universal factor underlying conflict and global instability. Instead, the Minister proposed that its impact on the socioeconomic and political situations in a number of countries and regions must be viewed on a case-by-case basis. The delegation of Colombia stressed that the General Assembly, as a universal body providing for a comprehensive and inclusive approach that took into account the intrinsic links between climate change and social and economic issues, was the proper context for debating and taking decisions relating to the causes and impacts of climate change. Similarly, the delegation of Peru considered it necessary for the Council to strengthen and systematize its coordination with the United Nations system, especially with those bodies directly involved in preventing and mitigating the negative effects of climate change. The delegation stressed further that such coordination should take into account the competencies and mandates of the various entities of the system while promoting favourable synergies to address both the particular needs of and the risk, crisis or conflict situations faced by various Member States, and that, from the Council's perspective, this implied having timely information on the impact of climate change, regarding both the situations on the Council's agenda and those where it was necessary to act preventively to maintain international peace and security.

#### **Case 4 The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

During various meetings and open videoconferences over the course of 2020, Council members and other Member States considered the Israeli annexation plans of parts of the West Bank and their potential ramifications for regional and international peace and security. On 21 January, the Council held its 8706th meeting under the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question".<sup>27</sup> In her briefing, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs reported that the beginning of 2020 had witnessed the continued expansion of settlement activity and the threat of annexation of parts of the West Bank. She further described annexation plans for the Jordan Valley and stressed that the annexation of some or all of Area C, if implemented, would deal a

<sup>27</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#).

devastating blow to the potential for reviving negotiations, advancing regional peace and the essence of the two-State solution. The representative of Tunisia underscored that the ongoing unilateral Israeli measures could lead only to an escalation of tensions and the exacerbation of violence, thereby threatening regional and international security and stability. The representative of Indonesia emphasized the urgent need to reverse the prevailing negative trends in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which escalate the threats to achieving durable peace and security in the region. The representative of the Dominican Republic said that the conflict between Israel and Palestine was one whose undeniable regional ramifications continued to heighten threats to international peace and security. The representative of Jordan stressed the need to make every effort to seek calm and reduce tensions in order to avoid any further threat to the security and stability of the region.

At an open videoconference held on 20 May,<sup>28</sup> the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, in his briefing to the Council, stated that the continuing threat of annexation by Israel of parts of the West Bank would constitute a most serious violation of international law, deal a devastating blow to the two-State solution, close the door to a renewal of negotiations and threaten efforts to advance regional peace and broader efforts aimed at maintaining international peace and security. The representative of France stated that annexation was not in the interest of the Palestinians, the Israelis, the Europeans or the international community, and that the implementation of such a unilateral step would further threaten regional stability. The representative of South Africa expressed regret that no action had been taken to stop the building of settlements on illegally occupied land, the confiscation and destruction of Palestinian land and property, the illegal blockade of Gaza and the annexation of territory illegally acquired through the use of force. He emphasized that all of those actions were violations of international law and a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security, and no collective measures had been taken towards the prevention or removal of the threats to peace facing the Palestinian people. He stressed that the dangerous prospect of Israel continuing with its unilateral actions and the annexation of large parts of the occupied West Bank and the Jordan Valley not only showed belligerence, but also threatened efforts to advance regional peace.

At a high-level open videoconference on 24 June,<sup>29</sup> the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, in his briefing to the Council, emphasized that it was the

duty and responsibility of the Council to address any situation that threatened international peace and security and that the possible move by the Government of Israel to annex parts of the occupied Palestinian territory, if implemented, would constitute a serious threat to regional stability, with broader ramifications for international security. Similar concerns were expressed by the representative of Estonia, who stated that the unilateral annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank would undermine the prospects of a negotiated two-State solution and threaten the stability of the region, while the delegation of the Niger expressed the worry that the annexation, if carried out, would constitute a serious violation of international law and a grave threat to international peace and security. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia emphasized that the intended Israeli annexation represented a grave violation of international law and yet another aggression against the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. He added that it constituted a serious threat to any efforts to advance peace, and would have extremely dangerous repercussions on the entire situation in the region. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia stated that the official declaration of annexation in May had created a justification for the Council to take swift action under the Charter, and questioned why the Council waited for the annexation to happen in order to assume its functions. He argued that no matter who posed a threat to international peace and security, they should be held accountable before the Council. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic noted that Israel refused to commit to Council resolutions because of the support it received from some Member States, especially the United States, which contributed to prolonging the occupation, increasing the number of grave violations of international law, augmenting acts of aggression and threatening regional and international peace and security.

At an open videoconference held on 21 July,<sup>30</sup> several delegations<sup>31</sup> also identified the potential annexation of part of the West Bank as a threat to regional and/or international peace and security or to the region's stability. The Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People recalled that annexation represented a serious threat to the two-State solution and threatened global peace and security. The delegation of Jordan stressed that all those who wanted an end to the conflict must act to prevent annexation, adding that the achievement of a just and lasting peace that met all legitimate rights of the Palestinian people was a strategic Jordanian, Palestinian and Arab choice. The

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<sup>28</sup> See [S/2020/430](#).

<sup>29</sup> See [S/2020/596](#).

<sup>30</sup> See [S/2020/736](#).

<sup>31</sup> Estonia, Tunisia, Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries), Bahrain, Ireland and Namibia.



delegation further underscored that any other scenario was a threat to peace and to all in the region.

### C. References to Article 39 in communications addressed to the Security Council

During the period under review, two letters from the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela addressed to the President of the Council contained explicit references to Article 39 of the Charter. In his letter dated 3 April,<sup>32</sup> the representative alerted the President of the Council to the “dangerous actions” being taken by the Government of the United States, which threatened the peace and security of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the entire region. His country requested that the Council take strong action by declaring the “warmongering policy” of the United States and Colombia against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to be a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security and, in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter, urge those Governments to end their policy of aggression against his country in order to prevent the escalation of tensions in the region. In his letter dated 13 May,<sup>33</sup> the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela stated that armed groups of mercenaries and terrorists organized, trained, financed and protected by the Governments of Colombia and the United States had entered his country’s territory illegally with the stated aim of perpetrating criminal acts

against its people. The representative further declared that in the light of the gravity of the reported events and the dangerous escalation of the aggression against his country, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela would soon be bringing its case before the appropriate international judicial bodies. In that regard, he stated that his country had asked the President of the Council to initiate the steps necessary for the Council to hold discussions to: (a) recognize that the aggression perpetrated by the Governments of Colombia and the United States against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on 3 and 4 May 2020 had been an armed attack that had threatened the peace and security of his nation and the region; and (b) issue a clear statement condemning and prohibiting the use or threat of use of force in all its forms and manifestations against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in accordance with the powers conferred upon the Council under Article 39 of the Charter.

In addition, an explicit reference to Article 39 was included in a concept note for the open videoconference that took place on 3 November under the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”,<sup>34</sup> in which Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which held the presidency for the month, invited Council members to share their views on, inter alia, whether pandemics, environmental challenges (including climate change) and underdevelopment were matters that should be seriously considered in the context of Article 39 of the Charter.

<sup>32</sup> S/2020/277.

<sup>33</sup> S/2020/399.

<sup>34</sup> See S/2020/1064.

## II. Provisional measures to prevent an aggravation of the situation in accordance with Article 40 of the Charter

### Article 40

*In order to prevent an aggravation of the situation, the Security Council may, before making the recommendations or deciding upon the measures provided for in Article 39, call upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable. Such provisional measures shall be without prejudice to the rights, claims, or position of the parties concerned. The Security Council shall duly take account of failure to comply with such provisional measures.*

### Note

Section II covers the practice of the Council in relation to Article 40 of the Charter, regarding provisional measures to prevent an aggravation of the situation. While Article 40 suggests that provisional measures to prevent the aggravation of a conflict would be adopted prior to the imposition of measures under Chapter VII (Articles 41 and 42), the practice of the Council reflects a more flexible interpretation of that provision. Given the prolonged and rapidly changing nature of conflicts dealt with by the Council, provisional measures have been imposed in parallel to the adoption of measures under Articles 41 and 42.

During the period under review, the Council did not impose any measures pursuant to Article 40 of the Charter. There was also no explicit reference to Article 40 made during the deliberations of the Council, nor

was there any discussion of constitutional significance on its interpretation. Similarly, there was no explicit reference to Article 40 in any of the communications of the Council.

### III. Measures not involving the use of armed force in accordance with Article 41 of the Charter

#### Article 41

*The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations.*

#### Note

Section III covers decisions and deliberations of the Council related to the imposition of measures not involving the use of force, pursuant to Article 41 of the Charter. During the period under review, the Council explicitly referred to Article 41 in the preamble of resolution 2515 (2020) in connection with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In 2020, the Council did not impose any judicial measure under Article 41 of the Charter.<sup>35</sup>

The present section is divided into two subsections. Subsection A contains an outline of the decisions in which the Council imposed, modified or terminated measures under Article 41 of the Charter. It is organized under two main headings, dealing with decisions on issues of a thematic and country-specific nature. Subsection B covers the deliberations of the Council during 2020 and is also organized under two headings, each highlighting the salient issues that were raised in connection with Article 41, with regard to thematic items or country-specific items.

#### A. Decisions relating to Article 41

##### Decisions on thematic issues relating to Article 41

In 2020, the Council adopted two decisions on issues of a thematic nature concerning sanctions measures and their implementation, both under the

agenda item entitled "Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts".<sup>36</sup>

In resolution 2557 (2020), the Council reiterated the need to ensure that the sanctions regime established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) contributed effectively to ongoing efforts to advance reconciliation to bring about peace, stability and security in Afghanistan, including the importance of the sanctions review in full accordance with resolution 2513 (2020).<sup>37</sup>

In resolution 2560 (2020), the Council emphasized that sanctions were an important tool under the Charter in the maintenance and restoration of international peace and security, including in support of countering terrorism.<sup>38</sup> The Council also continued to encourage all Member States to more actively submit to the Committee listing requests of individuals, groups, undertakings and entities that met listing criteria in paragraph 2 of resolution 2368 (2017), to submit to the Committee additional identifying and other information set out in paragraph 85 of resolution 2368 (2017) in order to keep the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions list reliable and up-to-date, and to make use of the provisions regarding available exemptions to the measures in paragraph 1 (a) and 81 (a) of resolution 2368 (2017).<sup>39</sup>

##### Decisions on country-specific issues relating to Article 41

During the period under review, as set out below, the Council renewed the existing measures concerning the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen, as well as those concerning the Taliban and associated individuals and entities. In addition, the Council introduced modification to the measures concerning the Central African Republic and Libya. With regard to Somalia, for the first time, the Council renewed the humanitarian exemption to the assets freeze and the partial lifting of the arms embargo without specifying an

<sup>35</sup> For information on the activity of the Council regarding issues pertaining to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, see part IX, sect. IV.

<sup>36</sup> For more information on this agenda item, see part I, sect. 29.

<sup>37</sup> Resolution 2557 (2020), seventh preambular paragraph.

<sup>38</sup> Resolution 2560 (2020), fourth preambular paragraph.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., para. 1.



expiry date. No changes were made to the measures concerning ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida and associates, nor to those concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Lebanon and the Sudan.

The present subsection concerning the developments in each of the sanctions regimes does not include references to the subsidiary bodies of the Council responsible for their implementation. The decisions of the Council relating to the subsidiary bodies are described in detail in part IX, section I.B. Decisions adopted by the Council on the establishment and history of each of the sanctions regimes are covered in previous supplements.

The categories of sanctions measures used in the present subsection, such as arms embargoes, asset freezes or travel bans, are for clarification purposes only, and are not intended to serve as legal definitions of the measures. In addition, developments in the sanctions measures imposed by the Council during the period under review are categorized according to the following main actions taken by the Council: "establishment",<sup>40</sup> "modification",<sup>41</sup> "extension",<sup>42</sup> "limited extension"<sup>43</sup> or "termination".<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> An action by the Council is categorized as an "establishment" when a sanctions measure is initially imposed by the Council.

<sup>41</sup> When a change is introduced to the measure, it is categorized as a "modification". A measure is modified when: (a) elements of the measure are terminated or newly introduced; (b) information on designated

The sanctions regimes are discussed below in the order of their establishment. Each of the following subsections consists of a narrative section describing the most significant developments in 2020 and a table including all relevant provisions of Council decisions concerning changes to a sanctions regime, according to the categories outlined above (a number indicates the corresponding paragraph of the Council resolution). Tables 3 and 4 provide an overview of relevant decisions adopted in 2020 by which the Council established or modified sanctions measures it had previously imposed.

individuals or entities is modified; or (c) elements of the measure are otherwise modified. A measure is also modified when exemptions are introduced, modified or terminated. In such instances, a separate category, "exemption", is used in the tables included below.

<sup>42</sup> An action by the Council is categorized as an "extension" when the sanctions measure concerned is not modified or terminated and the Council extends or restates the measure without specifying an end date.

<sup>43</sup> An action by the Council is categorized as a "limited extension" when the sanctions measure concerned is extended for a specific period of time, including a date upon which the measure will terminate unless further extended by the Council.

<sup>44</sup> An action by the Council is categorized as a "termination" when the Council ends the specific sanctions measure. However, if only an element of the measure is terminated, but other elements of that measure remain, the action will be categorized as a modification of the measure.

**Table 3  
Overview of country-specific decisions establishing or modifying measures pursuant to Article 41, in place or imposed, in 2020**

<i>Sanctions regime</i>	<i>Resolutions by which measures were established or subsequently modified</i>	<i>Resolutions adopted in 2020</i>	
Somalia	733 (1992)	2023 (2011)	2551 (2020)
	1356 (2001)	2036 (2012)	2554 (2020)
	1425 (2002)	2060 (2012)	
	1725 (2006)	2093 (2013)	
	1744 (2007)	2111 (2013)	
	1772 (2007)	2125 (2013)	
	1816 (2008)	2142 (2014)	
	1844 (2008)	2182 (2014)	
	1846 (2008)	2184 (2014)	
	1851 (2008)	2244 (2015)	
	1872 (2009)	2246 (2015)	
	1897 (2009)	2316 (2016)	
	1907 (2009)	2317 (2016)	
	1916 (2010)	2383 (2017)	
	1950 (2010)	2385 (2017)	
	1964 (2010)	2444 (2018)	
	1972 (2011)	2498 (2019)	
2002 (2011)			

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<i>Sanctions regime</i>	<i>Resolutions by which measures were established or subsequently modified</i>		<i>Resolutions adopted in 2020</i>
ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities	1267 (1999)	2161 (2014)	None
	1333 (2000)	2170 (2014)	
	1388 (2002)	2178 (2014)	
	1390 (2002)	2199 (2015)	
	1452 (2002)	2253 (2015)	
	1735 (2006)	2347 (2017)	
	1904 (2009)	2349 (2017)	
	1989 (2011) 2083 (2012)	2368 (2017)	
Taliban and associated individuals and entities	1988 (2011)	2255 (2015)	2557 (2020)
	2082 (2012)	2501 (2019)	
	2160 (2014)		
Iraq	661 (1990)	1723 (2006)	None
	687 (1991)	1790 (2007)	
	707 (1991)	1859 (2008)	
	1483 (2003)	1905 (2009)	
	1546 (2004)	1956 (2010)	
	1637 (2005)	1957 (2010)	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1493 (2003)	1857 (2008)	2528 (2020)
	1552 (2004)	1896 (2009)	
	1596 (2005)	1952 (2010)	
	1616 (2005)	2136 (2014)	
	1649 (2005)	2147 (2014)	
	1671 (2006)	2198 (2015)	
	1698 (2006)	2211 (2015)	
	1768 (2007)	2293 (2016)	
	1771 (2007)	2360 (2017)	
	1799 (2008)	2424 (2018)	
	1807 (2008)	2478 (2019)	
Sudan	1556 (2004)	2200 (2015)	2508 (2020)
	1591 (2005)	2265 (2016)	
	1672 (2006)	2340 (2017)	
	1945 (2010)	2400 (2018)	
	2035 (2012)	2455 (2019)	
	2138 (2014)		
Lebanon	1636 (2005)		None
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	1718 (2006)	2270 (2016)	None
	1874 (2009)	2321 (2016)	
	2087 (2013)	2356 (2017)	
	2094 (2013)	2371 (2017)	
		2375 (2017) 2397 (2017)	

**Part VII. Actions with respect to threats to the peace,  
breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression  
(Chapter VII of the Charter)**

<i>Sanctions regime</i>	<i>Resolutions by which measures were established or subsequently modified</i>		<i>Resolutions adopted in 2020</i>
Libya	1970 (2011)	2208 (2015)	2509 (2020)
	1973 (2011)	2213 (2015)	2510 (2020)
	2009 (2011)	2238 (2015)	2526 (2020)
	2016 (2011)	2259 (2015)	2542 (2020)
	2040 (2012)	2278 (2016)	
	2095 (2013)	2292 (2016)	
	2146 (2014)	2362 (2017)	
	2174 (2014)	2441 (2018)	
Guinea-Bissau	2048 (2012)	2203 (2015)	2512 (2020)
	2157 (2014)		
Central African Republic	2127 (2013)	2262 (2016)	2507 (2020)
	2134 (2014)	2339 (2017)	2536 (2020)
	2196 (2015)	2399 (2018)	2552 (2020)
	2217 (2015)	2488 (2019)	
Yemen	2140 (2014)		2511 (2020)
	2204 (2015)		
	2216 (2015)		
South Sudan	2206 (2015)	2290 (2016)	2514 (2020)
	2241 (2015)	2353 (2017)	2521 (2020)
	2252 (2015)	2418 (2018)	
	2271 (2016)	2428 (2018)	
	2280 (2016)		
Mali	2374 (2017)		2531 (2020)
	2432 (2018)		2541 (2020)

Table 4  
Overview of measures pursuant to Article 41, in place or imposed, in 2020

<i>Sanctions regime</i>	<i>Type of measure</i>																						
	<i>Arms embargo</i>	<i>Asset freeze</i>	<i>Travel ban or restrictions</i>	<i>Ban on arms exports by target State</i>	<i>Ban/restriction on workers abroad</i>	<i>Ban on improvised explosive device components</i>	<i>Business restrictions</i>	<i>Charcoal ban</i>	<i>Diplomatic/overseas representation restrictions</i>	<i>Embargo on natural resources</i>	<i>Financial restrictions</i>	<i>Luxury goods embargo</i>	<i>Natural gas embargo/restriction</i>	<i>Non-proliferation measures</i>	<i>Oil/petroleum and petroleum products embargo/restriction</i>	<i>Prohibition on bunkering services/port entry</i>	<i>Public financial support for trade restrictions</i>	<i>Restrictions on ballistic missiles</i>	<i>Sectoral ban</i>	<i>Specialized teaching and technical cooperation restrictions</i>	<i>Transport and aviation sanctions</i>	<i>Trade ban on cultural goods</i>	
Somalia	X	X	X			X		X															
Taliban	X	X	X																				
ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida	X	X	X																			X	
Iraq	X	X																					
Democratic Republic of the Congo	X	X	X																			X	
Sudan	X	X	X																				
Lebanon <sup>a</sup>		X	X																				
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Libya	X	X	X	X			X				X				X	X							
Guinea-Bissau			X																				
Central African Republic	X	X	X																				
Yemen	X	X	X																				
South Sudan	X	X	X																				
Mali		X	X																				

<sup>a</sup> Pursuant to paragraph 15 of resolution 1701 (2006), the Council decided, inter alia, that States should take the necessary measures to prevent, by their nationals or from their territories or using their flag vessels or aircraft, the sale or supply of arms and related materiel to any entity or individual in Lebanon other than those authorized by the Government of Lebanon or by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. In 2020, in resolution 2539 (2020), the Council recalled paragraph 15 of resolution 1701 (2006) and requested the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Council on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), including an enhanced annex on the implementation of the arms embargo.

## Somalia

In 2020, the Council adopted resolution 2551 (2020), by which it reaffirmed and recalled the existing sanctions measures on Somalia. The Council also renewed the humanitarian exemption to the assets freeze and the partial lifting of the arms embargo for the first time without specifying an expiry date.<sup>45</sup> By the same resolution, the Council also renewed the maritime interdiction of charcoal and weapons or military equipment and reaffirmed the ban on components of improvised explosive devices and added to the list of components, first imposed by resolution 2498 (2019).<sup>46</sup> Table 5 provides an overview of the changes to the measures authorized by the Council in 2020.

The Council reaffirmed the arms embargo initially imposed by paragraph 5 of resolution 733 (1992) and paragraphs 1 and 2 of resolution 1425 (2002),<sup>47</sup> and the specific exceptions to the measure,<sup>48</sup> renewed the partial lifting of the arms embargo on the Somali security forces without specifying an expiry date,<sup>49</sup> and outlined the procedures for requests for exemptions or notifications to the Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia.<sup>50</sup> The Council also reaffirmed the ban on the import and export of Somali charcoal as set out in paragraph 22 of resolution 2036 (2012) and paragraphs 11 to 21 of resolution 2182 (2014), and decided to renew until 15 November 2021 the authorization for Member States to inspect vessels and to seize and dispose of any prohibited items bound to or from Somalia, where there were grounds to believe that the vessels were in violation of the charcoal ban and arms embargo, as set out in paragraph 15 of resolution 2182 (2014).<sup>51</sup> Recalling its decisions in resolution 1844 (2008), which imposed targeted sanctions, and in resolutions 2002 (2011) and 2093 (2013), which expanded the listing criteria, the Council decided, for the first time without specifying an expiry date, that the asset freeze measure should not be applied to the payment of funds, other financial assets or economic resources necessary to ensure the timely delivery of urgently needed humanitarian assistance.<sup>52</sup>

Expressing grave concern that Al-Shabaab continued to pose a serious threat to the peace, security and stability of Somalia and the region, and noting the increase in improvised explosive device attacks by the group, the Council decided that all States should prevent the direct or indirect sale, supply or transfer of the items in part I of annex C to resolution 2551 (2020) to Somalia from their territories or by their nationals outside their territories, or using their flag vessels or aircraft, if there was sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the item(s) would be used, or a significant risk they might be used, in the manufacture in Somalia of improvised explosive devices.<sup>53</sup> The items in annex C to resolution 2551 (2020) include explosive materials, explosives precursors, explosive-related equipment and related technology. The Council further decided to renew the implementation measures related to the ban on components of improvised explosive devices.<sup>54</sup> While noting that the security situation in Somalia continued to necessitate the measures, including strict controls on the movement of arms, the Council affirmed that it would keep the situation in Somalia under constant review and that it would be prepared to review the appropriateness of the measures contained in resolution 2551 (2020), including any modification, possible benchmarks, suspension or lifting of the measures.<sup>55</sup> The Council also requested the Secretary-General to provide to the Council, no later than 15 September 2021, a technical assessment of the weapons and ammunition management capability of Somalia and recommendations to improve it further.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, sixth and tenth preambular paragraphs and para. 26.

<sup>54</sup> The Council decided that where an item in part I of annex C was directly or indirectly sold, supplied or transferred to Somalia, the State should notify the Committee no more than 15 working days after the sale, supply or transfer took place, and stressed the importance that notifications should contain all relevant information (*ibid.*, para. 27). The Council also called upon Member States to undertake appropriate measures to promote the exercise of vigilance by their nationals, as well as individuals and entities subject to their jurisdiction, that are involved in the sale, supply or transfer of explosive precursors and materials to Somalia that may be used in the manufacture of improvised explosive devices to keep records of transactions and share information with the Federal Government of Somalia, the Committee and the Panel of Experts on Somalia regarding suspicious purchases of or enquiries into these chemicals by individuals in Somalia, and to ensure that the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states of Somalia were provided with adequate financial and technical assistance to establish appropriate safeguards for the storage and distribution of materials (*ibid.*, para. 28).

<sup>55</sup> Resolution 2551 (2020), fourth preambular paragraph.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 35.

<sup>45</sup> For background and past practice, see previous supplements.

<sup>46</sup> See resolution 2551 (2020), annex C.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 6.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 19.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 9. The Council further provided that weapons and military equipment sold or supplied solely for the development of the Somali National Security Forces or Somali security sector institutions other than those of the Federal Government of Somalia (in accordance with para. 9) would not be resold to, transferred to or made available for use by any individual or entity not in the service of the Somali National Security Forces or Somali security sector institution (*ibid.*, para. 7).

<sup>50</sup> Resolution 2551 (2020), paras. 10–17.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 23.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 20 and 22.

Table 5  
Changes to the measures imposed pursuant to Article 41 concerning Somalia in 2020

<i>Provision relating to sanctions measures</i>	<i>Resolution establishing measures</i>	<i>Resolution adopted during the review period (paragraph) 2551 (2020)</i>
Arms embargo	733 (1992), para. 5 1425 (2002), paras. 1–2	Extension (6) Exemption (9, 19)
Asset freeze	1844 (2008), para. 3	Extension (20) Exemption (22)
Charcoal ban	2036 (2012), para. 22	Extension (23)
Ban on improvised explosive device components	2498 (2019), para. 26	Extension (26)
Travel ban or restrictions	1844 (2008), para. 1	Extension (20)

**Taliban and associated individuals and entities**

In 2020, the Council adopted resolution 2557 (2020), by which it reaffirmed the asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo measures with regard to individuals and entities designated prior to the date of adoption of resolution 1988 (2011) as the Taliban, as well as other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with the Taliban in constituting a threat to the peace, stability and security of

Afghanistan as designated by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011).<sup>57</sup> Table 6 provides an overview of the changes to the measures during the period under review.

<sup>57</sup> Resolution 2557 (2020), para. 1. For information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, see part IX, sect. I.B.

Table 6  
Changes to the measures imposed pursuant to Article 41 concerning the Taliban and associated individuals and entities in 2020

<i>Provision relating to sanctions measures</i>	<i>Resolution establishing measures</i>	<i>Resolution adopted during the review period (paragraph) 2557 (2020)</i>
Arms embargo	1333 (2000), para. 5	Extension (1)
Asset freeze	1267 (1999), para. 4 (b)	Extension (1)
Travel ban or restrictions	1390 (2002), para. 2 (b)	Extension (1)

**ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities**

During the period under review, the Council did not make any modifications to the sanctions measures on ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida and associates. In resolution 2560 (2020), the Council continued to encourage all Member States to more actively submit to the relevant Committee listing requests of individuals, groups, undertakings and entities that met the listing criteria in paragraph 2 of resolution 2368 (2017), to submit to the Committee additional identifying and other information set out in paragraph 85 of resolution 2368 (2017) in order to keep the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions list reliable and up-to-date and to make use of the provisions

regarding available exemptions to the measures in paragraphs 1 (a) and 81 (a) of resolution 2368 (2017).<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Resolution 2560 (2020), para. 1. For more information, see the subsection entitled “Decisions on thematic issues relating to Article 41” in the present section. For information on the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, see part IX, sect. I.B.



## Iraq

In 2020, the Council did not adopt any new resolutions concerning the remaining sanctions measures on Iraq, consisting of an arms embargo, with exemptions, and an asset freeze on senior officials, State bodies, corporations and agencies of the former Iraqi regime. Pursuant to resolution 1483 (2003), the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1518 (2003) continued to oversee the implementation of the asset freeze and maintain the lists of individuals and entities.<sup>59</sup>

## Democratic Republic of the Congo

In 2020, the Council adopted resolution 2528 (2020), by which it renewed the sanctions measures on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, comprising an arms embargo, a travel ban, an asset freeze and restrictions on transportation and aviation, as well as the exemptions to said measures, until 1 July 2021.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>59</sup> For information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1518 (2003), see part IX, sect. I.B.

<sup>60</sup> Resolution 2528 (2020), para. 1.

Table 7 provides an overview of the changes to the measures during the period under review.

In addition, in resolution 2556 (2020), by which the Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council recalled that it was prepared to impose targeted sanctions under paragraph 7 (d) and (e) of resolution 2293 (2016), regarding, inter alia, human rights violations or abuses or violations of international humanitarian law.<sup>61</sup> The Council also demanded that all armed groups cease immediately all forms of violence and other destabilizing activities and the illegal exploitation and trafficking of natural resources, and recalled that the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo could lead to sanctions under paragraph 7 (d) of resolution 2293 (2016).<sup>62</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Resolution 2556 (2020), para. 5.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., para. 13.

Table 7

### Changes to the measures imposed pursuant to Article 41 concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2020

<i>Provision relating to sanctions measures</i>	<i>Resolution establishing measures</i>	<i>Resolution adopted during the review period (paragraph) 2528 (2020)</i>
Arms embargo	1493 (2003), para. 20	Limited extension (1) Exemption (1)
Asset freeze	1596 (2005), para. 15	Limited extension (1) Exemption (1)
Travel ban or restrictions	1596 (2005), para. 13	Limited extension (1) Exemption (1)
Transportation and aviation control measures	1807 (2008), paras. 6 and 8	Limited extension (1)

## Sudan

During the period under review, the Council did not adopt any new resolution modifying sanctions measures on the Sudan. However, by resolution 2508 (2020), the Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, recalled the arms embargo, asset freeze and travel ban measures and designation criteria established by previous resolutions and also reaffirmed the related exemptions.<sup>63</sup> The Council expressed its intent to regularly review the measures on Darfur, in the light of the evolving situation on the ground, while

<sup>63</sup> Resolution 2508 (2020), para. 1.

taking note of the reports submitted by the Chair of the Committee, the Panel of Experts and relevant resolutions. The Council further expressed its intent to establish clear, well identified and measurable key benchmarks that could serve in guiding the Council to review measures on the Government of the Sudan.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., paras. 3–4. For information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan and the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, see part IX, sect. I.B.

## Lebanon

In 2020, the Council did not make any modifications to the sanctions measures established pursuant to resolution 1636 (2005), consisting of an asset freeze and a travel ban, which were to be imposed on individuals designated by the International Independent Investigation Commission or the Government of Lebanon as suspected of involvement in the 14 February 2005 terrorist bombing in Beirut, Lebanon that killed the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafic Hariri, and 22 others.<sup>65</sup>

## Democratic People's Republic of Korea

During the period under review, the Council did not make any modifications to the sanctions measures concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) continued to oversee the implementation of the asset freeze, arms embargo, travel ban and other restrictions previously imposed by resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), 2094 (2013), 2270 (2016), 2321 (2016), 2356 (2017), 2371 (2017), 2375 (2017) and 2397 (2017). By resolution 2515 (2020), the Council extended until 30 April 2021 the mandate of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1874 (2009) to support the Committee.<sup>66</sup>

## Libya

In 2020, the Council adopted one resolution modifying the sanctions measures concerning Libya.<sup>67</sup> Table 8 provides an overview of the changes to the measures during the period under review.

By resolution 2509 (2020), the Council extended until 30 April 2021 the authorizations provided and the measures imposed by resolution 2146 (2014), as amended by paragraph 2 of resolution 2441 (2018), to prevent the illicit export of petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products, from Libya, and modified the designation period for vessels to be one year, instead of 90 days as provided for in paragraph 11

of resolution 2146 (2014).<sup>68</sup> In addition, the Council renewed the arms embargo, travel ban and asset freeze measures.<sup>69</sup> The Council also affirmed its readiness to, inter alia, review the appropriateness of the measures contained in the resolution, including their strengthening, modification, suspension or lifting, as may be needed, at any time in the light of developments in Libya.<sup>70</sup>

By resolution 2526 (2020), the Council extended the authorizations concerning the implementation of the arms embargo on the high seas off the coast of Libya for a further period of 12 months and requested the Secretary-General to report within 11 months on its implementation.<sup>71</sup>

In addition, in resolution 2510 (2020), the Council endorsed the conclusions of the Berlin Conference on Libya<sup>72</sup> and reaffirmed its intention to ensure that assets frozen pursuant to paragraph 17 of resolution 1970 (2011) should at a later stage be made available to and for the benefit of the Libyan people. It also recalled its decision that individuals or entities engaging in, or providing support for, acts that threatened the peace, stability or security of Libya might be designated by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) for the travel ban and asset freeze measures specified in resolution 1970 (2011), as modified by subsequent resolutions. The Council also stressed that the Committee should consider the designation of individuals or entities who breached the arms embargo or the ceasefire, once agreed. The Council recalled the commitments made at the Berlin Conference to abide by the arms embargo and demanded full compliance, including by all Member States, with the arms embargo imposed under resolution 1970 (2011), as modified by subsequent resolutions, including by ceasing all support for and withdrawing all armed mercenary personnel, and demanded all Member States not to intervene in the conflict or take measures that exacerbated the conflict.<sup>73</sup>

Furthermore, in resolution 2542 (2020), the Council recalled its decision that all Member States should comply with the arms embargo. It demanded full compliance, including by all Member States, with the arms embargo imposed under resolution 1970 (2011), as modified by subsequent resolutions, including by ceasing all support for and withdrawing all armed mercenary personnel. The Council also demanded all Member States not to intervene in the

<sup>65</sup> Resolution 1636 (2005), fourth preambular paragraph and para. 3. For information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1636 (2005), see part IX, sect. I.B.

<sup>66</sup> Resolution 2515 (2020) para. 1. For information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) and the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1874 (2009), see part IX, sect. I.B.

<sup>67</sup> Resolution 2509 (2020). For information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya and the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011), see part IX, sect. I.B.

<sup>68</sup> Resolution 2509 (2020), para. 2.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 6 and 9–10.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 15.

<sup>71</sup> Resolution 2526 (2020), paras. 1–2.

<sup>72</sup> See S/2020/63.

<sup>73</sup> Resolution 2510 (2020), paras. 2 and 8–10.

conflict or take measures that exacerbated the conflict. In addition, the Council welcomed efforts by the Panel of Experts on Libya to investigate violations of the arms embargo, further welcomed the cooperation between the relevant United Nations bodies, including the United Nations Support Mission in Libya

(UNSMIL), and other interested parties and the Panel of Experts, and noted its intention to hold those who violated the arms embargo accountable through its sanctions committee.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Resolution 2542 (2020), para. 7.

**Table 8  
Changes to the measures imposed pursuant to Article 41 concerning Libya in 2020**

<i>Provision relating to sanctions measures</i>	<i>Resolution establishing measures</i>	<i>Resolution adopted during the review period (paragraph) 2509 (2020)</i>
Arms embargo	1970 (2011), para. 9	Extension (6)
Asset freeze	1970 (2011), para. 17	
Ban on arms exports by target State	1970 (2011), para. 10	
Business restrictions	1973 (2011), para. 21	
Financial restrictions	2146 (2014), para. 10 (d)	Limited extension (2)
Oil/petroleum embargo/restriction	2146 (2014), para. 10 (a) and (c)–(d)	Limited extension (2) Modification (2)
Prohibition on bunkering services/port entry	2146 (2014), para. 10 (c)	Limited extension (2)
Travel ban or restrictions	1970 (2011), para. 15	Extension (9)

### Guinea-Bissau

During the period under review, the sanctions regime for Guinea-Bissau continued to remain in force, without undergoing any modifications.<sup>75</sup> In resolution 2512 (2020), the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit a report within five months of the adoption of the resolution to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012) concerning Guinea-Bissau on the progress made regarding the stabilization of Guinea-Bissau and the restoration of constitutional order, giving recommendations on the sanctions regime that included, but were not limited to, its continuation, adjustment or suspension, and on prospective delisting, in accordance with paragraph 12 of resolution 2048 (2012).<sup>76</sup> In the same resolution, the Council decided to review the sanctions measures established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012) six months from the adoption of the resolution, and consider appropriate, concrete measures including, but not limited to, their continuation, adjustment or suspension, and on prospective delisting, in accordance with paragraph 12 of resolution 2048 (2012).<sup>77</sup>

<sup>75</sup> For more information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012) concerning Guinea-Bissau, see part IX, sect. I.B.

<sup>76</sup> Resolution 2512 (2020), para. 25. See also S/2020/818.

<sup>77</sup> Resolution 2512 (2020), para. 26.

### Central African Republic

During the period under review, the Council adopted two resolutions related to the sanctions measures concerning the Central African Republic.<sup>78</sup> Table 9 provides an overview of the changes to the measures during the period under review.

By resolution 2507 (2020), the Council extended until 31 July 2020 the sanctions measures established pursuant to resolutions 2127 (2013) and 2134 (2014) as well as related exemptions, and reaffirmed that the travel ban and asset freeze would apply to individuals and entities as designated by the Committee.<sup>79</sup> The Council also decided to adjust the list of exemptions to the arms embargo by expanding it to include supplies of unarmed ground military vehicles and ground military vehicles mounted with weapons with a calibre of 14.5 mm or less, as notified in advance to the Committee.<sup>80</sup> The Council further requested the Secretary-General, in close consultation with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), including the Mine Action

<sup>78</sup> Resolutions 2507 (2020) and 2536 (2020). For information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic and the Panel of Experts, see part IX, sect. I.B.

<sup>79</sup> Resolution 2507 (2020), paras. 3–4.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., para. 1 (g).

Service, and the Panel of Experts, to conduct, no later than 30 June 2020, an assessment on the progress achieved by the authorities of the Central African Republic on the key benchmarks on the arms embargo established in the Council's presidential statement dated 9 April 2019.<sup>81</sup> The Council also affirmed that it would keep the situation in the Central African Republic under continuous review and be prepared to review the appropriateness of the measures contained in resolution 2507 (2020) at any time as may be necessary, in the light of the evolution of the security situation in the country and of the progress achieved in relation to the security sector reform process, the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process and the management of weapons and ammunition, including in relation to the report and assessment requested in paragraphs 12 and 13 of resolution 2507 (2020).<sup>82</sup>

Further to the request of the Council in paragraph 13 of resolution 2507 (2020), the Secretary-General, in a letter to the President of the Council dated 29 June, provided an update on the progress achieved by the Central African Republic authorities on the key benchmarks established in the presidential statement of 9 April 2019.<sup>83</sup>

By resolution 2536 (2020), the Council extended the arms embargo, travel ban and asset freeze measures, as well as related exemptions, until 31 July 2021.<sup>84</sup> The Council also decided to further adjust the existing exemptions to the arms embargo by expanding the categories of items to include spare parts of unarmed ground military vehicles and ground military vehicles mounted with weapons with a calibre of 14.5 mm or less, and rocket-propelled grenades and ammunition specially designed for such weapons, as well as the provision of

related assistance.<sup>85</sup> The Council also requested the Central African Republic authorities to report, by 15 June 2021, to the Committee on the progress achieved regarding the security sector reform, the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process and the management of weapons and ammunition, and requested the Secretary-General, in close consultation with MINUSCA, including the Mine Action Service, and the Panel of Experts, to conduct, no later than 15 June 2021, an assessment on the progress achieved by the authorities of the Central African Republic on the key benchmarks.<sup>86</sup> It further affirmed that it would keep the situation in the Central African Republic under continuous review and be prepared to review the appropriateness of the measures contained in resolution 2536 (2020), at any time as may be necessary, in the light of the evolution of the security situation in the country and of the progress achieved in relation to the security sector reform process, the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process and the management of weapons and ammunition.<sup>87</sup>

In addition, in resolution 2552 (2020), the Council recalled that individuals or entities that undermined peace and stability in the Central African Republic could be listed for targeted measures pursuant to resolution 2536 (2020).<sup>88</sup> It also recalled that committing acts of incitement to violence, in particular on an ethnic or religious basis, and then engaging in or providing support for acts that undermined the peace, stability or security of the Central African Republic, could be a basis for sanctions designations pursuant to resolution 2536 (2020).<sup>89</sup>

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 1 (g).

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 12–13.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 14.

<sup>88</sup> Resolution 2552 (2020), para. 4.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 20.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 13. See also S/PRST/2019/3.

<sup>82</sup> Resolution 2507 (2020), para. 14.

<sup>83</sup> See S/2020/622.

<sup>84</sup> Resolution 2536 (2020), paras. 1 and 4.

Table 9  
Changes to the measures imposed pursuant to Article 41 concerning the Central African Republic in 2020

Provision relating to sanctions measures	Resolution establishing measures	Resolutions adopted during the review period (paragraph)	
		2507 (2020)	2536 (2020)
Arms embargo	2127 (2013), para. 54	Limited extension (1) Exemption (1)	Limited extension (1) Exemption (1)
Asset freeze	2134 (2014), paras. 32 and 34	Limited extension (4) Exemption (4)	Limited extension (4) Exemption (4)
Travel ban or restrictions	2134 (2014), para. 30	Limited extension (4) Exemption (4)	Limited extension (4) Exemption (4)

## Yemen

In 2020, the Council adopted resolution [2511 \(2020\)](#), by which it extended the asset freeze and travel ban established pursuant to resolution [2140 \(2014\)](#) concerning Yemen, as well as the relevant exemptions to those measures, until 26 February 2021.<sup>90</sup> By the same resolution, the Council reaffirmed the arms embargo as set out in resolution [2216 \(2015\)](#) and further elaborated the designation criteria set out in resolutions [2140 \(2014\)](#) and [2216 \(2015\)](#). The Council also affirmed that sexual violence in armed conflict, or the recruitment or use of children in armed conflict in violation of international law, could constitute an act as specified in paragraph 18 (c) of resolution [2140 \(2014\)](#), and therefore constitute a sanctionable act of engaging in or providing support for acts that threatened the peace, security or stability of Yemen.<sup>91</sup> Emphasizing

<sup>90</sup> Resolution [2511 \(2020\)](#), para. 2.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 4–6.

the importance of humanitarian assistance, the Council also decided that the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2140 \(2014\)](#) might, on a case-by-case basis, exempt any activity from the sanctions measures imposed by the Council in resolutions [2140 \(2014\)](#) and [2216 \(2015\)](#) if the Committee determined that such an exemption was necessary to facilitate the work of the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations in Yemen or for any other purpose consistent with the objectives of those resolutions.<sup>92</sup> The Council also reaffirmed its intention to keep the situation in Yemen under continuous review and its readiness to review the appropriateness of the sanctions measures contained in resolution [2511 \(2020\)](#), including their strengthening, modification, suspension or lifting, as may be needed at any time in the light of developments in the country.<sup>93</sup> Table 10 provides an overview of the changes to the measures during the period under review.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 3.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 13.

Table 10

### Changes to the measures imposed pursuant to Article 41 concerning Yemen in 2020

<i>Provision relating to sanctions measures</i>	<i>Resolution establishing measures</i>	<i>Resolution adopted during the review period (paragraph) 2511 (2020)</i>
Arms embargo	<a href="#">2216 (2015)</a> , paras. 14–16	Extension (2) Exemption (3)
Asset freeze	<a href="#">2140 (2014)</a> , paras. 11 and 13	Limited extension (2) Exemption (2, 3)
Travel ban or restrictions	<a href="#">2140 (2014)</a> , para. 15	Limited extension (2) Exemption (2, 3)

## South Sudan

In 2020, the Council adopted resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#), by which it renewed the arms embargo, asset freeze and travel ban established pursuant to resolutions [2206 \(2015\)](#) and [2428 \(2018\)](#) concerning South Sudan, as well as the relevant exemptions to those measures, until 31 May 2021.<sup>94</sup> Table 11 provides an overview of the changes to the measures during the period under review.

Further to paragraph 5 of resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#), the Secretary-General submitted a report<sup>95</sup> to the Council

<sup>94</sup> Resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#), paras. 3 and 11.

<sup>95</sup> See [S/2020/1067](#). See also the letter dated 16 December 2020 from the President of the Council ([S/2020/1277](#)), requesting the Secretary-General to conduct a desk review and consultations and to report to the Council with recommendations on benchmarks to assess the arms embargo measures by 31 March 2021.

concerning benchmarks to assess the arms embargo measures according to progress on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

In the context of the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), in resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#), the Council expressed its intention to consider all appropriate measures against those who took actions that undermined the peace, stability and security of South Sudan, and specifically underscored that individuals or entities that were responsible or complicit in, or had engaged in, directly or indirectly, attacks against UNMISS personnel and premises and any humanitarian personnel could meet the designation criteria.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#), para. 3.



Table 11  
Changes to the measures imposed pursuant to Article 41 concerning South Sudan in 2020

<i>Provision relating to sanctions measures</i>	<i>Resolution establishing measures</i>	<i>Resolution adopted during the review period (paragraph) 2521 (2020)</i>
Arms embargo	2428 (2018), para. 4	Limited extension (3) Exemption (3)
Asset freeze	2206 (2015), paras. 12 and 14	Limited extension (11) Exemption (11)
Travel ban or restrictions	2206 (2015), para. 9	Limited extension (11) Exemption (11)

### Mali

In 2020, the Council adopted two resolutions related to the sanctions measures established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali.<sup>97</sup> In resolution 2531 (2020), the Council stressed that individuals or entities placed on the Mali sanctions list should not benefit from any financial, operational or logistical support from United Nations entities

deployed in Mali until their removal from the list and without prejudice to the exemptions set by paragraphs 2, 5, 6 and 7 of resolution 2374 (2017).<sup>98</sup> By resolution 2541 (2020), the Council extended the asset freeze and travel ban, as well as the relevant exemptions to those measures, until 31 August 2021.<sup>99</sup> Table 12 provides an overview of the changes to the measures during the period under review.

<sup>97</sup> Resolutions 2531 (2020) and 2541 (2020).

<sup>98</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), para. 5.

<sup>99</sup> Resolution 2541 (2020), para. 1.

Table 12  
Changes to the measures imposed pursuant to Article 41 concerning Mali in 2020

<i>Provision relating to sanctions measures</i>	<i>Resolution establishing measures</i>	<i>Resolution adopted during the review period (paragraph) 2541 (2020)</i>
Asset freeze	2374 (2017), para. 4	Limited extension (1) Exemption (1)
Travel ban or restrictions	2374 (2017), para. 1	Limited extension (1) Exemption (1)

## B. Discussions relating to Article 41

The present subsection covers the discussions in the Council regarding the use of sanctions and other measures pursuant to Article 41 of the Charter.

During the period under review, Article 41 of the Charter was explicitly referred to on three occasions at Council meetings and open videoconferences. At the 8699th meeting of the Council, held on 10 January under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”,<sup>100</sup> the representative of Canada stated that the measures contemplated in Article 41 were by no means comprehensive. He added that instead, the form and scope of potential non-military

measures were left to the Council to determine. During an open videoconference held on 20 May on the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela,<sup>101</sup> the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela said that coercion was coupled with a fresh peril, namely, the threat of the use of military force against five Iranian tankers en route to his country. He noted that if the threat materialized, it would constitute an actual armed attack against a civilian Iranian vessel and against the Venezuelan people as a whole. He stressed that a naval blockade was an act of war under international law, particularly if not authorized by the Council on the basis of Article 41 of the Charter or applied pursuant to the right of self-defence. During an

<sup>100</sup> See S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1).

<sup>101</sup> See S/2020/435.



open videoconference held on 27 May on the protection of civilians in armed conflict,<sup>102</sup> the representative of the United Arab Emirates emphasized that too often, Council resolutions, including those imposing measures under Article 41 of the Charter, were ignored by non-State actors. She urged the Council to tailor and apply the range of tools at its disposal to address effectively the growing threat to civilians posed by non-State actors, and to ensure their compliance.

The use of sanctions was discussed by Council and non-Council members in deliberations in relation to both thematic and country- or region-specific items during 2020. For example, during a high-level open videoconference on 17 July in connection with the item entitled “Women and peace and security”, focused on conflict-related sexual violence,<sup>103</sup> Council members heard briefings on, inter alia, the use of targeted sanctions to leverage behavioural change in response to sexual violence. Observing that no perpetrator had ever been targeted by sanctions for acts of sexual violence, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Belgium questioned the point of the Council’s intentions if those intentions were not translated into concrete action to the benefit of survivors. Similarly, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany stated that sanctions could and must play a greater role in ending sexual violence. The delegation of Ireland welcomed the recent progress linking conflict-related sexual violence with the work of specific sanctions committees, and expressed strong support for efforts to bolster the use of conflict-related sexual violence as a criterion for imposing sanctions and for greater alignment across thematic and country-specific sanctions regimes. The delegation emphasized that for such criteria to be effective in ensuring compliance and accountability, they must be clearly articulated, consistent and credible and must result in actual listings. The representative of Estonia also welcomed the inclusion of sexual violence as a designation criterion and supported its application in practice. The Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa noted that measures taken to ensure accountability from perpetrators of sexual violence, such as prohibiting States listed for violations from participating in United Nations peace operations and making sexual violence a designation criterion in sanctions regimes, should continue to be implemented consistently across all country situations. The delegation of Mexico called upon the Council to consider, where relevant, the adoption of sanctions

targeting the perpetrators listed in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence.<sup>104</sup> The representative of Kenya stated that the Council and its secretariat had an important role to play when it came to monitoring compliance with its own resolutions and acting upon breaches of the same, including listing suspected perpetrators and enacting sanctions, but noted that there were concerns in the manner in which the secretariat had been reporting on suspected cases, arguing that in many occasions, the relevant offices in the secretariat had presented cases of suspected sexual and other violations against women and children as facts without proper investigations.

In addition, during discussions in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Central African Republic”, Council members addressed the easing of the arms embargo (see case 5). Council members also addressed the goals of the sanctions measures, in particular the arms embargo, in the context of the situation in Libya, and their role in potentially ending the conflict (see case 6). Furthermore, Council members addressed the conditions for the review, modification or lifting of sanctions in the context of the situation in South Sudan in their explanation of votes submitted in writing in accordance with the procedures agreed upon further to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic (see case 7).<sup>105</sup> They also discussed the use of sanctions in the context of national reconstruction and the building of long-term stability with regard to the situation in Somalia (see case 8).

## **Discussion on country-specific issues relating to Article 41**

### **Case 5 The situation in the Central African Republic**

At its 8712th meeting, held on 31 January under the item entitled “The situation in the Central African Republic”,<sup>106</sup> the Council adopted resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#), with two abstentions.<sup>107</sup> By resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#), the Council renewed until 31 July 2020 the sanctions measures concerning the Central African

<sup>104</sup> See [S/2020/487](#).

<sup>105</sup> For information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>106</sup> See [S/PV.8712](#).

<sup>107</sup> The draft resolution received 13 votes in favour (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam) and 2 abstentions (China and Russian Federation).

<sup>102</sup> See [S/2020/465](#).

<sup>103</sup> See [S/2020/727](#).

Republic and the related exemptions, and decided to adjust the arms embargo.<sup>108</sup>

Following the adoption of resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#), some Council members expressed regret about the lack of consensus in adopting the resolution.<sup>109</sup> In that regard, the representative of Germany stated that it was regrettable that the Council could not send a signal of unity to the Central African Republic. The representative of Estonia noted that the Council should not be divided on the issue of restricting the illegal flow of weapons to a country that was suffering from warfare and violence but should instead unite in finding ways to assist in stopping massacres. This notwithstanding, most Council members welcomed the renewal of sanctions measures with the adoption of resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#), and noted that the arms embargo was an important element in paving the way towards stability, peace and development. Furthermore, the representative of the Niger, who spoke also on behalf of South Africa and Tunisia, stressed that the sanctions regime was not an objective in itself, but rather a commitment to the transition of the Central African Republic towards peace and stability. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines considered resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#) to be robust enough to help combat the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, while providing some flexibility to the legitimate authorities of the country, which had faced operational and logistical difficulties.

In explaining his country's abstention, the representative of the Russian Federation expressed appreciation for the efforts of the penholder, but noted that not all arguments were taken into account in the drafting of the text of the resolution. He further explained that his delegation had advocated for a greater easing of the arms embargo and, unfortunately, neither the official appeal from Bangui nor the position of the Russian Federation were duly considered. The representative of the Russian Federation added that while the arms embargo might have played a positive role in the early stages, it was now effectively an obstacle to the rearming of the national army and security forces, while the saboteurs of the peace process among the armed groups remained unhindered in replenishing their stockpiles of weapons through smuggling. He welcomed the adjustments to the arms embargo on certain categories of armed vehicles but recalled that the legitimate authorities of the Central African Republic had urged the Council to fully lift the arms embargo. His delegation was determined to

further review the Council's sanctions with a view to their easing and, ultimately, their full lifting. In contrast, the representative of the United States expressed the hope that the extension of the arms embargo, assets freeze and travel ban would keep necessary pressure on the armed groups that continued to undermine peace and security in the Central African Republic. While noting that the members of the Council differed with regard to the technical elements most appropriate for an effective sanctions regime, the issues to highlight in Council resolutions and even sometimes on how to characterize recent developments in the Central African Republic, the representative stated that all members were engaged on the matter because they wanted to see peace and security in the Central African Republic and elevate the interests of its people. In connection with the position expressed by the Russian Federation, she affirmed that Council members should be seeking to de-escalate tensions and build confidence among political actors, rather than spreading false narratives. She hoped that the Russian Federation would work cooperatively with the United States and other friends of the Central African Republic to support the strengthening of State institutions in a transparent and coordinated way, and to ensure that the 2020 elections were free and fair. The representative of China, whose delegation had abstained together with the Russian Federation, noted that China had always believed that sanctions were not an end in themselves but rather a means to an end, which was to help the Central African Republic restore national stability and a normal social order at an early date, adding that the Council should base its actions on the actual situation on the ground in the Central African Republic and lift the arms embargo sanction measures as soon as possible. The representative added that resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#) failed to fully respect the wishes of the Government of the Central African Republic regarding the lifting of the arms embargo, nor did it reflect the constructive ideas of some Council members.

The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, while taking note of the repeated calls of the Central African Republic for a complete lifting of the arms component of the sanctions measures and agreeing that there was some merit to that request, said that her delegation did not believe that the time was ripe for a complete lifting of the arms measures, as there still remained some shortcomings with regard to weapons and ammunition management in the country. The representative of Germany stressed that there remained a lot of work to be done given the instability, violence and continuing attacks on civilians in the Central African Republic. He added that Germany

<sup>108</sup> Resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#), paras. 1 and 3–4.

<sup>109</sup> See [S/PV.8712](#) (France, Germany, Estonia and United Kingdom).

remained convinced that the sanctions regime, including the arms embargo, was an important element to accompany the Government on its way towards stability, peace and development.

At its 8750th meeting, held on 28 July,<sup>110</sup> the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2536 \(2020\)](#), renewing the sanctions measures as well as all related exemptions until 31 July 2021, and added further modifications to the arms embargo.

Speaking after the vote, the representatives of France, the United States (speaking also on behalf of Germany, Estonia and Belgium), the United Kingdom and the Niger welcomed the unanimous adoption of the resolution. The representative of France, penholder of the resolution, underlined that unity was crucial to the Council's support to the Central African Republic at a time marked by the implementation of the peace agreement, preparations for the presidential and legislative elections in 2020 and 2021 and the fight against the coronavirus disease pandemic. France had therefore chosen to adopt a pragmatic approach and strived to play the role of constructive facilitator. He also explained that his delegation had taken the lead in proposing that the members of the Council work towards a further, limited easing of the arms embargo to meet a specific need of the Central African security forces based on a realistic analysis of the security situation in the country.

The representative of the Russian Federation noted the work of the French sponsors of the resolution, who succeeded in securing the support of all Council members. He added that it was achieved not least by the decision to respond to Bangui's legitimate demands for the further easing of the sanctions regime. He added that the simplified procedure for supplying grenade launchers for the needs of the Central African Republic was another small step in support of the Central African people. This notwithstanding, he recalled that the authorities of the Central African Republic were calling on the Council to fully lift the arms embargo. In this regard, he called upon those authorities to continue to meet the benchmarks for the review of the arms embargo so that the Council had every reason to lift it in a year's time.

While noting his country's vote in favour of the resolution, the representative of China expressed his country's belief that, overall, the political and security situation in the Central African Republic was improving, and commended the efforts of all parties in the Central African Republic in implementing the benchmarks for the arms embargo assessment. He also

stressed his country's support for the Government of the Central African Republic in continuing to meet those benchmarks, and for the Council in continuing to respond positively to the reasonable needs of the Government so as to lift the arms embargo as soon as possible.

Citing concerns with the easing of the arms embargo, the representatives of the United States (speaking also on behalf of Germany, Estonia and Belgium), the United Kingdom and the Dominican Republic urged the Government of the Central African Republic to ensure the effective management of its arms to prevent proliferation. Specifically, the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom expressed the concern that without better management and tracking of the weapons brought into the Central African Republic, the changes in the sanctions regime would significantly increase the risk of the proliferation of rocket-propelled grenades, both within the Central African Republic and the wider region.

The representatives of the United States (speaking also on behalf of Germany, Estonia and Belgium), the Dominican Republic and the United Kingdom also expressed support for the Council's decision to return to an annual cycle of renewing the Central African Republic sanctions regime, adding that it would give the authorities of the Central African Republic more time to achieve progress and implement the benchmarks.

#### **Case 6 The situation in Libya**

During an open videoconference held on 19 May under the item entitled "The situation in Libya",<sup>111</sup> Council members heard a briefing by the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNSMIL, and by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) concerning Libya on the work of the Committee covering the period from 30 January to 19 May 2020. In his statement, the Chair noted that the primary responsibility to implement sanctions measures rested with Member States, and that the Committee was committed to facilitating the implementation of these measures and sought to contribute to promoting peace and stability in Libya.

The representative of China noted that sanctions should be used properly and effectively and always serve the political settlement of relevant issues. He stressed that under the current circumstances in Libya,

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<sup>110</sup> See [S/PV.8750](#).

<sup>111</sup> See [S/2020/421](#).

it was important to strictly enforce the arms embargo and refrain from a military intervention or any other action that could aggravate the conflict. The representative of Viet Nam reiterated his country's position that sanctions measures must be correctly and properly targeted at individuals and entities that threatened peace and security in Libya without negatively affecting the livelihoods of the common people of Libya, and urged all parties inside and outside of the country to strengthen their commitment to and actions towards implementing the arms embargo. Also on the issue of arms embargo implementation, the representative of Estonia emphasized that unless the flagrant violations of the sanctions regime and the involvement of outside actors stopped, Libya would not stand a chance with regard to achieving peace. The representative of Libya called upon the countries concerned, especially those that were responsible for the manufacture or origin of the weapons that were used in violation of the arms embargo, to provide his Government and the sanctions committee with documents certifying the end users and to explain how the weapons fell into the hands of those who subverted legitimacy and violated Council resolutions.

During an open videoconference held on 19 November,<sup>112</sup> Council members heard a briefing by the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNSMIL on the situation in Libya following the signing of a countrywide permanent ceasefire agreement. Reporting that military cargo flights and other intense cargo aircraft activity continued to be monitored, the Acting Special Representative requested the Council's support with regard to enforcing relevant resolutions pertaining to the arms embargo. Following the briefing, most Council members<sup>113</sup> called upon all countries to fully adhere to the sanctions regime and in particular to the arms embargo. In this regard, the representative of Germany called for the international community to respect the aspirations of Libyans to cease all fighting, which included full adherence to the arms embargo, and also underscored the need for the immediate and complete withdrawal of all foreign troops, fighters and mercenaries from Libya. He also stressed that full adherence to the arms embargo would remain key to supporting the political process. The delegation of the Dominican Republic expressed profound concern at, among other things, the constant violations of the arms

embargo, describing the violations as a constant threat to the protection and well-being of the Libyan people. The representative of the Russian Federation expressed concern about the reports of continuing violations of the arms embargo, adding that supplies of weapons and the introduction of mercenaries fuelled the conflict in Libya. He called for an end to this, especially because any provocations could disrupt the current ceasefire. He added that the weapons that had continued to flow into Libya since 2011 created conditions that could spread the threat of terrorism throughout the entire African continent. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines urged all parties to fulfil their obligations and strictly comply with the arms embargo so as not to undermine the political process in Libya. The representative of South Africa welcomed the efforts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) to ensure that the arms embargo was respected in order to reduce the possibility of fuelling further conflict. The United Kingdom noted that where members of the international community continued to flagrantly flout international law and block progress made by the Libyans and the United Nations, the Council must be ready to take firm action, including by imposing sanctions.

#### **Case 7 Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan**

During an open videoconference held on 29 May under the item entitled "Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan",<sup>114</sup> the President of the Council announced the adoption of resolution 2521 (2020) in accordance with the written procedure agreed upon by Council members in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>115</sup> The vote on the resolution included three abstentions.<sup>116</sup> By the resolution, the Council decided to renew the arms embargo and targeted sanctions for South Sudan until 31 May 2021.<sup>117</sup>

In accordance with the procedures agreed upon by Council members in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic,<sup>118</sup> some Council members

<sup>112</sup> See [S/2020/1129](#).

<sup>113</sup> United Kingdom, Germany, Indonesia (also on behalf of Viet Nam), Belgium, Tunisia, China, France, South Africa, Russian Federation and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

<sup>114</sup> See [S/2020/462](#).

<sup>115</sup> For information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>116</sup> The draft resolution received 12 votes in favour (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam) and 3 abstentions (China, Russian Federation and South Africa). See also [S/2020/469](#).

<sup>117</sup> Resolution 2521 (2020), paras. 3 and 11.

<sup>118</sup> See [S/2020/253](#).



submitted their explanation of vote in written form.<sup>119</sup> The delegation of the United States noted that renewing the sanctions measures created space for peace to thrive in South Sudan by reducing the flow of weapons to one of Africa's deadliest conflicts and encouraging critical reforms. Its statement added that resolution 2521 (2020) recognized positive steps taken by the leaders of South Sudan to advance the peace process. The delegation noted that challenges and risks remained on the country's path to peace, the situation on the ground was volatile and the lifting of sanctions measures at that sensitive turning point would have removed an important incentive for the formerly warring parties to refrain from leading the country back into widespread conflict. The delegation of the Niger explained that the vote in favour of the resolution had been guided, in part, by the provisions of paragraph 4 of the resolution providing for the possibility of reviews in a bid to lifting the sanction measures early, which was the ultimate goal of the Council. In that regard, the delegation reiterated its full support to the peace process in South Sudan and hoped to see the peace gains further consolidated for an early lifting of the sanctions in their entirety. Similarly, the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines noted that her delegation had voted in favour of resolution 2521 (2020), as it set in motion the sanctions review process while sending a positive message to the South Sudanese leaders that the international community continued to support the country in its nation-building efforts. She also noted that her delegation remained steadfast in its principled position that sanctions regimes should be continually reviewed and amended, adding that her delegation looked forward to the sanctions review process later during the year, with the hope that the measures would be relaxed. The representative of Viet Nam acknowledged that the resolution recognized the achievements made by the South Sudanese parties and that it also set out a clear and specific road map for the review of the sanctions, particularly the arms embargo, which provided good ground for guiding the future work of the Council. In addition, he expressed his country's hope that the adoption of the resolution would contribute to long-term peace and stability in South Sudan.

The three Council members who abstained on the draft resolution did not share the view that the situation in South Sudan required the application of sanctions. The representative of China noted that, considering that the political process towards peace in South Sudan had recently made significant progress and that the

<sup>119</sup> See [S/2020/469](#).

security situation in the country had also greatly improved, the Council should have sent positive messages, including setting a clear timetable for the lifting of the sanctions measures. Similarly, the delegation of the Russian Federation explained that the proposed text of the resolution did not reflect the reality on the ground, as the current situation in South Sudan saw a sustainable trend towards stabilization. The delegation stated that it was regional mediators, and not sanctions, that played the key role, adding that at some point the arms embargo had not let the countries of the region support the peace process with their own security initiatives. In addition, the delegation expressed that it was very disappointing that amid calls from South Sudan and Ethiopia for the lifting, or at least easing, of the arms embargo, the penholders had only offered to review it by the end of the year, and emphasized in that regard that a review of Council sanctions was not a concession, but an integral part of the restrictions imposed by the Council. Furthermore, the delegation of the Russian Federation argued that it was inappropriate to make a decision whether or not to review sanctions based on the dynamics of the human rights situation in South Sudan, and expressed worry at the attempts to portray the issues of economic management in the country as a risk to the peace, stability and security of South Sudan and as a basis for listing.

The delegation of South Africa noted that South Sudanese leaders had made a commitment to building their State and had requested the Council to remove any punitive measures that could be a hindrance towards their goal. The delegation further explained that South Africa had abstained on the renewal of the sanctions because it remained convinced that the situation in South Sudan did not necessitate the application of sanctions, in line with the assessment by the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

### **Case 8 The situation in Somalia**

At its 8755th meeting, held on 12 November under the item entitled "The situation in Somalia",<sup>120</sup> the Council adopted resolution 2551 (2020), renewing the sanctions measures on Somalia. The vote on the resolution included two abstentions.<sup>121</sup> Following the

<sup>120</sup> See [S/PV.8775](#).

<sup>121</sup> The draft resolution received 13 votes in favour (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam) and 2 abstentions (China and Russian Federation).

adoption of the resolution, some Council members<sup>122</sup> and the representative of Somalia expressed regret about the lack of consensus in the Council.

The representative of the United States noted that the authorities in resolution 2551 (2020) were an important part of the United Nations arms embargo, which every Council member had committed to upholding in the interest of securing peace and stability both in Somalia and in the broader region. The representative of the United Kingdom stated that the sanctions regime was a central part of the international efforts to help Somalia build its long-term security and stability and address the threat posed by terrorist organizations, such as Al-Shabaab.

The representative of the Russian Federation noted the amendments, included at the request of Somalia, aimed at streamlining the arms embargo. She expressed the hope that these would contribute to normalizing the situation and to reducing the terrorist threat, primarily from Al-Shabaab. The representative of China expressed regret that his country's proposal for the Council to explore benchmarks for assessing the appropriateness of lifting the arms embargo had not been taken on board in the resolution. He also noted that Somalia was at a critical stage in its national reconstruction, as preparations for the general elections were proceeding steadily and the progress observed in

the implementation of its transition plan continued, although the country's security situation remained challenging. He added that the mandate renewal had provided an opportunity that should have been used to update the relevant sanctions measures in the light of the developments on the ground to help Somalia build greater security capacity in the service of the reconstruction process. Instead, the current embargo had been a serious impediment to the enhanced security capacity of the Federal Government of Somalia, and resolution 2551 (2020) had failed to duly respond to the strong desire of that Government to have the arms embargo lifted.

The representative of Somalia stressed the importance of identifying clearly defined benchmarks for the full lifting of the sanctions on Somalia, and also welcomed the new addition to the fourth preambular paragraph, in which the Council planned to keep sanctions under constant review in order to assess their appropriateness, including modifications, the identification of possible benchmarks and the suspension or the lifting of measures. Furthermore, the representative welcomed paragraph 35 of resolution 2551 (2020), in which the Council called upon the Secretary-General to conduct a technical assessment of the weapons and ammunition management programme of Somalia in 2021, with a view to identifying benchmarks for the full lifting of the arms embargo.

<sup>122</sup> Russian Federation and United Kingdom.

## IV. Measures to maintain or restore international peace and security in accordance with Article 42 of the Charter

### Article 42

*Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations.*

### Note

Section IV covers the practice of the Council in relation to Article 42 of the Charter, regarding the authorization of the use of force by peacekeeping

operations and multinational forces, as well as interventions by regional organizations.<sup>123</sup>

During the period under review, the Council authorized the use of force under Chapter VII of the Charter with regard to the maintenance or restoration of international peace and security by several peacekeeping missions and multinational forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan (including Abyei and Darfur).<sup>124</sup>

<sup>123</sup> The Council's authorization of the use of force by regional organizations is covered in part VIII. The authorization of the use of force by peacekeeping operations is covered in part X in the context of mandates of peacekeeping operations.

<sup>124</sup> For more information on the mandates of peacekeeping operations, see part X, sect. I.



The present section is divided into three subsections. Subsection A outlines decisions in which the Council authorized the use of force under Chapter VII of the Charter. Subsection B covers discussions of the Council of relevance for Article 42. Subsection C provides an overview of the communications addressed to the Council containing references to Article 42.

### **A. Decisions relating to Article 42**

During the reporting period, the Council made no explicit reference to Article 42 of the Charter in its decisions. Nonetheless, the Council adopted several resolutions under Chapter VII of the Charter by which it authorized peacekeeping missions and multinational forces, including those deployed by regional organizations, to use “all necessary measures” or “all necessary means”, or to take “all necessary action(s)” for the maintenance or restoration of international peace and security.

For information on the authorization of the use of force of missions in the past, including some of the missions covered below, see previous Supplements. For further information on the specific mandates of each field mission, see part X of the present Supplement.

In 2020, the Council reiterated its authorization to use force in relation to various situations and disputes. In Africa, in relation to the situation in the Central African Republic, the Council renewed the authorization to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic to take “all necessary means” to carry out its mandate within its capabilities and areas of deployment,<sup>125</sup> and to the French forces to use “all the means” to provide operational support to the Mission when under serious threat.<sup>126</sup>

Consistent with past practice in connection with the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council authorized the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to take “all necessary measures” to carry out its mandate.<sup>127</sup>

With regard to the flows of arms and related materiel transferred to or from Libya in violation of the arms embargo, the Council extended the authorizations first granted in paragraphs 4 and 8 of resolution 2292 (2016) to Member States, acting nationally or through regional organizations, to use “all measures

commensurate to the specific circumstances” when conducting inspections of vessels and seizing items in the course of such inspections, emphasizing that the inspections should be carried out in compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law and “without causing undue delay to or undue interference with the exercise of freedom of navigation”.<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, in connection with the smuggling of migrants into, through and from the Libyan territory, the Council renewed the authorizations granted in paragraphs 7 to 10 of resolution 2240 (2015) to Member States, acting nationally or through regional organizations, engaged in the fight against migrant smuggling and human trafficking, to use “all measures commensurate to the specific circumstances” in confronting migrant smugglers or human traffickers when carrying out inspections of vessels on the high seas off the coast of Libya that they had reasonable grounds to suspect were being used for migrant smuggling or human trafficking and to seize such vessels that were confirmed to be used for such activities.<sup>129</sup> The Council also reaffirmed paragraph 11 of resolution 2240 (2015), in which it had clarified that the authorization to use force applied only when confronting migrant smugglers and human traffickers on the high seas off the Libyan coast and should not affect the rights and obligations of Member States under international law.<sup>130</sup>

With regard to the situation in Mali, the Council, as it had in previous years, authorized the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to use “all necessary means” to carry out its mandate,<sup>131</sup> and French forces, within the limits of their capacities, also to use “all necessary means” until the end of the mandate of MINUSMA to intervene in support of the Mission when under imminent and serious threat at the request of the Secretary-General.<sup>132</sup> Moreover, the Council requested MINUSMA to carry out its mandate with a “proactive, robust, flexible and agile posture”.<sup>133</sup>

In connection with the situation in Somalia, the Council decided that the African Union Mission in Somalia would be authorized to take “all necessary measures”, in full compliance with participating States’ obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law, and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of

<sup>125</sup> Resolution 2552 (2020), para. 30.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., para. 52.

<sup>127</sup> Resolution 2556 (2020), para. 27.

<sup>128</sup> Resolution 2526 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>129</sup> Resolution 2546 (2020), para. 2.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), para. 18.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., para. 41.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., para. 21.

Somalia, to carry out its mandate.<sup>134</sup> In addition, the Council renewed, for a period of 12 months, the authorizations granted by paragraph 14 of resolution [2500 \(2019\)](#) to States and regional organizations cooperating with Somali authorities to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia for which advance notification has been provided by Somali authorities to the Secretary-General.<sup>135</sup>

In connection with the situation in Abyei, the Council underscored that the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei to protect civilians, as set out in paragraph 3 of resolution [1990 \(2011\)](#), included taking the “necessary actions” to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, irrespective of its source, and in that regard underlined that peacekeepers were authorized to use “all necessary means”, including force, when required, in order to protect civilians under threat of physical violence.<sup>136</sup>

In relation to the situation in Darfur, the Council decided to extend the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, as contained in resolution [2495 \(2019\)](#), until 31 December 2020.<sup>137</sup>

With regard to the situation in South Sudan, the Council reiterated the authorizations to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to use “all necessary means” to perform its mandated tasks.<sup>138</sup> The Council also decided that the mandate of UNMISS would include the responsibility of providing a secure environment in and around Juba and in other parts of South Sudan as necessary, and authorized UNMISS to use all necessary means, including undertaking robust action where necessary and actively patrolling to facilitate the conditions for safe and free movement into, out of, and around Juba, including through protecting the means of ingress and egress from the city and major lines of communication and transport within Juba; protecting the airport to ensure it remained operational and protecting key facilities in Juba essential to the well-being of the people of Juba; and promptly and effectively engaging any actor that was credibly found to be preparing attacks, or engaging in attacks, against United Nations protection of civilians sites, other United Nations premises, United Nations personnel, international and national

humanitarian actors, or civilians.<sup>139</sup> The Council further stressed that this mandate included the authority to use “all necessary means” to accomplish the mandated tasks of UNMISS, particularly the protection of civilians, and that such actions included, within the Mission’s capacity and areas of deployment, defending protection of civilians sites, including by extending weapons-free zones to UNMISS protection of civilians sites where appropriate, addressing threats to the sites, searching individuals attempting to enter the sites, seizing weapons from those inside or attempting to enter the sites and removing from and denying entry to armed actors to the protection of civilians sites.<sup>140</sup>

In Europe, in relation to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council renewed its authorization to Member States, under the European Union military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR-Althea) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) presence, to take “all necessary measures” to effect the implementation of and to ensure compliance with annexes 1-A and 2 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>141</sup> The Council also authorized Member States to take “all necessary measures”, at the request of either EUFOR-Althea or NATO, in defence of the EUFOR-Althea or NATO presence, respectively; and recognized the right of both EUFOR-Althea and NATO to take “all necessary measures” to defend themselves from attack or threat of attack.<sup>142</sup>

In the Middle East, in connection with the situation in Lebanon, the Council recalled its authorization to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon to take “all necessary action” in areas of deployment of its forces to ensure that its area of operations was not utilized for hostile activities; resist attempts by forceful means to prevent it from discharging its duties; protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment; ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel and humanitarian workers; and protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.<sup>143</sup>

## B. Discussions relating to Article 42

During the period under review, no explicit references to Article 42 of the Charter were made at the

<sup>134</sup> Resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#), para. 10.

<sup>135</sup> Resolution [2554 \(2020\)](#), para. 14.

<sup>136</sup> Resolution [2550 \(2020\)](#), para. 12.

<sup>137</sup> Resolution [2525 \(2020\)](#), para. 1. See also resolutions [2495 \(2019\)](#), para. 3, and [2429 \(2018\)](#), paras. 15 and 48.

<sup>138</sup> Resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#), para. 8.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 10.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 14.

<sup>141</sup> Resolution [2549 \(2020\)](#), para. 5.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 6.

<sup>143</sup> Resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#), para. 21.

meetings or open videoconferences of the Council. The Council did, however, continue to discuss issues relating to the authorization of the use of force by peacekeeping missions in carrying out protection of civilians mandates. In that regard, at a high-level open videoconference held on 7 July under the item entitled “United Nations peacekeeping operations”, which focused on peace operations and human rights,<sup>144</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation underscored that no matter how peacekeeping reform proceeded in the future, what should stand at the core of that process was respect for the sovereignty of host countries, compliance with the Charter and adherence to the basic principles of peacekeeping: the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate. Similarly, the representative of Viet Nam, with regard to the role of host countries, stressed that peace operations must be carried out in accordance with the basic principles of political impartiality, consent of the parties and non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate. He added that the promotion and protection of human rights remained primary responsibilities of host countries and therefore peace operations should support the host countries in

undertaking those responsibilities with a constructive approach based on the aforementioned principles and an awareness of the economic, social and cultural context of local societies. The representative of Brazil argued that when it came to advancing human rights, the use of force must never be used except as a last resort. He further underlined that the overuse of force under the pretext of protecting human rights could compromise the credibility and legitimacy of peacekeeping missions and damage the fundamental principles of peacekeeping. He noted that peacekeeping operations should, above all, make full use of peaceful measures, such as strengthening cooperation within civil-military coordination cells and human rights components in order to establish links with the local population, gather information and understand and respond to the community’s main threats and concerns. The delegation of India underscored the need for United Nations personnel engaged in peace operations to be adequately trained and prepared to respond appropriately to human rights violations and abuses in accordance with their mandate and their competence, stressing that the use of force must be employed in accordance with necessity and proportionality and, above all, without endangering the cardinal principle of impartiality.

<sup>144</sup> See [S/2020/674](#).

## V. Consideration of Articles 43 to 45 of the Charter

### Article 43

1. *All Members of the United Nations, in order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, undertake to make available to the Security Council, on its call and in accordance with a special agreement or agreements, armed forces, assistance, and facilities, including rights of passage, necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security.*

2. *Such agreement or agreements shall govern the numbers and types of forces, their degree of readiness and general location, and the nature of the facilities and assistance to be provided.*

3. *The agreement or agreements shall be negotiated as soon as possible on the initiative of the Security Council. They shall be concluded between the Security Council and Members or between the Security Council and groups of Members and shall be subject to ratification by the signatory states in accordance with their respective constitutional processes.*

### Article 44

*When the Security Council has decided to use force it shall, before calling upon a Member not represented on it to provide armed forces in fulfilment of the obligations assumed under Article 43, invite that Member, if the Member so desires, to participate in the decisions of the Security Council concerning the employment of contingents of that Member's armed forces.*

### Article 45

*In order to enable the United Nations to take urgent military measures, Members shall hold immediately available national air-force contingents for combined international enforcement action. The strength and degree of readiness of these contingents and plans for their combined action shall be determined within the limits laid down in the special agreement or agreements referred to in Article 43, by the Security Council with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee.*

## Note

Under Article 43 of the Charter, all Member States undertake to make available to the Council, for the maintenance of international peace and security, armed forces, assistance and facilities in accordance with special agreements. Such agreements, to be entered into by the Council and Member States, were conceived to regulate the numbers and types of troops, their readiness and location and the nature of facilities to be provided.

No agreements under Article 43 were ever concluded, however, and in the absence of such agreements, there is therefore no practice in application of Article 43. The United Nations has developed practical arrangements to carry out military operations in the absence of such agreements. In that context, the Council authorizes peacekeeping forces (under the command and control of the Secretary-General and assembled pursuant to ad hoc agreements entered into by the United Nations and Member States), and national or regional forces (under national or regional command and control) to conduct military action. Peacekeeping operations, as well as their mandates, are covered in detail in part X of the present Supplement.

Articles 44 and 45 of the Charter contain explicit references to Article 43 and are therefore intimately linked. As with Article 43, there is no practice in application of Articles 44 and 45. Nonetheless, the Council has developed, through its decisions, a practice by which to: (a) call upon Member States to contribute armed forces, assistance and facilities, including rights of passage; (b) consult Member States contributing troops for United Nations peacekeeping activities; and (c) call upon Member States to contribute military air assets in the context of peacekeeping. Some of those decisions are also featured in section VII of the present part, which relates to Article 48, to the extent that they concern action required to carry out decisions of the Council regarding the maintenance of international peace and security.

During the period under review, in its decisions, the Council called for the provision of troops and other military assistance, including air assets, to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). While the Council did not engage in any constitutional discussion concerning Articles 43 and 45 during the reporting

period, some speakers at the Council's meetings addressed the need to provide additional troops and military equipment to peacekeeping operations to ensure effective mandate implementation. Throughout 2020, the Council also adopted decisions in which it emphasized, and held meetings and videoconferences at which participants deliberated upon, the importance of consulting troop- and police-contributing countries on issues pertaining to the mandates of peacekeeping operations. Set out below is an overview of the practice of the Council during 2020 concerning the need for Member States to contribute, support and provide assistance to peacekeeping operations (subsection A) and the need for consultation with troop and police contributing countries (subsection B).

### **A. Need for Member States to contribute, support and provide assistance, including military air assets, to peacekeeping operations**

In 2020, the Council made no explicit reference to Article 43 or Article 45 in its decisions or discussions, but did call upon Member States to contribute, support and provide assistance to peacekeeping operations. In resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#), adopted on 29 May, the Council reiterated its call for new donors to provide support for AMISOM through the provision of additional funding for troop stipends, equipment and technical assistance.<sup>145</sup> In order to strengthen the Mission's operational capabilities, fill gaps in resource requirements and enhance its force protection to carry out its mandated tasks, the Council further encouraged Member States to support the African Union in mobilizing the required resources and equipment, including through financial contributions that did not include caveats, to the United Nations trust fund in support of AMISOM based on deliverable recommendations set out in the equipment review.<sup>146</sup>

In resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), adopted on 29 June, the Council expressed its full support to the continuation of the implementation of the MINUSMA adaptation plan and encouraged Member States to contribute to the plan by providing the capabilities needed for its success, particularly air assets, and further urged Member States to provide troops and police with adequate capabilities, as well as equipment, including enablers specific to the operating environment, to MINUSMA.<sup>147</sup> The Council also noted the potential adverse effects on mandate

<sup>145</sup> Resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#), para. 24 (a).

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 15.

<sup>147</sup> Resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), paras. 23 and 44.



implementation of national caveats that had not been declared and accepted by the Secretary-General prior to deployment, calling on Member States to provide troops with the minimum of declared caveats to MINUSMA.<sup>148</sup> In a presidential statement dated 15 October, the Council again called upon Member States to consider additional contributions to MINUSMA to provide the key assets, capabilities and troops needed for better protection of civilians.<sup>149</sup>

In resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#) of 12 November, the Council reiterated its concern at the continuing lack of key capabilities for MINUSCA and the need to fill gaps, in particular in the field of military helicopters, as well as the importance of current and future troop- and police-contributing countries providing troops and police with adequate capabilities, equipment and predeployment training in order to enhance the capacity of MINUSCA to operate effectively.<sup>150</sup>

During the period under review, several discussions of the Council touched upon the importance of providing peacekeeping operations with adequate troops and equipment, including military air assets. For example, at the 8703rd meeting held on 15 January under the item entitled “The situation in Mali”,<sup>151</sup> the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations reported that the increased focus by MINUSMA on central Mali had required it to divert key capabilities, such as air assets, its quick reaction force and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets, from Gao to Mopti, and that it was not feasible for MINUSMA to implement its additional strategic priority in central Mali without additional resources. Attempting to do so had resulted in dangerous gaps in areas in northern Mali where the Mission’s presence was critical and urgently needed. Noting that obtaining the required capabilities would be challenging, he nevertheless insisted that it was indispensable for MINUSMA to deliver on its mandate and that it was an integral part of efforts to further enhance the Mission’s performance. In that regard, he called upon all partners to support the implementation and help the Secretariat mobilize the required resources and capabilities to ensure that MINUSMA remained fit for purpose. The representative of the United States stressed the need to ensure that MINUSMA received high-performing troop and police contingents. She expressed concern over reports of training and capability shortfalls, undeclared caveats and commanders unwilling to take risks or comply with orders, and cautioned that such

challenges, especially in a Mission as complex and dangerous as MINUSMA, hindered the Mission, increased the risk of both peacekeeper and civilian casualties and supported a narrative of peacekeeping ineffectiveness. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines underscored that the Mission’s challenges in the north were understandable given the conditions on the ground, adding that the mobility challenge could be resolved through the deployment of air assets necessary to facilitate operations.

At an open videoconference held on 4 June in connection with United Nations peacekeeping operations,<sup>152</sup> the Force Commander of MINUSMA emphasized that its operations should have the means, or capabilities, for their proper execution, such as aircraft and specialized units. Recalling that the recent force generation conference of 19 May had been a milestone, he stressed that to fully realize the adaptation concept, MINUSMA still required additional utility and armed helicopter units. He added that it was essential that the Mission received the resources required to allow infrastructural changes and additional air operations. The representative of Belgium expressed support for the force adaptation plan of MINUSMA on the basis of the general principles that had been shared with Member States. Having heard reports that some critical assets, including air assets and intelligence capacity, remained unavailable, he noted that those assets were key to the success of the adaptation plan. The representative of Germany stated that the force adaptation plan was indispensable for further improving the operational efficiency of MINUSMA, and recalled that the recent force generation conference had demonstrated that there was strong support for the plan and that more pledges for certain critical capabilities, in particular helicopters, were needed. The representative of the United States, also referring to the Mission’s force adaptation plan, emphasized that its success depended on getting the right troop-contributing countries for the job, and the recent force generation conference had been a positive step in that direction. She added that the United States continued to encourage Member States to pledge more highly specialized units, as well as the necessary enablers, such as helicopters, medical capabilities and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets.

At a high-level open videoconference held on 11 June, in connection with the situation in Mali,<sup>153</sup> the Secretary-General underscored that the MINUSMA adaptation plan remained a viable proposal for a more

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 44.

<sup>149</sup> [S/PRST/2020/10](#), fifth paragraph.

<sup>150</sup> Resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), para. 35.

<sup>151</sup> See [S/PV.8703](#).

<sup>152</sup> See [S/2020/514](#).

<sup>153</sup> See [S/2020/541](#).

agile, mobile and flexible operation, with tailored units and enhanced capabilities – most important among them additional air mobility. He was encouraged by the pledges made during the recent MINUSMA force generation conference by troop-contributing countries in May to deploy additional specialized capabilities to the Mission, stressing that in an increasingly challenging security environment, additional air assets were urgently needed to enable the Mission to continue ensuring the implementation of its mandate. In that regard, he reiterated his call upon Member States to support the plan when considering contributions and the Mission's budget, in keeping with their commitments under the Action for Peacekeeping framework. The Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France stated that the adaptation plan, which he invited all Member States to support, should further improve the Mission's capabilities. The Minister for Defence of Estonia underscored that in order to increase the Mission's ability to provide security and protect the local population, its adaptation plan should focus on increasing the mobility and flexibility of the Mission. Adding that the Mission's early warning systems should also be strengthened in order to be better prepared for the protection of both civilians and the peacekeepers themselves, he highlighted the responsibility and willingness of the troop-contributing countries to ensure that their troops had adequate training, equipment and capabilities specific to the operating environment in Mali as the key to success. The representative of the United States stressed that the Council must continue to increase the Mission's efficiency and effectiveness by supporting the Force Commander's force adaptation plan and improving troop and police quality throughout the Mission. Commending the Force Commander's efforts to maximize troop capabilities through the development of the adaptation plan, he called upon Member States that had those capabilities to consider providing them to MINUSMA.

At an open videoconference held on 14 September in connection with United Nations peacekeeping operations,<sup>154</sup> the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations reported that across the four large multidimensional missions, major force transformation processes had been conducted to shift mission postures and presence in order to strengthen strategic flexibility and operational adaptation. That transformation process, accompanied by a concerted whole-of-mission approach that combined the comparative advantages of uniformed personnel with civilian components, had been fundamental to

<sup>154</sup> See [S/2020/911](#).

improving mission performance with regard to the protection of civilians. He stressed that all that would not have been possible without the continued support of Member States, and urged troop- and police-contributing countries to continue to come forward with pledges. He further underlined the importance of having the right equipment in the right place at the right time, with the right know-how, and added that contingent-owned equipment was key in that regard. With regard to MINUSMA, he thanked the Member States that had made specialized capability pledges to the Mission and encouraged others to do the same. Commenting on mission performance, the representative of the Dominican Republic stressed the need to share intelligence and to reduce gaps in essential equipment, which would translate into greater security and staff performance. The representative of Estonia stated that his country expected the strengthening of the comprehensive performance assessment system and predeployment visits to continue. He added that in Mali, for example, there was a need for increasingly mobile, flexible and robust troop postures and stronger early warning systems, and those relied on ensuring that the troops deployed not only had adequate training and equipment, but also had the capabilities necessary to fulfil their mandate. The representative of France underscored that in order to perform well, peacekeeping operations should be capable of adapting to changes on the ground, which required the development of rapid deployment battalions, as had been done in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in order to react as quickly as possible to increased tensions. That also involved improving equipment, filling capacity gaps, improving casualty evacuation procedures and adapting deployments on the ground, as seen in the Central African Republic and Mali in the context of the adaptation plan for MINUSMA. The representative of the United States stated that her country recognized that missions should have the necessary resources and capabilities to fully carry out their mandated tasks in complex, fragile environments, and while robust training and equipment were necessary, they were not sufficient alone to improve performance. They needed to be backed by a commitment to the mission and sustained by a culture of performance and accountability.

## **B. Recognition of the need to consult troop- and police-contributing countries**

During the period under review, the Council adopted four decisions concerning the need to consult troop- and police-contributing countries on issues



pertaining to peacekeeping. On 30 March, the Council adopted resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#) in connection with United Nations peacekeeping operations. In the resolution, the Council called upon all Member States hosting peacekeeping operations to promptly investigate and effectively prosecute those responsible for attacks on United Nations personnel, and to keep the relevant troop- and police-contributing countries informed of the progress of such investigations and prosecutions.<sup>155</sup>

On 29 June and 18 December, respectively, the Council adopted resolutions [2530 \(2020\)](#) and [2555 \(2020\)](#) in connection with the situation in the Middle East. In those resolutions, the Council emphasized the importance of the Council and troop-contributing countries having access to reports and information related to the redeployment configuration of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), and reinforced that such information assisted the Council with evaluating, mandating and reviewing UNDOF and with effective consultation with troop-contributing countries.<sup>156</sup>

In resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), adopted on 29 June in connection with the situation in Mali, the Council requested the Secretary-General to ensure that troop-contributing countries received sufficient information relevant to up-to-date tactics, techniques and procedures in reducing troop casualties in an asymmetric environment before deploying to Mali.<sup>157</sup>

In resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#), adopted on 28 August in connection with the situation in the Middle East, the Council requested the Secretary-General to elaborate a detailed plan, with timelines and specific modalities, in full and close consultation with the parties, including Lebanon, the troop-contributing countries and the members of the Council, to implement the recommendations in his report on the assessment of the continued relevance of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) resources and options for improving the efficiency and effectiveness between UNIFIL and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon.<sup>158</sup>

During 2020, there were no explicit references made to Article 44 during the discussions of the Council. Nonetheless, consistent with recent practice, at the open videoconference on the working methods of

the Council held on 15 May in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”,<sup>159</sup> some participants<sup>160</sup> addressed the issue of cooperation and consultation of the Council with troop- and police-contributing countries.

In addition, the importance of consulting troop- and police-contributing countries on issues relating to the mandates of peacekeeping operations continued to be discussed in connection with the item entitled “United Nations peacekeeping operations”. At a high-level open videoconference held on 7 July, focused on peace operations and human rights,<sup>161</sup> the delegation of Tunisia suggested that Council members could reflect on how to mobilize more financial resources and better trained and more skilled personnel for peace operations in order to ensure higher performance on the human rights component, and noted that cooperation with troop- and police-contributing countries was important in that regard. The delegation of Argentina considered it a priority to continue the discussions and periodic meetings of Council members with troop- and police-contributing countries, and encouraged the Council to continue working to achieve a constructive, transparent and inclusive dialogue among States and other stakeholders so as to continue to bring its best efforts to the societies and nations where the Organization was deployed. The representative of Nepal emphasized the centrality of human rights in United Nations peace operations and called upon troop- and police-contributing countries, host countries, the United Nations and other international partners to work in unison to ensure the protection and promotion of the human rights of civilians in peace operations. The delegation of Peru highlighted the need for troop-contributing countries to have up-to-date and accurate information on the expectations, challenges and specific requirements of a given operation. The delegation of Spain underscored the need to pool efforts in three crucial areas: first, the Council, which was responsible for developing and adopting the mandate; second, troop- and police-contributing countries, which were responsible for the appropriate training and selection of the forces to be deployed; and, third, the Secretariat, which developed concepts and established policies, which were periodically reviewed in the light of lessons learned.

<sup>155</sup> Resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#), para. 3.

<sup>156</sup> Resolutions [2530 \(2020\)](#), thirteenth preambular paragraph, and [2555 \(2020\)](#), thirteenth preambular paragraph.

<sup>157</sup> Resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), para. 46.

<sup>158</sup> Resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#), para. 8. See also [S/2020/473](#).

<sup>159</sup> See [S/2020/418](#).

<sup>160</sup> Executive Director of Security Council Report, Viet Nam (on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Security Council), France, Argentina, Brazil, Cyprus, Egypt, Guatemala, Morocco, Nigeria, Philippines, Slovakia, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>161</sup> See [S/2020/674](#).

At a subsequent open videoconference held in connection with the item entitled “United Nations peacekeeping operations” on 14 September,<sup>162</sup> the representative of China stated that it was imperative to strengthen partnerships in peacekeeping operations and, in that regard, emphasized the need for the Council, the Secretariat, financial contributors and troop- and police-contributing countries to strengthen their communication and carry out in-depth discussions through existing mechanisms, such as meetings with troop- and police-contributing countries and Council peacekeeping working groups, in order to create synergy for peacekeeping reforms. The representative of the Russian Federation underscored that any changes related to troop rotations should be implemented in close cooperation with troop-contributing countries. She also noted that her country considered it extremely important to take into account the views of the host States and troop-contributing countries when considering issues concerning the extension of mandates, and to consult them when preparing recommendations for assessment reports on the effectiveness of the work of peacekeeping missions. She further stressed the need to further improve the trilateral cooperation among the Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat in order to strengthen the spirit of partnership, cooperation and mutual trust.

In addition, during the period under review, Council members and other participants at Council meetings and videoconferences stressed the need for

<sup>162</sup> See [S/2020/911](#).

the Council to listen to the views of troop- and police-contributing countries to UNISFA<sup>163</sup> and UNIFIL.<sup>164</sup> With regard to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), at the 8778th meeting, held on 7 December,<sup>165</sup> the representative of France noted that discussions were being held among contributing countries and the Secretariat, which was expected to facilitate the prompt enactment of the decisions taken by the Council. The representative of Indonesia emphasized that the multispectral challenges that the Democratic Republic of the Congo was facing required close cooperation from all stakeholders. She added that her country continued to call for more robust consultation with neighbours and regional organizations, as well as with the troop- and police-contributing countries to MONUSCO. The representative of the Russian Federation said that any decisions regarding the configuration of MONUSCO, including the Intervention Brigade, should take into account the situation on the ground and thoroughly consider the priorities of Kinshasa and the troop-contributing countries. In a similar vein, the representative of China underscored that any plan for the reform of MONUSCO and its Intervention Brigade should be adequately communicated to the troop- and police-contributing countries and be carried out at a steady pace.

<sup>163</sup> See [S/2020/351](#) (China and Viet Nam).

<sup>164</sup> See [S/2020/857](#) (China and Indonesia) for the explanations of vote on the draft resolution contained in [S/2020/844](#).

<sup>165</sup> See [S/PV.8778](#).

## VI. Role and composition of the Military Staff Committee in accordance with Articles 46 and 47 of the Charter

### Article 46

*Plans for the application of armed force shall be made by the Security Council with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee.*

### Article 47

1. *There shall be established a Military Staff Committee to advise and assist the Security Council on all questions relating to the Security Council’s military requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, the employment and command of forces placed at its disposal, the regulation of armaments, and possible disarmament.*

2. *The Military Staff Committee shall consist of the Chiefs of Staff of the permanent members of the*

*Security Council or their representatives. Any Member of the United Nations not permanently represented on the Committee shall be invited by the Committee to be associated with it when the efficient discharge of the Committee’s responsibilities requires the participation of that Member in its work.*

3. *The Military Staff Committee shall be responsible under the Security Council for the strategic direction of any armed forces placed at the disposal of the Security Council. Questions relating to the command of such forces shall be worked out subsequently.*

4. *The Military Staff Committee, with the authorization of the Security Council and after consultation with appropriate regional agencies, may establish regional sub-committees.*

## Note

Section VI covers the practice of the Council under Articles 46 and 47 of the Charter regarding the Military Staff Committee, including instances in which the Council considered the role of the Military Staff Committee in planning the application of armed force, and in advising and assisting the Council on the military requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security.

During the period under review, the Council did not explicitly refer to either Article 46 or Article 47 in any of its decisions. Articles 46 and 47 were also not referred to in any of the Council's discussions.

As is customary, the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly issued during the reporting period made reference to the activities of the Military Staff Committee.<sup>166</sup>

<sup>166</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part IV.

## VII. Action required of Member States under Article 48 of the Charter

### Article 48

1. *The action required to carry out the decisions of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security shall be taken by all the Members of the United Nations or by some of them, as the Security Council may determine.*

2. *Such decisions shall be carried out by the Members of the United Nations directly and through their action in the appropriate international agencies of which they are members.*

## Note

Section VII covers the practice of the Council in relation to Article 48 of the Charter, regarding the obligation of all or some Member States to carry out the decisions of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. Under Article 48 (2), Member States shall carry out the decisions directly, or through international organizations of which they are members. The section is focused on the types of obligations imposed on Member States pursuant to Article 48, and on the range of addressees designated by the Council to implement, or comply with, decisions adopted.

While Article 48 relates to requests to Member States to carry out action decided upon by the Council, during 2020, as in previous periods, the Council also addressed some of its pleas to "actors" or "parties", reflecting the intra-State and increasingly complex nature of many contemporary conflicts dealt with by the Council. In its requests to carry out actions, the Council also addressed "regional and subregional organizations", signalling the importance of such entities in tackling disputes and situations before the Council. Additional information on the engagement of regional arrangements in the maintenance of

international peace and security is provided in part VIII of the present Supplement.

During the period under review, the Council did not explicitly invoke Article 48 in any of its decisions. The Council, however, adopted resolutions and issued presidential statements in which it underlined the obligation of Member States and other entities concerned to comply with the measures imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter pursuant to Article 48. The section is divided into two subsections. Subsection A covers decisions of the Council requiring Member States to carry out action in relation to measures under Article 41. Subsection B covers decisions of the Council requiring Member States to carry out action in relation to measures under Article 42. During 2020, no references to Article 48 were found in communications to the Council, nor was there any discussion held in relation to the interpretation or application of that Article.

### A. Decisions in which the Security Council required Member States to carry out action in relation to measures under Article 41 of the Charter

In 2020, the Council adopted a number of decisions regarding measures adopted in accordance with Article 41. With regard to judicial measures adopted under that article, the Council continued to urge all States, especially States in which fugitives were suspected of being at large, to render all necessary assistance to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, in particular to achieve the arrest and surrender of all remaining fugitives indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda as soon as possible.<sup>167</sup> Noting

<sup>167</sup> Resolution [2529 \(2020\)](#), para. 3.

with concern that the Mechanism faced problems in the relocation of acquitted persons and convicted persons who had completed serving their sentence, the Council emphasized the importance of finding expeditious and durable solutions to those problems, including as part of a reconciliation process, and in that regard reiterated its call upon all States to cooperate with and render all necessary assistance to the Mechanism.<sup>168</sup> The Council also called upon all the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to fully cooperate with the Mechanism.<sup>169</sup>

With regard to decisions adopted under Article 41 concerning sanctions, the Council frequently requested or stressed the importance of specific measures being implemented by all Member States or all States, as well as regional organizations. The Council requested the countries specifically targeted by the measures to carry out the actions required.

In relation to the situation in the Central African Republic, the Council urged all parties and all Member States, as well as regional and subregional organizations, to ensure cooperation with the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic and the safety of its members.<sup>170</sup> It urged all Member States and all relevant United Nations bodies to ensure unhindered access, in particular to persons, documents and sites, in order for the Panel of Experts to execute its mandate, and recalled the value of information-sharing between the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the Panel of Experts.<sup>171</sup> The Council also requested the Central African Republic authorities to report, by 30 June 2020 and 15 June 2021, respectively, to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic on the progress achieved regarding security sector reform, the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process and the management of weapons and ammunition.<sup>172</sup> The Council recalled that all Member States were to continue to take the necessary measures to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer to the Central African Republic of arms and related materiel of all types.<sup>173</sup>

Concerning the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Council urged all States, relevant United Nations bodies and other

interested parties to cooperate fully with the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) and the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1874 (2009), in particular by supplying any information at their disposal on the implementation of the measures imposed by the relevant resolutions.<sup>174</sup>

With regard to the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council called for enhanced cooperation between all States, particularly those in the region, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004), encouraged all parties and all States to ensure cooperation with the Group of Experts by individuals and entities within their jurisdiction or under their control, and reiterated its demand that all parties and all States ensure the safety of its members and its support staff and ensure unhindered and immediate access, in particular to persons, documents and sites that the Group of Experts deemed relevant to the execution of its mandate.<sup>175</sup>

In connection with the situation in Lebanon, the Council recalled paragraph 15 of resolution 1701 (2006), according to which all States were to take the necessary measures to prevent, by their nationals or from their territories or using flag vessels or aircraft, the sale or supply of arms and related materiel to any entity or individual in Lebanon other than those authorized by the Government of Lebanon or the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).<sup>176</sup>

In relation to the situation in Libya, with regard to the arms embargo, the Council called upon all Member States to ensure full compliance with the arms embargo.<sup>177</sup> It also called upon the Government of National Accord to improve the implementation of the arms embargo, as soon as it exercised oversight.<sup>178</sup> Concerning other sanctions measures, the Council called upon Member States, particularly those in which designated individuals and entities were based, as well as those in which their assets frozen under the measures were suspected to be present, to report to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya on the actions taken to implement effectively the travel ban and asset freeze

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4.

<sup>169</sup> Resolution 2549 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>170</sup> Resolutions 2507 (2020), para. 9, and 2536 (2020), para. 9.

<sup>171</sup> Resolutions 2507 (2020), para. 10, and 2536 (2020), para. 10.

<sup>172</sup> Resolutions 2507 (2020), para. 12, and 2536 (2020), para. 12.

<sup>173</sup> Resolutions 2507 (2020), para. 1, and 2536 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>174</sup> Resolution 2515 (2020), para. 5.

<sup>175</sup> Resolution 2556 (2020), para. 39.

<sup>176</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), para. 20.

<sup>177</sup> Resolutions 2509 (2020), para. 6, 2510 (2020), para. 10, and 2542 (2020), penultimate preambular paragraph and para. 7.

<sup>178</sup> Resolution 2509 (2020), para. 7.



measures in relation to all individuals on the sanctions list.<sup>179</sup> The Council further urged all States, relevant United Nations bodies, including the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), and other interested parties, to cooperate fully with the Committee and the Panel of Experts on Libya, in particular by supplying any information at their disposal on the implementation of the measures decided in the relevant resolutions, in particular incidents of non-compliance. The Council called upon UNSMIL and the Government of National Accord to support the Panel's investigatory work inside Libya, including by sharing information, facilitating transit and granting access to weapons storage facilities.<sup>180</sup> The Council also called upon all parties and all States to ensure the safety of the members of the Panel of Experts, and further called upon all parties and all States, including Libya and countries of the region, to provide unhindered and immediate access, in particular to persons, documents and sites that the Panel deemed relevant to the execution of its mandate.<sup>181</sup>

Concerning the situation in Somalia, the Council called upon the Federal Government of Somalia to continue working with Somali financial authorities, private sector financial institutions and the international community to identify, assess and mitigate money-laundering and terrorist financing risks, improve compliance and strengthen supervision and enforcement, and requested the Federal Government of Somalia, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Panel of Experts on Somalia to continue exchanging information about Al-Shabaab's finances and to continue working with stakeholders to develop a plan to disrupt Al-Shabaab's finances.<sup>182</sup> The Council also requested the Federal Government of Somalia to strengthen cooperation and coordination with other Member States and international partners to prevent and counter the financing of terrorism, and to submit an update on specific actions taken in that regard.<sup>183</sup> The Council reaffirmed that all States were to implement a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia, including by prohibiting the financing of all acquisitions and deliveries of weapons and military equipment and the direct or indirect supply of technical advice, financial and other assistance, and training related to military activities, until the Council decided otherwise.<sup>184</sup> Noting the increase in improvised

explosive devices attacks undertaken by Al-Shabaab, the Council further decided that all States were to prevent the direct or indirect sale, supply or transfer of the items specified in annex C to the resolution to Somalia from their territories or by their nationals outside their territories, or using their flag vessels or aircraft, if there was sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the item(s) would be used, or a significant risk they could be used, in the manufacture in Somalia of improvised explosive devices.<sup>185</sup> The Council reiterated its request for Member States to assist the Panel of Experts in its investigations, and for the Federal Government of Somalia, federal member states and partners to share information with the Panel of Experts regarding Al-Shabaab activities, especially where covered by listing criteria.<sup>186</sup> In connection with anti-piracy measures, the Council called upon the Somali authorities to make all efforts to bring to justice those using Somali territory to plan, facilitate or undertake criminal acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea, and upon all States to take appropriate actions under their existing domestic law, or develop legislative processes, to prevent the illicit financing of acts of piracy and the laundering of its proceeds.<sup>187</sup> The Council also called upon all States to cooperate fully with the Panel of Experts, including on information-sharing regarding possible violations of the arms embargo or the total ban on the export of charcoal from Somalia.<sup>188</sup> The Council renewed its call upon States and regional organizations that were able to do so to take part in the fight against piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, in particular by deploying naval vessels, arms and military aircraft and by providing basing and logistical support for counter-piracy forces.<sup>189</sup>

With regard to the situation in South Sudan, the Council urged all parties and Member States, emphasizing, on one occasion, Member States neighbouring South Sudan, and international, regional and subregional organizations, to ensure cooperation with the Panel of Experts on South Sudan, and further urged all Member States involved to ensure the safety of the members of the Panel of Experts and unhindered access, in particular to persons, documents and sites, in order for the Panel to execute its mandate.<sup>190</sup> Concerning the arms embargo, the Council, underscoring that arms shipments in violation of the

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 8.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 13.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 14.

<sup>182</sup> Resolution 2551 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 6.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 26.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 20.

<sup>187</sup> Resolution 2554 (2020), paras. 7 and 17.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 10.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 12.

<sup>190</sup> Resolutions 2514 (2020), para. 24, and 2521 (2020), para. 20.

measures contained in the resolution risked fuelling conflict and contributing to further instability, strongly urged all Member States to take urgent action to identify and prevent such shipments within their territory.<sup>191</sup> The Council further called upon all Member States, in particular States neighbouring South Sudan, to inspect, in accordance with their national authorities and legislation and consistent with international law, all cargo to South Sudan in their territory, including seaports and airports, if the State concerned had information providing reasonable grounds to believe the cargo contained items of which the supply, sale or transfer was prohibited, and decided that all Member States were to seize and dispose of such items upon discovery.<sup>192</sup>

In relation to the situation in Yemen, recalling the provisions of paragraph 14 of resolution 2216 (2015), the Council called upon all Member States and other actors to comply with the targeted arms embargo imposed therein.<sup>193</sup> The Council further urged all parties, all Member States and international, regional and subregional organizations to ensure cooperation with the Panel of Experts on Yemen, and urged all Member States involved to ensure the safety of the members of the Panel and unhindered access, in particular to persons, documents and sites.<sup>194</sup>

With regard to measures adopted under Article 41 for the purpose of preventing and suppressing the financing of terrorism, the Council noted with grave concern that terrorists and terrorist groups, including in Africa, raised, moved and transferred funds through a variety of means, and recalled the relevant obligations on all Member States in that regard, including those in resolutions 1373 (2001) and 2178 (2014).<sup>195</sup> The Council also continued to encourage all Member States to more actively submit to the Committee listing requests of individuals, groups, undertakings and entities that met the listing criteria contained in paragraph 2 of resolution 2368 (2017) and to submit additional identifying and other information set out in paragraph 85 of that same resolution.<sup>196</sup>

<sup>191</sup> Resolution 2521 (2020), para. 7.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 8 and 9.

<sup>193</sup> Resolution 2511 (2020), twelfth preambular paragraph.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 10.

<sup>195</sup> S/PRST/2020/5, fifteenth paragraph. For more information, see sect. III.A.

<sup>196</sup> Resolution 2560 (2020), para. 1.

## **B. Decisions in which the Security Council required Member States to carry out action in relation to measures under Article 42 of the Charter**

During the period under review, the Council urged, called upon and requested action by a particular Member State, a designated group of Member States, all Member States and all parties in relation to measures adopted under Article 42 of the Charter.

With regard to the situation in Abyei, the Council called upon all Member States, in particular the Sudan and South Sudan, to provide for the free, unhindered and expeditious movement, to and from Abyei and throughout the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone, of all personnel, as well as equipment, provisions, supplies and other goods, including vehicles, aircraft and spare parts, which were for the exclusive and official use of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).<sup>197</sup> Expressing disappointment that the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan continued to obstruct the full implementation of the mission's mandate, the Council demanded that the two countries provide full support to UNISFA in the deployment of its personnel, including by promptly issuing visas without prejudice to their nationalities.<sup>198</sup> The Council also urged the Governments to facilitate basing arrangements for UNISFA in the mission area, including Athony airport, and to provide necessary flight clearances, and called upon all parties to fully adhere to their obligations under the status-of-forces agreements.<sup>199</sup>

Concerning the situation in the Central African Republic, the Council urged all parties in the country to cooperate fully with the deployment and activities of MINUSCA, in particular by ensuring safety, security and freedom of movement with unhindered and immediate access throughout the territory of the Central African Republic to enable MINUSCA to carry out fully its mandate.<sup>200</sup> The Council also called upon Member States, especially those in the region, to ensure the free, unhindered and expeditious movement to and from the Central African Republic of all personnel, as well as equipment, provisions, supplies and other goods that were for the exclusive and official use of MINUSCA.<sup>201</sup>

In connection with the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council

<sup>197</sup> Resolution 2550 (2020), para. 21.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 7.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 8.

<sup>200</sup> Resolution 2552 (2020), para. 47.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 48.



reiterated its call upon all parties to cooperate fully with MONUSCO and to remain committed to the full and objective implementation of the Mission's mandate, and encouraged all parties to work together to enhance the safety and security of MONUSCO personnel.<sup>202</sup>

With regard to the situation in Lebanon, the Council called upon all parties to respect the cessation of hostilities, prevent the violation of the Blue Line and respect it in its entirety and to cooperate fully with the United Nations and UNIFIL.<sup>203</sup> The Council further urged all parties to abide scrupulously by their obligation to respect the safety of UNIFIL and other United Nations personnel, and to ensure that the freedom of movement of UNIFIL and its access to the Blue Line in all its parts was fully respected and unimpeded, in conformity with its mandate and its rules of engagement.<sup>204</sup> The Council also called upon the Government of Lebanon to facilitate prompt and full access requested by UNIFIL, including all relevant locations north of the Blue Line related to the discovery of tunnels crossing the Blue Line which UNIFIL reported as a violation of resolution 1701 (2006).<sup>205</sup> The Council further called upon all States to fully support and respect the establishment between the Blue Line and the Litani River of an area free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and UNIFIL.<sup>206</sup> The Council also urged the Government of Israel to expedite the withdrawal of its army from northern Ghajar without further delay, in coordination with UNIFIL.<sup>207</sup>

In connection with the situation in Mali, the Council called upon Member States, especially those in the region, to ensure the free, unhindered and expeditious movement to and from Mali of all personnel, as well as equipment, provisions, supplies and other goods, which were for the exclusive and official use of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), in order to facilitate the timely and cost-effective delivery of the

logistical supply of MINUSMA.<sup>208</sup> The Council also urged all parties in Mali to cooperate fully with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and MINUSMA in the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, as well as to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of MINUSMA personnel with unhindered and immediate access throughout the territory of Mali.<sup>209</sup>

The Council renewed its call upon States and regional organizations that were able to do so to take part in the fight against piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia by deploying naval vessels, arms and military aircraft, by providing basing and logistical support for counter-piracy forces and by seizing and disposing of boats, vessels, arms and other related equipment used in the commission of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, or for which there were reasonable grounds for suspecting such use.<sup>210</sup>

In connection with the situation in South Sudan, the Council demanded that all relevant actors, particularly the Government of South Sudan, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, the South Sudan National Police Service, the National Security Service, the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition and the National Salvation Front, end all obstructions towards the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).<sup>211</sup> The Council also demanded that the Government of South Sudan comply with the obligations set out in the status-of-forces agreement between the Government of South Sudan and the United Nations, and immediately cease obstructing UNMISS in the performance of its mandate.<sup>212</sup> The Council called upon the Government of South Sudan to take action, to deter and to hold those responsible to account for any hostile or other actions that impeded UNMISS and to guarantee UNMISS unimpeded access to United Nations premises in accordance with the status-of-forces agreement.<sup>213</sup>

<sup>202</sup> Resolution 2556 (2020), seventeenth preambular paragraph.

<sup>203</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), para. 11.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 14 and 15.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 15.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 19.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 18.

<sup>208</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), para. 50.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 7.

<sup>210</sup> Resolution 2554 (2020), para. 12.

<sup>211</sup> Resolution 2514 (2020), eighteenth preambular paragraph.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 2 and 12.

## VIII. Mutual assistance pursuant to Article 49 of the Charter

### Article 49

*The Members of the United Nations shall join in affording mutual assistance in carrying out the measures decided upon by the Security Council.*

### Note

Section VIII covers the practice of the Council in relation to Article 49 of the Charter, concerning mutual assistance among Member States in carrying out the measures decided upon by the Council.

During the period under review, the Council did not explicitly invoke Article 49 in any of its decisions. However, in its decisions in 2020, the Council called upon Member States to cooperate with each other or assist specific States in the implementation of measures imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter. The present section is divided into two subsections. Subsection A covers decisions in which the Council urged cooperation among Member States with regard to measures under Article 41. Subsection B covers decisions in which the Council requested mutual assistance in relation to measures under Article 42.

In 2020, as in previous periods, there was no constitutional discussion in the Council relating to the interpretation or application of Article 49 of the Charter. No reference to Article 49 was found in the communications received by the Council.

### A. Decisions in which the Security Council requested mutual assistance in the implementation of measures under Article 41 of the Charter

During the period under review, the Council called upon Member States to enhance their cooperation in implementing specific sanctions measures. The addressees of the Council's calls for mutual assistance ranged from individual Member States, in particular concerned and neighbouring States, to "all Member States", as well as regional and subregional organizations. The types of assistance requested of Member States varied greatly, from requests to share information and requests for the provision of technical assistance to requests for cooperation in carrying out inspections.

For example, with regard to the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the

Council called for enhanced cooperation between all States, particularly those in the region, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo established pursuant to resolution [1533 \(2004\)](#).<sup>214</sup>

In connection with the situation in Libya, the Council called upon the Government of National Accord to improve the implementation of the arms embargo, and upon all Member States to cooperate in such efforts.<sup>215</sup> The Council further called upon the Government of National Accord to enhance cooperation and information-sharing with other States with regard to measures taken to prevent entry into or transit through their territories of all persons as designated by the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) concerning Libya.<sup>216</sup>

With regard to the situation in Somalia, the Council requested the Federal Government of Somalia to strengthen cooperation and coordination with other Member States, particularly other Member States in the region, and with international partners to prevent and counter the financing of terrorism, which included compliance with resolution [1373 \(2001\)](#), resolution [2178 \(2014\)](#), resolution [2462 \(2019\)](#) and relevant domestic and international law.<sup>217</sup>

Concerning the situation in South Sudan, the Council decided that all Member States were to cooperate in efforts to seize and dispose of items for which the supply, sale or transfer was prohibited by paragraph 4 of resolution [2428 \(2018\)](#).<sup>218</sup>

Regarding judicial measures adopted in accordance with Article 41, the Council urged all States, especially States in which fugitives were suspected of being at large, to intensify their cooperation with and render all necessary assistance to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, in particular to achieve the arrest and surrender of all remaining fugitives indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda as soon as possible.<sup>219</sup>

<sup>214</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 39.

<sup>215</sup> Resolution [2509 \(2020\)](#), para. 7.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 9.

<sup>217</sup> Resolution [2551 \(2020\)](#), para. 2.

<sup>218</sup> Resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#), para. 9.

<sup>219</sup> Resolution [2529 \(2020\)](#), para. 3.

## B. Decisions in which the Security Council requested mutual assistance in the implementation of measures under Article 42 of the Charter

During the period under review, the Council also adopted several resolutions in which it requested cooperation among Member States in carrying out measures under Article 42 of the Charter, under which the use of force is authorized. The types of assistance requested included sharing information and capacity-building to deter various criminal acts, and coordination among Member States to deter such acts.

For example, concerning the situation in Lebanon, the Council continued to call upon Member States to assist the Lebanese Armed Forces as needed to enable them to perform their duties in line with resolution 1701 (2006).<sup>220</sup>

With regard to the situation in Libya and the question of migration, the Council reiterated its calls made in previous resolutions upon “all flag States involved” to cooperate in efforts aimed at inspecting vessels suspected of being used for migrant smuggling or human trafficking from Libya.<sup>221</sup> The Council also reiterated previous resolutions which called upon

<sup>220</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), penultimate preambular paragraph.

<sup>221</sup> Resolution 2546 (2020), para. 2. See also resolution 2240 (2015), para. 9.

Member States acting nationally or through regional organizations, including the European Union, to cooperate with the Government of National Accord and with each other, including by sharing information to assist Libya in building capacity to secure its borders and to prevent, investigate and prosecute acts of smuggling of migrants and human trafficking through its territory and in its territorial sea.<sup>222</sup>

Concerning the situation in Somalia and efforts aimed at countering and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia, the Council encouraged Member States to continue to cooperate with Somali authorities in the fight against piracy and armed robbery at sea, without impeding the exercise of high seas freedoms or other navigational rights and freedoms by ships of any State, and called upon Member States to assist Somalia in strengthening maritime capacity in Somalia.<sup>223</sup> The Council further recognized the need for Member States, international and regional organizations and other appropriate partners to exchange evidence and information for anti-piracy law enforcement purposes with a view to ensuring the effective arrest, prosecution of suspected, and imprisonment of convicted pirates and key figures of criminal networks involved in piracy.<sup>224</sup>

<sup>222</sup> Resolution 2546 (2020), para. 2. See also resolutions 2240 (2015), paras. 2–3, 2312 (2016), paras. 2–3, and 2380 (2017), paras. 2–3.

<sup>223</sup> Resolution 2554 (2020), paras. 3 and 7.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 10.

## IX. Special economic problems of the nature described in Article 50 of the Charter

### Article 50

*If preventive or enforcement measures against any state are taken by the Security Council, any other state, whether a Member of the United Nations or not, which finds itself confronted with special economic problems arising from the carrying out of those measures shall have the right to consult the Security Council with regard to a solution of those problems.*

### Note

Section IX covers the practice of the Council in relation to Article 50 of the Charter, regarding the right of States to consult the Council with a view to resolving economic problems arising from the implementation of preventive or enforcement measures, such as sanctions, imposed by the Council.

During the period under review, the Council continued its practice of imposing targeted instead of comprehensive economic sanctions, thereby minimizing the unintended adverse impact on third States.<sup>225</sup> None of the Council-mandated sanctions committees received formal requests for assistance under Article 50 of the Charter.

The Council did not explicitly invoke Article 50 of the Charter in any of its decisions during the reporting period. Article 50 of the Charter was also not explicitly mentioned at any meeting of the Council, nor was there any substantive discussion on the application or interpretation of the Article during the Council's deliberations.

<sup>225</sup> For more information on sanctions measures, see sect. III.

## X. Right of individual or collective self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter

### Article 51

*Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.*

### Note

Section X deals with the practice of the Council in relation to Article 51 of the Charter, regarding the “inherent right of individual or collective self-defence” in the event of an armed attack against a Member State. The section is divided into two subsections. Subsection A covers the discussions of the Council of relevance to the interpretation and application of Article 51, and subsection B covers references to Article 51 and the right to self-defence in communications addressed to the Council. The Council did not refer to Article 51 of the Charter or the right of self-defence in its decisions during the reporting period.

### A. Discussions relating to Article 51

In 2020, Article 51 of the Charter was explicitly invoked 10 times during the deliberations of the Council.<sup>226</sup> Six of those references were made in the context of the high-level open debate held on 9 January under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” (see case 9).<sup>227</sup> Moreover, the right of self-defence was discussed at several meetings of the Council in relation to a number of thematic and country- and region-specific items on its agenda.

<sup>226</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#) (United States, Syrian Arab Republic, Liechtenstein, Islamic Republic of Iran and Mexico); [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#) (Austria); [S/PV.8706 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Liechtenstein); [S/PV.8713](#) (Russian Federation); [S/PV.8738](#) (Syrian Arab Republic); and [S/2020/418](#) (Mexico).

<sup>227</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#). The meeting was resumed on 10 January ([S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#)) and 13 January ([S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#)).

### Discussion on thematic items

At the 8713th meeting of the Council held on 5 February under the item entitled “Small arms”,<sup>228</sup> the representative of the Russian Federation cautioned that the report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons contained several controversial points, in particular the idea of expanding the remit of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to include an eighth category of small arms and light weapons. When taking decisions on an eighth category, the representative recalled what he deemed the negative precedent of the use of the Register for unintended purposes, namely, to define the scope of arms embargoes. He said that in practice, that would significantly curtail the ability of States under sanctions not only to exercise the right of self-defence enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter, but also to simply conduct law enforcement activities. At the same meeting, the representative of Viet Nam expressed support for international efforts to prevent and combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, but emphasized that such efforts should be made on the basis of international law and the Charter, including full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in their internal affairs, and should not negatively affect the legitimate right of self-defence of Member States.

At an open videoconference on 15 May, Council members discussed the working methods of the Council in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#))”.<sup>229</sup> The delegation of Mexico reiterated the need for greater transparency when it came to reports addressed to the Council invoking self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter. The delegation further emphasized that notifying the Council of such actions was an obligation, and it was in the interest of the entire membership to be informed, especially with regard to the use of force. The delegation recalled that Mexico had formally submitted a proposal for the consideration of this matter to the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, but that did not replace the need for greater transparency and effectiveness on the part of the Council. The delegation argued that the issue was becoming even more relevant in the light of the recent increase in invocations of Article 51 relating to actions

<sup>228</sup> See [S/PV.8713](#). See also [S/2019/1011](#).

<sup>229</sup> See [S/2020/418](#).



against non-State actors, in particular terrorists in a third State, and called upon the Council to ensure that the lawful order established by the Charter was upheld at all times.

#### Discussion on country- and region-specific items

Council members also addressed issues relevant to the interpretation and application of Article 51 and/or the right to self-defence in relation to country- and region-specific items. At its 8706th meeting on 22 January under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”,<sup>230</sup> the representative of Liechtenstein took note of an alarming trend of asserting the right to self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter as the legal basis for preventive military action without appropriate justification. He added that such justification would include at the very least evidence of the imminence of an armed attack, as well as of the necessity and the proportionality of measures taken in response, and warned that excessively expansive and unchecked interpretations of Article 51 undermined the international rules-based order and were an obstacle to the United Nations mandate to maintain international peace and security.

At the 8738th meeting on 28 February,<sup>231</sup> the representative of the United States expressed her country’s commitment to its North Atlantic Treaty Organization ally Turkey and its full support for Turkey in responding in self-defence to the unjustified attacks on Turkish observation posts that resulted in the deaths of Turkish forces, adding that “Russia and the Al-Assad regime” had violated the Astana ceasefire agreements on three separate occasions. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic categorically rejected the claims of the “Turkish regime” that its aggression against his country was a form of self-defence, recalling that members of the Council were aware that the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations had ended its work and that the Mexican delegation had proposed a good idea, namely, not misusing or misinterpreting Article 51 of the Charter. The representative of Turkey reported that a Turkish military convoy had been targeted the day before by a series of air strikes for a duration of five hours. He explained that the radar tracks showed that the “[Syrian] regime and Russian aircraft” had been in formation flight during the time of the air strikes, adding that the logical conclusion was that the Turkish forces had been deliberately attacked. He further reported that the air strikes had continued despite the

<sup>230</sup> See [S/PV.8706 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>231</sup> See [S/PV.8738](#).

warnings issued right after the very first attack and explained that, in self-defence, Turkish forces had responded in kind.

#### Case 9 Maintenance of international peace and security

At the 8699th meeting convened on 9 January, at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency for the month,<sup>232</sup> the Council held an open debate under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and the sub-item entitled “Upholding the United Nations Charter”, marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations.<sup>233</sup> During the meeting, several speakers explicitly referred to Article 51 of the Charter. The representative of the United States recalled the defensive military action undertaken by the United States against “Iranian threats” in direct response to an escalating series of armed attacks in recent months by the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iranian-supported militias on United States forces and interests in the region. She underscored that those attacks had been detailed in the letter submitted to the Council the day before, pursuant to Article 51 of the Charter, and that the decision had not been taken lightly.<sup>234</sup> The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran read a statement by his country’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, who underscored that his country’s action on 8 January against an air base in Iraq had been a measured and proportionate response to a “terrorist attack” in the exercise of his country’s inherent right to self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter. The representative of the United Kingdom, referring to the situation in the Middle East, recalled that her country’s Foreign Secretary, following his recent visit to Washington, D.C., had said that he recognized the danger and threat that the Islamic Republic of Iran posed to the Middle East, as well as the right to self-defence. At the same time, the United Kingdom wanted to see tensions de-escalated and find a diplomatic way through.

Several participants criticized the increasing volume of invocations of Article 51 by Member States to justify the use of force. In that regard, the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic expressed his country’s firm belief that the meeting should come

<sup>232</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 31 December 2019 ([S/2020/1](#)).

<sup>233</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#). The meeting was resumed on 10 January ([S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#)) and 13 January ([S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#)).

<sup>234</sup> See [S/2020/20](#). For more information on communications submitted by Member States pursuant to Article 51, see table 13 of the present section.



up with recommendations based on transparency, self-criticism and the definition of mistakes, so that specific threats could be dealt with seriously, at the forefront of which was, *inter alia*, the misuse of the Charter, particularly its Article 51. The representative of Liechtenstein recalled that the use of force was illegal, except when authorized by the Council or carried out in self-defence. In that regard, when invoking Article 51 preventively, States owed the international community a thorough justification, including evidence of the imminence of an external threat and the proportionality of measures to be taken in response. She added that excessively expansive and unchecked interpretations of Article 51 were a threat to the international rules-based order and an obstacle to the promotion of international peace and security. The representative of Mexico reiterated his country's concern about the continued invocation of Article 51 of the Charter by some States to address threats to international peace and security by military means, especially against non-State actors. He added that it was very worrisome that that practice ran the risk of the *de facto* broadening of the exceptions to the general prohibition on the use of force in an irregular manner and, given the importance and seriousness of the issues addressed in the notes that were sent to the Council under Article 51 and the lack of transparency with which they were processed, he stressed that it was necessary for the Council to review and modify its working methods in order to ensure full compliance with the Charter, especially when the inherent right of self-defence was invoked. The Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines stated that the treasured right to self-defence could not be exercised disproportionately or outside the boundaries of international law. The representative of South Africa noted that the Charter made very clear that the Council was the sole body that could authorize the use of force, and provided that States could act in self-defence, including confronting imminent threats, but that such threats needed to be credible, real and objectively verifiable for the use of force without Council authorization to be justifiable.

At the resumption of the meeting on 13 January,<sup>235</sup> the representative of Austria emphasized that all States were to refrain from actions that were in violation of Article 2 (4) of the Charter, which prohibited the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, noting with concern the increasing number of cases in which armed force was applied unilaterally while invoking the inherent right of self-defence

<sup>235</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

pursuant to Article 51 of the Charter. He further stressed that those cases and the fact that other Member States did not publicly express their legal views on each and every case may not be interpreted as a new State practice or *opinio juris* that might lead to the erosion of Article 2 (4) of the Charter.

## **B. References to Article 51 and the right of self-defence in communications addressed to the Security Council**

In 2020, Article 51 was explicitly invoked 23 times in 18 communications from Member States addressed to the President of the Council or circulated as a document of the Council. The communications concerned a variety of disputes and situations. A complete list of letters from Member States containing explicit references to Article 51 is featured in table 13. Explicit references to Article 51 of the Charter were also found in two reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#) concerning the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq,<sup>236</sup> as well as in a letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Council in which the Secretary-General transmitted the report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Mali.<sup>237</sup>

In addition, references to the principle of self-defence continued to be found in other communications from several Member States. For example, the Islamic Republic of Iran submitted various communications in which it expressed the intention to take all measures in exercising its right to self-defence with regard to the armed attack in Baghdad in which Major General Soleimani had been killed. On 3 January, categorically rejecting all reasoning and references made by the officials of the United States to justify the criminal assassination of Major General Soleimani, the Islamic Republic of Iran reserved all of its rights under international law to take necessary measures, in particular in exercising its inherent right to self-defence.<sup>238</sup> Subsequently, on 16 January, with reference to the identical letters dated 9 January submitted by Iraq,<sup>239</sup> the Islamic Republic of

<sup>236</sup> See [S/2020/792](#) and [S/2020/1099](#).

<sup>237</sup> See [S/2020/1332](#).

<sup>238</sup> See [S/2020/13](#).

<sup>239</sup> See [S/2020/26](#). In that letter, Iraq stated that for Iraqi territory to be bombarded by the Islamic Republic of Iran on the pretext of self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter was unacceptable and constituted a breach of the sovereignty of Iraq and a violation of the principles of good-neighbourliness, the Charter and international law.

Iran informed the Council that its actions on 8 January had been a measured and proportionate response in exercising its inherent right to self-defence against an American air base from which the attack against Major General Soleimani had been launched.<sup>240</sup> In addition, on 15 September, the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterated that it would not hesitate to exercise its inherent right to self-defence to protect its people, defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity and secure its national interests against any aggression.<sup>241</sup> Pakistan also submitted a communication transmitting a letter from its Minister for Foreign Affairs informing the Council that Pakistan would – consistent with its right to self-defence granted under the Charter – respond swiftly and effectively to “Indian aggression”.<sup>242</sup> Iraq also submitted a communication in which it called upon the Council to condemn the bombardment of Iraqi army positions and civilian installations by the United States, and emphasized that there was no basis in international law for using self-defence as a justification.<sup>243</sup> The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela submitted a communication denouncing the hostile and aggressive attitude of British-, Dutch-, French- and United States-flagged warships and the threat of the imposition of a naval blockade, which, under international law, was an act of war, particularly if not authorized by the Council on the basis of Article 41 of the Charter or applied pursuant to the inherent

right of self-defence.<sup>244</sup> Armenia submitted several communications denouncing the alleged aggression by Azerbaijan and recalling its own inherent right to self-defence.<sup>245</sup> Armenia also denounced the allegations by Turkey that the military actions of Azerbaijan could be justified as self-defence under international law.<sup>246</sup> Azerbaijan also submitted several communications informing the Council of the series of countermeasures undertaken by the country in self-defence against the alleged attacks by Armenia, including the cross-border attacks and the aggression carried out on 27 September.<sup>247</sup> Turkey submitted a communication regarding the hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan, asserting that Azerbaijan had been exercising its inherent right of self-defence, as the hostilities were taking place exclusively on its own sovereign territory.<sup>248</sup> South Africa also submitted a communication transmitting a letter from the Secretary-General of Frente POLISARIO addressed to the President of the Council, in which the Secretary-General of Frente POLISARIO alleged an act of aggression by the Moroccan military forces and reported on the measures taken by Frente POLISARIO in self-defence and to protect civilians.<sup>249</sup>

<sup>240</sup> See [S/2020/44](#).

<sup>241</sup> See [S/2020/905](#).

<sup>242</sup> See [S/2020/194](#).

<sup>243</sup> See [S/2020/213](#).

<sup>244</sup> See [S/2020/431](#). See also [S/2020/520](#).

<sup>245</sup> See [S/2020/719](#), [S/2020/955](#) and [S/2020/1060](#).

<sup>246</sup> See [S/2020/1187](#).

<sup>247</sup> See [S/2020/732](#), [S/2020/948](#), [S/2020/956](#), [S/2020/965](#), [S/2020/973](#), [S/2020/977](#), [S/2020/1047](#) and [S/2020/1161](#).

<sup>248</sup> See [S/2020/1024](#).

<sup>249</sup> See [S/2020/1131](#).

**Table 13  
Communications from Member States containing explicit references to Article 51 of the Charter in 2020**

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Document title</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/7</a>	Identical letters dated 2 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/16</a>	Letter dated 7 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/19</a>	Letter dated 8 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/20</a>	Letter dated 8 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/26</a>	Identical letters dated 9 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/81</a>	Letter dated 29 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/130</a>	Letter dated 19 February 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

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<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Document title</i>
<a href="#">S/2020/277</a>	Letter dated 3 April 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/399</a>	Identical letters dated 13 May 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/675</a>	Letter dated 8 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/677</a>	Letter dated 8 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/729</a>	Letter dated 21 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General
<a href="#">S/2020/885</a>	Letter dated 2 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/989</a>	Letter dated 8 October 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/1117</a>	Letter dated 16 November 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/1165</a>	Letter dated 3 December 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/1264</a>	Letter dated 19 December 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council
<a href="#">S/2020/1307</a>	Letter dated 29 December 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

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# **Part VIII**

## **Regional arrangements**

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## Introductory note

### Article 52

1. *Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations.*

2. *The Members of the United Nations entering into such arrangements or constituting such agencies shall make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies before referring them to the Security Council.*

3. *The Security Council shall encourage the development of pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies either on the initiative of the states concerned or by reference from the Security Council.*

4. *This Article in no way impairs the application of Articles 34 and 35.*

### Article 53

1. *The Security Council shall, where appropriate, utilize such regional arrangements or agencies for enforcement action under its authority. But no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council, with the exception of measures against any enemy state, as defined in paragraph 2 of this Article, provided for pursuant to Article 107 or in regional arrangements directed against renewal of aggressive policy on the part of any such state, until such time as the Organization may, on request of the Governments concerned, be charged with the responsibility for preventing further aggression by such a state.*

2. *The term enemy state as used in paragraph 1 of this Article applies to any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory of the present Charter.*

### Article 54

*The Security Council shall at all times be kept fully informed of activities undertaken or in contemplation under regional arrangements or by regional agencies for the maintenance of international peace and security.*

Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations provides the constitutional basis for the involvement of regional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>1</sup> While Article 52 encourages the engagement of regional arrangements in the pacific settlement of disputes prior to their referral to the Security Council, Article 53 allows the Council to utilize regional arrangements for enforcement action under its authority and with its explicit authorization. Article 54 stipulates that regional arrangements should inform the Council of their activities at all times.

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter VIII of the Charter refers to “regional arrangements or agencies”. For the purposes of the *Repertoire*, the term “regional arrangements” is understood to encompass regional and subregional organizations as well as other international organizations.

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During the period under review, the Council underlined the importance of strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements in the fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, conflict prevention and mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter. The Council reaffirmed the progress made in the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union and further encouraged their collaboration on issues of peace and security in Africa, building on the annual joint consultations between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. The two Councils held their fifth joint informal seminar and fourteenth annual joint consultative meeting, which were conducted by videoconference on 29 and 30 September 2020, respectively.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the engagement with the African Union and the European Union, engagement with other organizations, such as the League of Arab States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF), featured prominently in the discussions at the Security Council.

As described in further detail in section II below, during 2020, the work of the Council was significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Faced with the absence of meetings in the Security Council Chamber, Council members initiated the practice of holding videoconferences and as of 14 July 2020, the Council developed a hybrid model, alternating in-person meetings with videoconferences. Therefore, part VIII of the present Supplement features discussions of constitutional relevance to Chapter VIII of the Charter held in the context of both meetings and videoconferences.

In 2020, Council members considered ways to further enhance cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in conflict prevention and mediation, collectively address emerging threats, such as climate security risks, and promote collective security mechanisms in the Persian Gulf. In addition, participants at meetings and videoconferences continued to discuss the modalities of ensuring predictable and sustainable funding for peacekeeping operations led by the African Union and African subregional organizations.

In connection with the pacific settlement of disputes, the Council continued to highlight in its decisions the important role played by regional and subregional arrangements, particularly subregional economic communities, including the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Southern African Development Community, to promote reconciliation, mediation and good offices to end conflicts and ensure successful peace processes. The Council underlined the mediation efforts of regional and subregional arrangements in connection with political crises and the implementation of peace agreements in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, the Central African region and West Africa and the Sahel.

Concerning peacekeeping operations led by regional organizations, the Council renewed the authorization of two existing missions, namely the African Union Mission in Somalia and the European Union military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR-Althea),<sup>3</sup> while the Kosovo Force of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization continued to operate without any decisions having been taken with respect to its mandate. The Council supported the continued efforts of the African Union to enhance its peacekeeping role and that of African subregional organizations, and underlined the importance of progress in increasing the

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<sup>2</sup> See [A/75/2](#). For information on prior practice concerning the informal joint meetings of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2008–2009 to 2019*, part II, sect. I.C.

<sup>3</sup> Resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#), para. 9, and resolution [2549 \(2020\)](#), para. 3.

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autonomy of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. As in previous periods, the Council authorized enforcement action by regional and subregional organizations beyond the framework of peacekeeping operations, such as in relation to Libya, Somalia and South Sudan, and continued to request reporting by regional organizations, particularly on the implementation of mandates of relevant regional peacekeeping operations and cooperation with the United Nations.

The practice of the Council under Chapter VIII of the Charter in 2020 is illustrated below in five sections. Each section covers both the decisions adopted by the Council and the discussions held during Council meetings and videoconferences. Section I examines the practice of the Council regarding cooperation with regional and subregional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security concerning items of a thematic nature. Section II deals with the recognition by the Council of the efforts of regional arrangements in the peaceful settlement of disputes, within the framework of Article 52 of the Charter. Section III covers the practice of the Council relating to its cooperation with regional organizations in the area of peacekeeping. Section IV describes the practice of the Council in authorizing enforcement action by regional organizations outside the context of regional peacekeeping operations. Section V refers to the reporting on the activities of regional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security.

# I. Consideration of the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations under thematic items

## Note

Section I examines the practice of the Council in 2020 in cooperating with regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, within the framework of Chapter VIII of the Charter, in connection with items of a thematic nature. The section is divided into two subsections. Subsection A covers decisions on thematic issues relating to Chapter VIII, and subsection B covers discussions on thematic issues concerning the interpretation and application of Chapter VIII.

## A. Decisions on thematic issues relating to Chapter VIII of the Charter

During the period under review, the Council explicitly referred to Chapter VIII of the Charter in three of its decisions, adopted under the thematic items entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security” and “Maintenance of international peace and security”. The text of those provisions is included in table 1.

Table 1  
Decisions adopted in 2020 containing explicit references to Chapter VIII

<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Provisions</i>
Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security		
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/11</a> 4 December	Second paragraph	The Security Council reiterates its primary responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security, and recalls that cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security and consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations can improve collective security
Maintenance of international peace and security		
<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/1</a> 9 January	Sixth paragraph	The Security Council underlines the importance of the role of regional and subregional organizations and arrangements and of cooperation with them, consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, with regard to maintaining international peace and security, contributing to international efforts to uphold the Charter. The Council welcomes the contribution by regional and subregional organizations in promoting and undertaking activities in accordance with the Charter. In this connection, the Council urges them to further strengthen awareness of the Charter and uphold the Charter in all their activities relating to international peace and security. The Council invites regional and subregional organizations to consider providing assistance to Member States, upon their request, in their efforts to uphold the Charter in their undertakings, and strengthening their cooperation with the United Nations and other organizations in solidifying Member States’ adherence to the Charter, including through promoting partnership, dialogue and exchange of views
Resolution <a href="#">2553 (2020)</a> 3 December	Para. 21	Underlines the importance of partnerships and cooperation with regional and subregional arrangements and organizations, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and in supporting security sector reform, as well as fostering greater regional engagement

In other decisions adopted under various thematic items, the Council, without making explicit reference to Chapter VIII of the Charter, recognized and referred to the role of regional and subregional arrangements. Under the item entitled “Children and armed conflict”, the Council issued a presidential statement on

12 February in which it, inter alia, encouraged the Secretary-General, including through the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, to broadly disseminate the practical guidance to United Nations entities, Member States, regional and subregional organizations and

other relevant actors involved in peace and mediation processes and to promote the use of the practical guidance in United Nations-supported, -sponsored and -facilitated peace and mediation processes.<sup>4</sup> In the same presidential statement, the Council encouraged United Nations entities, Member States and regional and subregional organizations involved in peace and mediation to strengthen cooperation and collaboration to promote the integration of child protection issues in peace processes, and urged Member States, United Nations entities, regional and subregional organizations and other parties concerned to ensure that child protection provisions relating to the release and reintegration of children formerly associated with armed forces or armed groups were integrated into all peace negotiations, ceasefire and peace agreements, and in provisions for ceasefire monitoring.<sup>5</sup> Under the same item, the Council issued a presidential statement on 10 September in which it, inter alia, expressed concern at regional and cross-border violations and abuses against children affected by armed conflict, and called upon Member States, United Nations peacekeeping, peacebuilding and political missions and United Nations country teams, and regional and subregional bodies, within their respective mandates and in close cooperation with the Governments of the countries concerned, to continue efforts to establish and implement appropriate strategies and coordination mechanisms for information exchange and cooperation on child protection concerns.<sup>6</sup>

In connection with the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”, the Council issued a presidential statement on 4 December in which it made several references to the important role of the African Union, and, inter alia, continued to encourage the United Nations and the African Union to strengthen their efforts to coordinate their engagement in a mutually supportive manner.<sup>7</sup> The Council also expressed its willingness to continue its cooperation and collaboration with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa, and encouraged the United Nations and the African Union to continue to make use of their annual consultations to encourage the implementation of the

women and peace and security agenda as it related to their specific contexts.<sup>8</sup>

Under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, the Council adopted resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) on 1 July, in which it, inter alia, underscored that combating the pandemic required greater national, regional and international cooperation, and recognized efforts and measures proposed by the Secretary-General concerning the response to the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to conflict-affected countries.<sup>9</sup> In resolution [2535 \(2020\)](#), adopted on 14 July, which focused on the participation of youth in building sustainable peace, the Council, inter alia, acknowledged the ongoing work of national Governments and regional and international organizations to engage youth in building and maintaining peace,<sup>10</sup> and encouraged Member States and regional and subregional organizations to develop and implement policies and programmes for youth and to facilitate their constructive engagement, including through dedicated local, national and regional road maps on youth and peace and security, with sufficient resources.<sup>11</sup> The Council also called upon Member States, regional organizations and the United Nations system, including peacekeeping and special political missions, to coordinate and increase their engagement in the implementation of resolutions [2250 \(2015\)](#), [2419 \(2018\)](#) and [2535 \(2020\)](#) through inclusive partnerships with young people, and to ensure dedicated capacities with regard to youth and peace and security.<sup>12</sup>

In connection with the item entitled “United Nations peacekeeping operations”, the Council adopted resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#) on 30 March, in which it, inter alia, reaffirmed its determination to take effective steps to further enhance the partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in relation to the safety and security of peacekeepers, and encouraged partnerships to support the African Union’s efforts to continue to develop policy, guidance and training to ensure the safety and security of its peacekeepers.<sup>13</sup> In resolution [2538 \(2020\)](#), adopted on 28 August, the Council, inter alia, called upon Member States, the United Nations Secretariat and regional organizations to strengthen their collective efforts to promote the full, effective and meaningful participation of uniformed and civilian women in peacekeeping

<sup>4</sup> [S/PRST/2020/3](#), tenth paragraph.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, twelfth and sixteenth paragraphs.

<sup>6</sup> [S/PRST/2020/8](#), twenty-first paragraph.

<sup>7</sup> [S/PRST/2020/11](#), first, third, fifth, sixth and eleventh paragraphs.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, fifteenth and sixteenth paragraphs.

<sup>9</sup> Resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), sixth and eighth preambular paragraphs.

<sup>10</sup> Resolution [2535 \(2020\)](#), nineteenth preambular paragraph.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 14.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 16.

<sup>13</sup> Resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#), para. 7.



operations at all levels and in all positions, including in senior leadership positions.<sup>14</sup> In the same resolution, the Council encouraged Member States to develop strategies and measures to increase the deployment of uniformed women to peacekeeping operations, including by supporting the capacities of regional organizations in training uniformed women.<sup>15</sup> The Council also encouraged cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in advancing greater participation and the role of women in peacekeeping operations.<sup>16</sup>

## B. Discussions on thematic issues concerning the interpretation and application of Chapter VIII of the Charter

In 2020, at meetings and open videoconferences, Council members and other participants discussed the role of regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security in connection with a wide variety of items, including “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”,<sup>17</sup> “Maintenance of international peace and security”,<sup>18</sup> “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”,<sup>19</sup> “Protection of civilians in armed conflict”,<sup>20</sup> “United Nations peacekeeping operations”,<sup>21</sup> “Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe”,<sup>22</sup> “Briefing by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees”,<sup>23</sup> “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”,<sup>24</sup> “The promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security”,<sup>25</sup> “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts”<sup>26</sup> and “Women

and peace and security”.<sup>27</sup> Discussions held in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” served to highlight the importance of Chapter VIII of the Charter (see case 1), enhancing cooperation with regional and subregional organizations to effectively reduce the humanitarian risks of climate security issues (see case 4) and promoting collaboration with regional actors for a collective security mechanism to reduce tensions in the Persian Gulf (see case 5). Under the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”, participants exchanged views on the importance of promoting closer ties between the Council and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (see case 2), the important role of OIF in peacekeeping and peacebuilding (see case 3) and the importance of enhancing the Council’s cooperation with the African Union (see case 6).

### Case 1 Maintenance of international peace and security

At its 8699th meeting, held on 9 January at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>28</sup> the Council held a ministerial-level debate under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security” and the sub-item entitled “Upholding the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security”.<sup>29</sup> At the meeting, the Council heard briefings by the Secretary-General and by the Chair of the Elders, and several speakers<sup>30</sup> explicitly invoked Chapter VIII of the Charter. In his briefing, the Secretary-General described the Charter as visionary in imagining a world in which the United Nations worked dynamically with regional organizations to maintain international peace and security.<sup>31</sup> While Chapter VIII predated most of the Organization’s regional partners, it set a framework for cooperation and division of labour. The United Nations was investing in regional partnerships in crucial new ways, and the Secretary-General had placed a significant emphasis on a

<sup>14</sup> Resolution 2538 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2 (f).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 5.

<sup>17</sup> See S/PV.8711, S/2020/489, S/2020/893 and S/2020/1179.

<sup>18</sup> See S/PV.8699, S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1), S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2), S/2020/346, S/2020/751, S/2020/897, S/2020/929, S/2020/953, S/2020/1037 and S/2020/1176.

<sup>19</sup> See S/PV.8723, S/PV.8723 (Resumption 1), S/2020/799 and S/2020/1090.

<sup>20</sup> See S/2020/340, S/2020/465 and S/2020/930.

<sup>21</sup> See S/2020/514, S/2020/674, S/2020/911 and S/2020/1092.

<sup>22</sup> See S/PV.8714.

<sup>23</sup> See S/2020/560.

<sup>24</sup> See S/2020/418.

<sup>25</sup> See S/2020/1286.

<sup>26</sup> See S/PV.8716, S/2020/791 and S/2020/836.

<sup>27</sup> See S/2020/727 and S/2020/1084.

<sup>28</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 31 December 2019 (S/2020/1).

<sup>29</sup> See S/PV.8699, S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1) and S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2).

<sup>30</sup> Secretary-General, South Africa, Indonesia, Tunisia, Singapore, Egypt and Romania (see S/PV.8699); Kuwait and United Arab Emirates (see S/PV.8699 (Resumption 1)); and Angola and Senegal (see S/PV.8699 (Resumption 2)).

<sup>31</sup> See S/PV.8699.

strategic partnership with the African Union, including through its Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. The European Union continued to provide strong support across the agenda of the United Nations. The Organization was also working to strengthening ties with all other regional organizations, including ASEAN.

The representative of South Africa said that the Charter was explicit on the role of regional organizations, as reflected in Chapter VIII, which made provisions for regional arrangements to address matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. Chapter VIII was currently even more relevant in terms of regional organizations, particularly the African Union and regional economic communities on the African continent, as they had established peace and security mechanisms, including those dealing with mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. He called for continued efforts to strengthen cooperation and coordination with regional arrangements to ensure that the efforts were complementary and mutually reinforcing.

Several other speakers explicitly referred to Chapter VIII of the Charter. The representative of Indonesia said that, in line with Chapter VIII, his delegation recognized the important role of regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam emphasized the need to enhance the role of regional organizations and expand their collaboration with the United Nations and the Council in the maintenance of peace and security in their respective regions and beyond. He explained that the Charter of the United Nations had been the source of inspiration for the Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which had become the legal framework of a stronger, more cohesive ASEAN community. In that regard, ASEAN had affirmed its central, indispensable role in the regional security architecture and in addressing regional challenges and maintaining regional and international peace and security.

Several Council members emphasized the importance of regional organizations in conflict prevention and mediation. The representative of Tunisia, noting the particular importance of preventive and proactive work for maintaining peace and security, called upon the Council to address crises in their initial phases while benefiting fully from Chapter VIII of the Charter by encouraging regional organizations to play their role in preventing conflicts and settling crises. The representative of Kuwait emphasized that the Council must give more attention to precautionary measures aimed at preventing disputes by addressing

them at an early stage, highlighted the constructive role that could be played by regional and subregional organizations in maintaining peace and security at the regional and international levels in accordance with Chapter VIII, and called for greater cooperation between the Council and regional organizations.<sup>32</sup>

The representative of Angola said that Chapter VIII of the Charter recognized the value of regional arrangements and agencies as a first resort to the pacific settlement of local disputes.<sup>33</sup> Regional perspectives were critical to understanding the challenges faced, while regional capacity-building was crucial for rapid deployment. She further emphasized that regional ownership was essential for effective solutions to take root. The representative of Senegal said that in view of the significant regional dimensions of most conflicts and the essential role that neighbouring States must play in any peace process, his delegation believed that it was appropriate to place regional organizations at the heart of peace efforts, in accordance with Article 52 (1) of the Charter.

Participants at the meeting also focused on the need to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. Underlining that regional and subregional organizations had played an increasingly important role in maintaining peace and security in recent years, the representative of Singapore noted that their efforts could complement the actions of the Council, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter.<sup>34</sup> He welcomed the increasing number of meetings that the Council had had with regional organizations in the past few months and looked forward to the meeting on cooperation with ASEAN. The representative of Egypt opined that the relations between the Council and regional organizations must be strengthened in accordance with Chapter VIII. He recalled that during its presidency of the African Union, Egypt had worked to enhance the relationship between the African Union and the United Nations regarding peace and security while building on the comparative advantages of each of them.

The representative of Romania affirmed that Chapter VIII of the Charter provided the basis for the involvement of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. In that regard, he recalled that, during its non-permanent membership of the Council in 2005, Romania had promoted the first resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. The representative of the United Arab Emirates noted that

<sup>32</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>33</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 2\)](#).

<sup>34</sup> See [S/PV.8699](#).

regional and subregional organizations could play a greater role in addressing regional tensions and achieving security and stability.<sup>35</sup> In that regard, she called upon the Council to strengthen coordination with the League of Arab States (LAS) and the African Union to address the sensitive security situation in the region. She argued further that Chapter VIII of the Charter included a framework to build on the comparative advantages at the regional, subregional and international levels in dealing with current complex crises.

## Case 2

### **Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security**

At its 8711th meeting, held on 30 January at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>36</sup> the Council held a briefing under the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security” and the sub-item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations”.<sup>37</sup> At the meeting, the Council heard briefings by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of ASEAN.

Several Council members<sup>38</sup> made explicit reference to Chapter VIII of the Charter as the framework provided for the Council’s partnerships with regional arrangements and expressed support for further strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN.

Speakers highlighted the contributions and comparative advantages of regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. The representative of Tunisia, speaking also on behalf of the Niger and South Africa, highlighted the importance of regular engagement between the Council and regional organizations on ways to encourage the peaceful settlement of disputes and maintain peace and security in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. He further emphasized that on several occasions, regional and subregional arrangements had proved to be highly knowledgeable and efficient in dealing with local issues. Their understanding of local dynamics and deep insight into the history of events sometimes made all the difference. Through stronger cooperation, the United Nations and regional organizations could leverage their

respective comparative advantages in seeking effective solutions to the increasingly complex peace and security challenges all over the world. The representative of Tunisia further noted that greater consultation in the decision-making of the Council with regional organizations such as ASEAN, LAS, the European Union and the African Union was essential for achieving strategic convergence and coherence with a view to addressing current complex peace and security challenges. He noted that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations was still far from delivering on its promises, and that greatly enhanced efforts were needed if the Council was to fully utilize that tool, under Chapter VIII. There was a need to reflect more on such issues as how to strengthen coordination and coherence between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations regarding peace and security matters, how to develop a joint decision-making framework to make their joint action more effective and, most importantly, how to support peace efforts initiated by regional organizations through secure, sustainable and predictable resources. In that regard, he echoed the request of the African Union to endorse access to United Nations assessed contributions to fund its peace support operations, which were undertaken on behalf of the United Nations, in particular, the Council. The representative of Indonesia highlighted the contributions of ASEAN to peace and security and to emerging non-traditional security challenges. He also highlighted the contribution of ASEAN within the framework of the women and peace and security agenda. In that connection, he mentioned that it had established the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry, a pool of ASEAN women experts that sought to promote gender perspectives in peace and reconciliation processes in the Association. He also referred to his country’s work to establish the South-East Asian network of women peace negotiators and mediators and his delegation’s hope that the two forums could be part of the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks.

The representative of Germany said that it had become increasingly clear that regional partnerships were important and that the ASEAN-United Nations partnership was also very important and could still be strengthened, from security to climate change to disaster management, as noted by the representative of Indonesia. He recalled the adoption in April 2019, when Germany held the monthly presidency of the Council, of resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#) on sexual violence in conflict and accountability for perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence, expressed his strong support for the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar and encouraged ASEAN member States to seek further avenues, by way of regional

<sup>35</sup> See [S/PV.8699 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

<sup>36</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 9 January 2020 ([S/2020/30](#)).

<sup>37</sup> See [S/PV.8711](#).

<sup>38</sup> United States, Tunisia, France, Estonia, China and Viet Nam.

cooperation, to effectively address such events in their region and to prevent their recurrence.

The representative of France recalled that United Nations coordination with regional organizations was a key tool in accomplishing the Organization's mission of fostering peace and security. In that regard, she referred to that partnership as part of the framework provided for in Chapter VIII and without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, and added that geographical proximity and the awareness of local situations bestowed full legitimacy on subregional and regional organizations to be stakeholders in the resolution of crises close to them. Recalling Chapter VIII, the representative of Estonia expressed support for the deepening of United Nations cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in order to ensure more effective conflict prevention and mitigation. He also commended the work of ASEAN on addressing emerging non-traditional security issues, such as climate change, and recognized its interest in promoting cybersecurity. The representative of China also expressed support for the United Nations deepening its cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in line with Chapter VIII, with a view to consolidating and strengthening collective security mechanisms and jointly safeguarding international peace and security.

The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines noted that regional and subregional organizations acted as conduits that linked the global governance structure to the local and contextual realities. She added that threats to international peace and security, including climate change, cross-border terrorism and mass human displacement, were transnational in character and necessitated collective action for just and equitable outcomes, and that the sharing of such burdens on a regional basis was the only feasible option for small States like hers. The representative of the Dominican Republic said that close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations such as ASEAN made possible a stronger and more effective multilateral international system based on diversity, mutual cooperation and shared international principles. She referred to various examples of cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations in the areas of climate change, food security and shared strategies for peace in Myanmar. With regard to the climate crisis, she added that there was a need to continue to foster complementary regional and multilateral strategies to avert greater adverse effects and that joint action was the only way to do so. Commending ASEAN for its work in the area

of preventive diplomacy, the representative of Belgium underlined that regional organizations were often the best placed to understand and overcome the specific challenges of their respective regions. He also highlighted the contribution of ASEAN countries to peace and stability beyond their borders through the provision of peacekeepers to United Nations missions. The training work carried out at the regional level, in accordance with the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between the Association of Southeast Asia Nations and the United Nations (2016–2020), was of paramount importance in that regard. He looked forward to the new ASEAN-United Nations plan of action, which envisaged, among the many areas of activity, climate change, transnational organized crime and human rights. He expressed support for the engagement of the United Nations with the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children. He also addressed two specific issues in which ASEAN could play a positive and decisive role, namely, the resolution of disputes concerning the South China Sea and resolving the crisis in Rakhine State in Myanmar.

Several Council members took note of the negotiations and efforts of the ASEAN member States and China on a code of conduct for the South China Sea.<sup>39</sup> The representative of China underlined that China and ASEAN members were jointly committed to maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea. Other members expressed support for the continued collaboration between the United Nations and ASEAN in resolving the situation in Myanmar, including through mediation and shared strategies for peace.<sup>40</sup>

However, the representative of the Russian Federation considered that territorial disputes in the South China Sea must be resolved between the States or the parties in question on a bilateral basis; it was unacceptable to impose a particular vision of the resolution and settlement of disputes and of thorny issues on the basis of narrow national interests, especially if it was being done by States that were located thousands of kilometres from the region. He nevertheless stated that his country welcomed the mediating role played by ASEAN and China in resolving the situation in Myanmar and that it shared the priorities of Viet Nam with regard to ASEAN,

<sup>39</sup> United States, Belgium, France, United Kingdom and Estonia.

<sup>40</sup> Germany, Belgium, France, Dominican Republic and United Kingdom.

including on increasing its contribution to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region.

The representative of the United Kingdom noted that since its establishment, ASEAN had played a key role in maintaining peace and security in South-East Asia and the wider Asia-Pacific region, and that ASEAN also made a tangible and valuable contribution to global peace and security in three areas of particular relevance to the Council's work, namely, peacekeeping; women and peace and security; and climate change. The representative of Viet Nam emphasized the importance of, and continued support for, the centrality of ASEAN in the regional architecture and the central role of the United Nations in the global multilateral system, adding that it was necessary to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN in the various areas agreed upon, including the peaceful settlement of disputes, preventive diplomacy, disarmament and non-proliferation, maritime cooperation, maritime security and disaster management. As the Chair of ASEAN in 2020 and a non-permanent member of the Council, Viet Nam called for the support of the Council to achieve the three priorities set for 2020 concerning peacekeeping operations, women and peace and security and the implementation of the Complementarities Road Map (2020–2025) between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

### Case 3

#### **Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security**

On 8 September, at the initiative of the Niger, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>41</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations", focused on the role of OIF.<sup>42</sup> During the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations; the Secretary-General of OIF; and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia, in his capacity as Chair of the Ministerial Conference of la Francophonie. In addition to statements by

Council members, statements were delivered at the videoconference by eight Member States.<sup>43</sup>

In her briefing, the Secretary-General of OIF noted that OIF was a regional organization under Chapter VIII of the Charter, but was in fact transnational, bringing together 88 States and Governments, including 54 full members from five continents, united by a common language and common values. She emphasized that the actions of OIF in support of international peace and security consisted of three main areas, namely, peacekeeping, crisis prevention and management and support for the democratic processes of its member States, including electoral processes. In that regard, she underlined that OIF was the first international organization to volunteer to formally assume the role of champion of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. She also made reference to the work of OIF on capacity-building for French-speaking troops, as well as to the mobilization in the Central African Republic to support the peace process, her encouragement to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth to make a tripartite visit to Cameroon to spur and support Cameroonian partners in the search for a solution to the crisis in the North-West and South-West regions of the country, and the efforts to end the crisis and restore constitutional and democratic order to Mali. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia, in his capacity as Chair of the Ministerial Conference of la Francophonie, recalled the numerous partnerships between the United Nations and OIF based on shared values, a common will to work to strengthen international peace and security and a joint determination to fight against the scourge of terrorism and in favour of the prevention of genocide and crimes against humanity. Against the backdrop of the negative consequences of the COVID-19 crisis, particularly on developing countries and on the most vulnerable, the United Nations and OIF must strongly affirm their willingness to promote peace, cooperation, solidarity and the values of living together in harmony. In that connection, he noted the strong support of OIF for the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire and resolution 2532 (2020), in which the Council demanded a cessation of hostilities during the COVID-19 crisis.

Other speakers also made explicit references to Chapter VIII of the Charter, underscoring the value of the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the area of peace and

<sup>41</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 1 September 2020 (S/2020/880).

<sup>42</sup> See S/2020/893.

<sup>43</sup> Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Ireland, Romania, Senegal, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates.



security.<sup>44</sup> The representative of the Niger noted that Chapter VIII of the Charter enshrined the principle of subsidiarity and the comparative advantages of partner organizations. Within that framework, cooperation between the United Nations and OIF was carried out, in particular on the importance of early-warning and conflict prevention mechanisms, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and support for networks of women and youth involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The representative of South Africa said that, as a member of the African Union and of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), his country recognized the positive and complementary relations between the United Nations and regional organizations. He also stressed the importance of the principles of subsidiarity and comparative advantage in the resolution of conflicts, which entrusted regional and subregional organizations with taking the lead in finding a solution to a conflict situation owing to their geopolitical situation and/or familiarity with the crisis. The representative of South Africa also underlined that the Council remained the only international body with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and hence must work closely with regional organizations whose activities included the promotion of peace and security. Cooperation among regional organizations was equally important, primarily in instances where there was overlapping membership, and he encouraged closer cooperation and coordination between OIF and other regional organizations, such as the African Union, subregional organizations, such as SADC, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and other similar organizations, such as the Commonwealth. The delegation of the United Arab Emirates made three recommendations. First, the Council should strengthen its cooperation with regional organizations in the area of preventive diplomacy in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. In this regard, it highlighted success stories, particularly with regional organization on the African continent, including, most recently, the decisive role played by ECOWAS in the Gambia. Second, it encouraged continued progress in enhancing consultation and coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations on peacekeeping, welcoming the collaboration between the Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Operational Support and OIF in promoting multilingualism in field operations. Third, the United Arab Emirates believed that regional organizations should step up their efforts aimed at mainstreaming and highlighting the positive work of young people on issues of peace and security. In this

<sup>44</sup> Niger, South Africa and United Arab Emirates.

regard, it commended the work of OIF in supporting youth networks involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

With regard to peacekeeping, many participants expressed support for the partnership between OIF and the United Nations and noted the importance of multilingualism as a fundamental tool in developing peacekeeping operations.<sup>45</sup> The representative of Estonia acknowledged that the access and ability of peacekeepers to communicate with the local population in the francophone countries was a powerful tool for building trust and, through that, the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping. The representative of the United Kingdom echoed the view that language skills facilitated engagement with the local population, led to better situational awareness and helped peacekeepers to deliver on mandated responsibilities, such as the protection of civilians, while ensuring their own safety and security.

Speakers noted the important collaboration between OIF and the United Nations in the fields of conflict prevention, peace processes and electoral support.<sup>46</sup> The representative of Belgium suggested that, given that thematic issues important to OIF, such as the prevention of violence, conflict resolution, democratic transition, transitional justice and the role of women, and many countries in the French-speaking world were considered by the Council, it could be appropriate to explore ways to further strengthen such cooperation through joint actions, such as setting up joint field missions or missions involving special envoys of the two organizations. Citing the meaningful actions of OIF regarding the situations in Mali and Guinea, the representative of France highlighted that OIF could play an opportune role, in cooperation with the United Nations, in the long-term support for the electoral process in those countries. In the field of conflict prevention, the representative of Indonesia said that the diverse experience of OIF was a great asset for all United Nations members in their collective effort to promote international peace and security and called for the broadening of the United Nations cooperation with other regional cooperation bodies, such as ASEAN. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines shared the view that regional and subregional organizations occupied a critical space in the multilateral system as intermediaries that linked the international community to the local and contextual realities found within States. In

<sup>45</sup> Dominican Republic, Belgium, Indonesia, France, Viet Nam, United Kingdom, Germany, South Africa, Estonia, United States, Ireland, Romania, Senegal, Switzerland and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>46</sup> Dominican Republic, Indonesia, France, Viet Nam, United Kingdom, Estonia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United States, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates.

that regard and among other proposals, she encouraged OIF to strengthen the institutional relationships with regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union, ECOWAS and the Group of Five for the Sahel, which were at the forefront of the international community's efforts to promote lasting peace and security on the African continent, and to increase cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission in francophone countries to bolster the sustaining peace agenda of the United Nations.

Member States made specific proposals for further developing the role of OIF in connection with international peace and security. The representative of the United Kingdom encouraged OIF, along with the United Nations, the African Union, ECCAS and the Commonwealth, to continue to support efforts to end violence and restore peace in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon. The representative of Viet Nam said that the United Nations and OIF should make concerted efforts to promote multilateralism and find peaceful solutions to conflicts on the basis of international law, and thus contribute to the alleviation of hotspots on the Council's agenda. In that connection, he suggested that OIF might consider creating a network of francophone members in West Africa and the Sahel to share experience and best practices in the implementation of United Nations programmes such as the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel and the recent United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel. He also suggested that OIF and the United Nations enhance triangular cooperation with the African Union and other regional organizations. The representative of Canada highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration between OIF and the United Nations to ensure the inclusion of women and youth in conflict prevention and resolution and in peacebuilding.

#### **Case 4 Maintenance of international peace and security**

On 17 September, at the initiative of the Niger, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>47</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security" focused on the humanitarian effects of environmental degradation and peace and security.<sup>48</sup> At the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations

Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, a civil society representative and the representative of Canada in her capacity as the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. Representatives of all Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference,<sup>49</sup> while the representatives of 19 non-Council members and the European Union submitted their statements in writing.<sup>50</sup> In his briefing, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross stated that it was starkly evident that people affected by conflict were also disproportionately impacted by climate shocks, and added that while many would agree in general terms on the linkages between peace, security and climate and environment, the "how" of the response still needed more critical analysis and sharing of experiences. The Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission brought to the Council's attention some of the Commission's observations and recommendations in the context of different regions on its agenda, including the Lake Chad basin, the Sahel and the Pacific islands. She noted that environmental and climate-related challenges were considered as factors that could have a negative impact on peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts, and addressing those challenges in country-specific or regional contexts could therefore also contribute to those efforts aimed at peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In particular, she noted that many Governments in the Pacific region had requested additional support from the international community in order to address those issues. For regions such as the Lake Chad basin, a collective and coordinated effort by Member States, international, regional and subregional organizations, international financial institutions, civil society and, where relevant, the private sector was required to fully realize the African Union-Lake Chad Basin Commission Regional Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience Strategy for Areas Affected by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin Region.

During the videoconference, several speakers highlighted the importance of regional organizations in addressing the challenges relating to climate and security.<sup>51</sup> The representative of Indonesia noted the

<sup>47</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 1 September 2020 (S/2020/882).

<sup>48</sup> See S/2020/929.

<sup>49</sup> The Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the United Kingdom were represented at the ministerial level. For information on high-level meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>50</sup> The following countries submitted written statements: Brazil, Denmark (on behalf of the five Nordic countries), Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, Namibia, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and Ukraine.

<sup>51</sup> Indonesia, South Africa, Viet Nam, Denmark, Ethiopia, Portugal and Senegal.

adverse impacts of environmental degradation and climate change, which affected people and livelihoods and had become an aggravating factor that not only could prolong conflicts, but also threatened to reverse economic growth and development. Against that backdrop, he outlined three main points: the need for enhanced partnership, cooperation and information-sharing; the importance of mainstreaming environmental degradation and climate change throughout the peace continuum; and the crucial role of regional organizations. In that regard, he recognized the efforts of the African Union and ECOWAS, as well as the leadership of countries in West Africa and the Sahel, in spearheading initiatives to address the security challenges in the region. Recognizing that climate change represented an existential threat to humankind and all other species, the representative of South Africa encouraged the Council to support the lead United Nations organizations and processes, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and other multilateral environmental agreements, as well as the work of relevant regional organizations, such as the African Union, to ensure that it obtained information on the potential impact of climate or environment-related security risks in conflict settings. The representative of Viet Nam said that the Council's response to climate change needed to be coordinated with other parts of the United Nations system and all its partners, and highlighted the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in building regional resilience and adaptation capabilities. He referred to the strengthening of human and institutional capacity in implementing climate change adaptation and mitigation by ASEAN, adding that the cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN in that regard could be further explored.

The representative of Denmark, who submitted his statement on behalf of the five Nordic countries, called for urgent action to address climate-related security risks in a coherent and interlinked manner. He noted that a prerequisite for effective climate-sensitive conflict prevention and response was context-specific analyses. In that regard, he observed that the United Nations must collaborate with Governments, regional organizations, climate actors, including meteorological services, and civil society to improve early warning tools and conflict-forecasting models that systematically integrated climate information into conflict analyses and operational plans. The representative of Ethiopia noted that the health and future of the environment depended on the collective and coordinated efforts of Member States and international, regional and subregional organizations, and that regional

efforts to combat desertification and drought, such as the African Union-led Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, should be encouraged and supported. The representative of Portugal said that better coordination among United Nations agencies on the ground, other international and regional organizations, host Governments and civil society was needed to respond pre-emptively to climate risks and to build resilience. Similarly, the delegation of Senegal stated that the establishment of an analytical and early warning tool should also be considered to centralize data from the United Nations, regional organizations and States and various other partners on the effects of climate change and biodiversity degradation on peace and security. It also suggested that such a tool could even be used by the Secretary-General to submit an annual report to the General Assembly and the Council that took stock of the situation and made useful recommendations on the issue.

#### **Case 5 Maintenance of international peace and security**

On 20 October, at the initiative of the Russian Federation, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>52</sup> Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security" focused on a comprehensive review of the situation in the Persian Gulf region.<sup>53</sup> Council members heard briefings by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the President and Chief Executive Officer of the International Crisis Group, the President of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the Secretary-General of LAS. In addition, representatives of all Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference,<sup>54</sup> as well as the representatives of Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq and Qatar, which also submitted written statements.<sup>55</sup> In his briefing, the Secretary-General described the situation in Yemen as a local conflict that had become regionalized over time, and that looking at the wider Persian Gulf region, it was clear that tensions were running high and confidence was low. Consistent with the Charter and his own good offices role, he stood ready to convene any form of regional dialogue that could garner the necessary consensus of all the relevant parties. He also expressed

<sup>52</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 14 October 2020 (S/2020/1013).

<sup>53</sup> See S/2020/1037.

<sup>54</sup> China, the Niger, the Russian Federation, South Africa and Viet Nam were represented at the ministerial level. For information on high-level meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>55</sup> Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq and Qatar were represented at the ministerial level.

his full support for the efforts to promote dialogue and resolve tensions between members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The President of the International Crisis Group said that many reasons lay behind the intense polarization that had infected the Gulf region, but what had made matters worse had been the absence of any institutional mechanism for parties to air their grievances, nor any single regional organization that embraced all Gulf actors that could serve as a framework for confidence-building and de-escalation measures. The President of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences recalled the Helsinki process and the success achieved by opposing blocs of States that had managed to agree and develop an effective system of confidence-building measures and create the still-functioning Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). He added that it was no coincidence that a number of politicians and experts spoke figuratively about the creation of an OSCE for the Persian Gulf. He also noted that discussions had been held on various approaches to possible first steps towards the creation of a collective security system in the subregion. The Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council said that the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations had been incorporated into the statute of his organization. The Gulf Cooperation Council had engaged proactively with the international community and cooperated in the pursuit of just causes, also extending the hand of cooperation to all peace-loving countries, United Nations agencies and other international groups and organizations to promote the principles of tolerance and coexistence among nations and peoples, achieve stability and well-being for all and reinforce regional and global peace and security. In his briefing, the Secretary-General of LAS acknowledged that building a system of collective security in the Arabian Gulf region was an ambitious goal that remained distant, and that confidence-building measures must be based on mutual appreciation by both sides of each other's security concerns. He further noted that the Arab side continued to feel that its security concerns were not adequately understood or appreciated by the other party in the context of widespread conflicts in the region and across the world, which formed the most important barrier to establishing a sustainable system of collective security in the Arabian Gulf region.

During the videoconference, Council members and participants exchanged views on the growing tensions in the Persian Gulf and the collective security arrangement in the region that could help to diffuse those tensions. Several speakers<sup>56</sup> highlighted the

<sup>56</sup> Russian Federation, China, Niger, South Africa, Viet Nam, Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia and Qatar.

importance of regional cooperation and arrangements such as the Gulf Cooperation Council and LAS. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation argued that his country's concept of collective security in the Persian Gulf was aimed at creating a reliable structure for regional security, with the participation of the coastal countries of the Gulf and including the Islamic Republic of Iran and its Arab neighbours. He also proposed to involve the five permanent members of the Council, LAS, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and other influential and interested parties in practical steps to implement the creation of a reliable structure for regional security.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens Living Abroad of the Niger stated that notwithstanding certain episodes of violence in the region, the Persian Gulf must be equipped with an inclusive mechanism for cooperation and dispute settlement, with a strong involvement on the part of LAS, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations. He added that the Council could support such a regional initiative, which would constitute a strong signal of recognition of the key role that regional organizations played in the peaceful settlement of conflict.

The State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China stated that the United Nations should be allowed to fully carry out good offices and encourage dialogue, and that mediation efforts by the Gulf Cooperation Council and other regional organizations should be supported. The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa noted that the Council should support any initiative by States in the Gulf region to work collectively to address the security situation and instability in the region and affirmed that, on the basis of her country's own experience, regional and intergovernmental organizations remained critical partners in resolving conflict and should remain impartial in the drive towards the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Similarly, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam stated that the changing regional political landscape made the time ripe for further exploration and to turn the idea of a collective security arrangement in the Persian Gulf into concrete action. Such a mechanism should be customized to regional circumstances and anchored in the principles of the Charter. He further underlined the importance of strengthening the collaboration between regional and subregional organizations in the Gulf and the Middle East and the United Nations and the Council in conflict prevention, mediation and preventive diplomacy in line with Chapter VIII of the Charter. He noted that the role of regional

organizations was indispensable for a comprehensive security approach, as vividly drawn from the experience in which ASEAN played a central role in its regional security architecture and had helped to transform South-East Asia from a region of hostilities into a cohesive, integrated and people-centred community.

The representative of Belgium encouraged all regional approaches based on dialogue, cooperation, integration and the defence of common interests and values, and highlighted the importance of regional ownership of those initiatives. In that connection, he believed that the European Union and other actors had a historical experience of regional integration and cooperation that could be a source of inspiration, and OSCE had also built up a remarkable inventory of confidence- and security-building measures. Similarly, the representative of Estonia underlined the importance of ensuring that the initiatives for security and stability in the Middle East would come from the region itself, and noted that only a broader regional security dialogue among the countries of the region could lead to a long-term solution and enable the full potential of the societies in the region.

The representative of Qatar said that sustainable peace in the region could only be achieved through an approach to crisis resolution that operated within collective frameworks. Qatar was a strong supporter of the Gulf Cooperation Council as a model subregional framework for cooperation and coordination, and disputes and conflicts between its members were settled under its aegis, which was one of the reasons it had originally been established. In connection with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the representative of the Dominican Republic expressed the hope that parties would refrain from taking any action that might further undermine it. Failure to do so would have detrimental effects on non-proliferation, security and stability in the region, as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was the only mechanism to guarantee the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. While addressing and resolving those aspects was the responsibility of the States of the region, the collaboration and assistance of the international community, the United Nations and regional organizations were paramount.

## Case 6

### **Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security**

On 4 December 2020, at the initiative of South Africa, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>57</sup> Council members held an open

<sup>57</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 25 November 2020 (S/2020/1146).

videoconference in connection with the above-referenced item, with a special focus on the further strengthening of the Council's cooperation with the African Union.<sup>58</sup> At the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. In addition, representatives of all Council members delivered their statements during the videoconference,<sup>59</sup> as well as the President of Somalia.

In his briefing, the Secretary-General said that the cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union and the African regional economic communities and other regional mechanisms, such as ECCAS, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, ECOWAS and SADC, had never been stronger, and their joint work had gained in depth and scope. He commended the African Union and its members for establishing a strong partnership between the World Health Organization and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission noted the deepening cooperation of the African Union with the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, particularly with respect to consolidating its activities to maintain regional peace and security and continuing to make joint efforts to ensure that the Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative worked. He underlined the importance of enhancing strategic partnerships with the European Union and reinforcing cooperation with other key member-driven organizations, including LAS, in order to strengthen strategic cooperation and better address shared threats.

<sup>58</sup> See S/2020/1179.

<sup>59</sup> The Niger was represented by its President; South Africa was represented by its President; and Tunisia was represented by its President. Belgium was represented by its Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade; China was represented by its Special Representative of President Xi Jinping, State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs; Estonia was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs; Germany was represented by its Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs; Indonesia was represented by its Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was represented by its Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, National Security, Legal Affairs and Information; the United Kingdom was represented by its Minister for Africa; and Viet Nam was represented by its Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. For information on high-level meetings, see part II, sect. II.



Several speakers<sup>60</sup> explicitly invoked Chapter VIII of the Charter, while others<sup>61</sup> affirmed the importance of the United Nations assessed contributions for peace support operations led by the African Union and authorized by the Council, such as the African Union Mission in Somalia and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. The President of South Africa recalled that the United Nations and the African Union had deepened their relationship, with partnership agreements on peace and security, development and capacity-building, adding that the most advanced cooperation between the two organizations was on peace and security, as provided for in Chapter VIII of the Charter. Africa was taking responsibility for the complex challenges to its peace, security and development and was working with the United Nations and other international partners in supporting African-led solutions to problems on the continent. He affirmed that while the United Nations, through the Council, had the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, it was necessary to acknowledge the important role played by regional organizations, such as the African Union, to address threats to peace and security. In this regard, the African Union had recognized the nexus between peace and development and had aligned the African Peace and Security Architecture with Agenda 2063, the blueprint for Africa's development. He called upon the United Nations and the African Union to expedite deliberations to ensure that peace support operations led by the African Union and authorized by the Council were financed through United Nations assessed contributions and underlined the need to strengthen the strategic cooperation between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

The President of the Niger welcomed the outcomes of the fourteenth annual joint consultative meeting between the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, presided over by the Niger in September 2020, as well as the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the two bodies through the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security.<sup>62</sup> He highlighted the importance of operational collaboration between regional organizations and the United Nations for the establishment of development agencies focused on the primary goal of tackling the root causes of security problems

in crisis-affected areas, adding that security issues should not only be resolved but also prevented. He also proposed strengthening cooperation between the two Councils by emphasizing the coordination of their agendas and goals through an increase in the number of regularly scheduled meetings, and advocated for African countries to play a central role in the discussions and decision-making process of the Security Council, as African issues constituted the majority of the subjects it dealt with. Similarly, the President of Tunisia called for greater collaboration between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on joint assessments of conflict situations, formulating early and joint response plans, strengthening coordination and integration in mediation efforts to ensure that the parties to the conflict attained the results they sought, further developing the partnership in peacekeeping operations and managing the transitions between United Nations missions and African Union missions. He also said that for crisis responses, intervention by the African Union and subregional groups must be given priority, as illustrated by the recent intervention by ECOWAS to resolve the crisis in Mali.

The Special Representative of President Xi Jinping, State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China said that the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union must build on their annual consultative meeting mechanism to enhance their level of cooperation, and called upon the Security Council to assume its responsibility to help Africa to improve its independent capabilities in peacekeeping, stability and counter-terrorism, accelerate the establishment of the African Standby Force, a rapid response force and an early warning mechanism, and to support sustainable and predictable financing for the peace and security operations of the African Union. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade of Belgium welcomed the enhanced role of the African Union in promoting a positive regional dynamic and supporting United Nations efforts. She expressed the hope that the African Union would also be closely involved in the further implementation of the new Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework of the United Nations. While new conflicts on the African continent deserved an initial response from the African Union or its subregional organizations, the principle of subsidiarity should not imply inaction. She emphasized that greater synergy between the African Union and subregional organizations, as well as the optimum complementarity between the African Union and the Council, was essential to accelerating progress towards common objectives.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam opined that the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union

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<sup>60</sup> Chairperson of the African Union Commission, South Africa, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, France and Russian Federation.

<sup>61</sup> South Africa, Niger, Tunisia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, China, United Kingdom and France.

<sup>62</sup> See the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa, including on the work of the United Nations Office to the African Union (S/2020/860).

could be further strengthened by supporting the coordination efforts of the African Union on regional issues, strengthening strategic cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union at both the institutional and operational levels and expanding interregional cooperation to help Africa and other parts of the world cope with global problems that affected all nations alike. He said that it would be of significant benefit to ASEAN and the African Union, for instance, to explore more opportunities for sharing experiences and best practices in addressing common challenges and realizing regional goals. The Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany added that the African Union and the United Nations were natural partners in the fight against climate change, as droughts, hunger and displacement were catalysts for conflict in Africa.

The representative of France said that the Council must support the commitment of the African Union to the prevention and resolution of crises on the continent, a principle that was at the heart of Chapter VIII of the Charter. The partnership between the United Nations and the African

Union was also of strategic importance in security matters, as the African contribution to peacekeeping was invaluable. He also expressed support for the development of sustainable and predictable financing for African peace operations, including through United Nations assessed contributions. Several Council members<sup>63</sup> emphasized the importance of further enhancing the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in relation to the women and peace and security agenda, including the participation of women in peacekeeping operations. The representative of the Russian Federation said that it was important that Africans were increasingly taking the initiative in dealing with peace and security issues on their continent, and that United Nations cooperation with African regional organizations should be based on the understanding that regional actors should be the ones to take the lead in defining the paths to settling disputes on the African continent, based on Chapter VIII of the Charter.

<sup>63</sup> Niger, Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, United States, Dominican Republic and France.

## II. Recognition of the efforts of regional arrangements in the pacific settlement of disputes

### Note

Section II deals with recognition by the Council of the efforts of regional and subregional organizations in the pacific settlement of local disputes, within the framework of Article 52 of the Charter. The section is divided into two subsections. Subsection A covers decisions concerning efforts of regional arrangements in the pacific settlement of disputes, and subsection B covers discussions concerning the pacific settlement of disputes by regional arrangements.

### A. Decisions concerning efforts of regional arrangements in the pacific settlement of disputes

During the period under review, in several of its decisions, the Council welcomed, commended or encouraged the engagement of regional and subregional arrangements in the pacific settlement of disputes. The Council, however, did not explicitly refer to Article 52 of the Charter in any of its decisions. The Council appealed to regional organizations to support

peace processes,<sup>64</sup> to provide political support to the strengthening of State institutions,<sup>65</sup> to sustain and promote peace, stability and development,<sup>66</sup> to support United Nations efforts to foster intranational reconciliation<sup>67</sup> and to continue further mediation efforts.<sup>68</sup> The Council referred to efforts of regional arrangements in the pacific settlements of disputes in relation to a wide variety of items on its agenda, as featured in more detail in table 2 below. The decisions are organized in alphabetical order by item.

<sup>64</sup> See, for example, in relation to the situation in the Central African Republic, resolution 2552 (2020), sixth preambular paragraph.

<sup>65</sup> See, for example, in relation to the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, resolution 2556 (2020), para. 3.

<sup>66</sup> See, for example, in relation to the situation in Guinea-Bissau, resolution 2512 (2020), ninth preambular paragraph.

<sup>67</sup> See, for example, in relation to the situation in Libya, resolution 2510 (2020), sixth preambular paragraph, and resolution 2542 (2020), twenty-fifth preambular paragraph.

<sup>68</sup> See, for example, in relation to the situation in Mali, S/PRST/2020/10, second paragraph; and in relation to the reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan, resolution 2519 (2020), fourth preambular paragraph, and resolution 2550 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph and para. 10.

Table 2  
Decisions concerning the pacific settlement of disputes by regional arrangements

<i>Item</i>	<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Regional organizations mentioned</i>
Peace and security in Africa	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/5</a> 11 March 2020	Fifth, twenty-third and twenty-fifth paragraphs	African Union
The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution <a href="#">2552 (2020)</a> 12 November 2020	Sixth preambular paragraph and para. 5	African Union, ECCAS
The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution <a href="#">2556 (2020)</a> 18 December 2020	Paras. 3, 6, 14, 16 and 26	African Union, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, SADC
The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution <a href="#">2512 (2020)</a> 28 February 2020	Fifth, sixth and ninth preambular paragraphs and paras. 2 (a) and 16	African Union, Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, ECOWAS, European Union
The situation in Libya	Resolution <a href="#">2510 (2020)</a> 12 February 2020	Sixth preambular paragraph	African Union, European Union, LAS
	Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a> 3 June 2020	Para. 13	African Union
	Resolution <a href="#">2525 (2020)</a> 3 June 2020	Fourth preambular paragraph	African Union
	Resolution <a href="#">2542 (2020)</a> 15 September 2020	Twenty-fifth preambular paragraph and para. 1 (vi)	African Union, European Union, LAS
	Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a> 12 November 2020	Fifth preambular paragraph and para. 10	African Union
The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2541 (2020)</a> 31 August 2020	Fourth preambular paragraph	African Union, ECOWAS
	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/10</a> 15 October 2020	Second and third paragraphs	African Union, ECOWAS
The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a> 29 May 2020	Fifth preambular paragraph and para. 25	African Union, European Union
Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a> 12 March 2020	Fourth, fifth, twenty-second and twenty-third preambular paragraphs and paras. 11, 17 and 36	African Union, IGAD
	Resolution <a href="#">2519 (2020)</a> 14 May 2020	Fourth preambular paragraph	African Union
	Resolution <a href="#">2521 (2020)</a> 29 May 2020	Third preambular paragraph	IGAD
	Resolution <a href="#">2524 (2020)</a> 3 June 2020	Para. 13	African Union
	Resolution <a href="#">2525 (2020)</a> 3 June 2020	Fourth preambular paragraph	African Union
	Resolution <a href="#">2550 (2020)</a> 12 November 2020	Fifth preambular paragraph and para. 10	African Union

<i>Item</i>	<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Regional organizations mentioned</i>
Peace consolidation in West Africa	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/2</a> 11 February 2020	Eleventh paragraph	African Union, ECOWAS
	<a href="#">S/PRST/2020/7</a> 28 July 2020	Ninth, tenth and thirteenth paragraphs	African Union, ECOWAS

*Abbreviations:* ECCAS, Economic Community of Central African States; ECOWAS, Economic Community of West African States; IGAD, Intergovernmental Authority on Development; LAS, League of Arab States; SADC, Southern African Development Community.

## B. Discussions concerning the pacific settlement of disputes by regional arrangements

During the period under review, the discussions among Council members highlighted the mediation efforts of the African Union, the European Union and LAS in Libya, with many Council members reiterating their support for the cooperation between the United Nations and these regional organizations to continue mediation efforts and find a lasting and peaceful solution to the crisis in Libya.<sup>69</sup> Council members also discussed the cooperation between the United Nations and subregional economic institutions, such as the Economic Community of Central African States, with regard to institutional reform and conflict prevention in the Central African region.<sup>70</sup> In addition, various Council members referred to the role of regional and subregional organizations in the pacific settlement of disputes in connection with the role of the African Union relating to the construction of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and the trilateral discussions between Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan (see case 7).

### Case 7

#### Peace and security in Africa

On 29 June, Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Peace and security in Africa”.<sup>71</sup> At the videoconference, Council members heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. In addition, all Council members delivered statements, as well as the representatives of

Egypt and Ethiopia.<sup>72</sup> In her briefing, the Under-Secretary-General explained that the Blue Nile was an important transboundary water resource that was critical for the livelihoods and development of the people of Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan. She further explained that construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, a major hydropower project located on the Blue Nile in the Binshangul Gumuz region of Ethiopia, began in April 2011. Various initiatives had been undertaken by the Blue Nile riparian countries, which recognized the need for cooperation on the Renaissance Dam to fully realize its benefits and mitigate its potential negative effects on the downstream countries. She also reported on the most recent initiatives since 2018, which had led to trilateral negotiations and the agreement to appoint observers to the talks, including South Africa, the United States and the European Union, whose representatives had been observers at the recent meetings. She reported that further to inconclusive negotiations in February 2020, the Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union had convened on 26 June 2020 with South Africa as Chair of the African Union, and had agreed to a process led by the African Union aimed at resolving outstanding issues. She commended the parties for their determination to negotiate an agreement and applauded the efforts of the African Union to facilitate a process to that end.

Many speakers<sup>73</sup> welcomed the peaceful settlement led by the African Union and the parties’ subsequent commitment to finding a peaceful negotiated solution to outstanding issues. The representative of the Dominican Republic noted that resolving outstanding key issues, such as water sharing, drought mitigation and the establishment of a dispute

<sup>69</sup> See [S/2020/371](#) (China and Niger); [S/2020/421](#) (China, South Africa, Tunisia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, France, Indonesia and Viet Nam); [S/2020/879](#) (Viet Nam, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, China, Indonesia and Niger); and [S/2020/1108](#) (China, France and Niger).

<sup>70</sup> See [S/2020/542](#) and [S/2020/1188](#).

<sup>71</sup> See [S/2020/636](#).

<sup>72</sup> The representative of Germany spoke also on behalf of Belgium. Egypt was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>73</sup> United States, South Africa, Russian Federation, Estonia, Niger, Germany, Viet Nam, Dominican Republic, United Kingdom, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Indonesia and France.

resolution mechanism, would set an excellent regional and international precedent for future disputes on those issues. The representative of Estonia expressed the hope that the parties could reach an agreement over the coming weeks, as envisioned by the African Union process. The representative of France said that the African Union had a major role to play in facilitating and supporting those negotiations and, in that regard, the discussions held between the parties were a step in the right direction and must continue in a constructive spirit in order to reach an agreement.

The representative of Indonesia noted that settling the issue in the regional context was always one of the best options and welcomed the fact that all parties had renewed their commitment to finding a peaceful, negotiated solution to all the outstanding issues as well as to establishing a tripartite committee. The representative of the Niger welcomed the appeal made to the Council by the Extraordinary Meeting of the Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union to take note of the fact that the African Union was seized of the issue, a point that was also raised by the representative of South Africa. The representative of the Niger further said that the Council could support that regional initiative, as it would send a strong signal of recognition of the essential role played by regional organizations in the peaceful settlement of disputes of that nature. He added that regional organizations such as the African Union had a better understanding of regional dynamics and could detect the early warning signs of impending conflict and, through that knowledge, promote dialogue and reconciliation among the parties. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines expressed encouragement at the parties' determination, as demonstrated at the Extraordinary Meeting held on 26 June 2020, to continue their trilateral negotiations, in good faith and in the spirit of solidarity, towards an agreement that was reasonable, equitable and amicable, and urged them to take the requisite bold political steps to conclude those negotiations. Similarly, the representative of South Africa noted that the Extraordinary Meeting had been characterized by a positive and constructive spirit, with all parties showing their willingness to find a mutually acceptable agreement on all outstanding issues. The representative of Viet Nam welcomed the important role of the African Union in promoting negotiations and mediating among the three parties, and emphasized the need to promote best practices on transboundary watercourses, including the exchange of data and information,

notification, consultations and negotiations to address any concerns, and the full implementation of legal frameworks among the countries concerned.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt stated that it was incumbent upon the Council to take note of and welcome the outcomes of the Extraordinary Meeting and to call upon the three countries to comply with their commitments and pledges. He added that filling the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam unilaterally, without an agreement with Egypt and the Sudan, would jeopardize the interests of downstream communities, cause disastrous socioeconomic effects, expose millions to greater economic vulnerability leading to increasing rates of crime and illegal migration, reduce water quality, disrupt the riparian ecosystem, damage biodiversity and aggravate the dangers of climate change, all of which represented a serious threat to international peace and security. He called upon the Council to encourage the parties to negotiate in good faith to reach an agreement on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, and to refrain from any unilateral measures until such an agreement was reached.

The representative of Ethiopia, however, said that he did not believe the issue being discussed had a legitimate place in the Council. He noted that the Agreement on Declaration of Principles between The Arab Republic of Egypt, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia And The Republic of the Sudan On The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project provided for dispute-resolution mechanisms; furthermore, the African Union had the necessary goodwill and expertise to help the three countries in bridging their differences and reaching a mutually acceptable solution. He considered it lamentable that the principle of complementarity and subsidiarity had been ignored when the issue related to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam had been unjustifiably brought to the attention of the Council, contravening Article 33 of the Charter, which stipulated that parties to any dispute shall first, among other things, "resort to regional agencies or arrangements". The involvement of the Council on the issue risked hardening positions and making compromise even more difficult. Instead of pronouncing itself on the matter, the Council should defer to the African Union and encourage the three countries to return to the tripartite negotiations as the only means of finding an amicable solution to the remaining outstanding issues.



### III. Peacekeeping operations led by regional arrangements

#### Note

Section III describes the practice of the Council in connection with the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter in the area of peacekeeping. The section is divided into two subsections. Subsection A covers decisions concerning peacekeeping operations led by regional arrangements, and subsection B covers discussions concerning peacekeeping operations led by regional arrangements.

#### A. Decisions concerning peacekeeping operations led by regional arrangements

During 2020, the Council renewed the authorization of two peacekeeping operations led by regional arrangements, namely, the European Union military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR-Althea)<sup>74</sup> and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).<sup>75</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Kosovo Force, established pursuant to Council resolution 1244 (1999), continued to operate, and no decisions were taken with respect to its mandate.<sup>76</sup> The Council also commended the efforts of African Member States and subregional organizations in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, notably with the deployment of AMISOM, the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel.<sup>77</sup>

The Council also commended the continued efforts of the African Union to enhance its peacekeeping role and that of African subregional organizations to prevent, mediate and settle conflicts on the African continent, paying tribute in that regard to the courage and sacrifice of those serving in African-led peace operations.<sup>78</sup>

The Council further commended the efforts of the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), including through the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, in spearheading initiatives to address security challenges in West Africa and the Sahel region, and encouraged Member States to support those efforts by providing the necessary assistance and resources.<sup>79</sup> The Council also welcomed the increased engagement from the African Union and ECOWAS and, in that regard, also welcomed the initiative to deploy an African Union-led force in the Sahel.<sup>80</sup>

The Council encouraged partnerships to support the efforts of the African Union to continue to develop policy, guidance and training to ensure the safety and security of its peacekeepers.<sup>81</sup> The Council also acknowledged the need for more support to enhance African Union peace operations and encouraged further dialogue between the United Nations and the African Union to achieve that goal.<sup>82</sup>

Furthermore, in its decisions in 2020, the Council called upon United Nations peace operations to cooperate with several regionally led military and police training missions, namely, the NATO Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan,<sup>83</sup> the European Union Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic,<sup>84</sup> the European Union training mission in Mali<sup>85</sup> and the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau.<sup>86</sup>

The decisions by which the Council authorized peacekeeping operations led by regional organizations in 2020 are listed in table 3.

<sup>74</sup> Resolution 2549 (2020), para. 3.

<sup>75</sup> Resolution 2520 (2020), para. 9.

<sup>76</sup> For more information on the international security presence in Kosovo, see *Repertoire, Supplement 1996–1999*, chap. VIII, sect. F.

<sup>77</sup> S/PRST/2020/11, eighth paragraph.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, sixth paragraph.

<sup>79</sup> S/PRST/2020/2, eleventh paragraph. See also S/PRST/2020/5, twenty-third paragraph, and S/PRST/2020/7, tenth paragraph.

<sup>80</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), ninth preambular paragraph. See also S/PRST/2020/7, tenth paragraph.

<sup>81</sup> Resolution 2518 (2020), para. 7.

<sup>82</sup> S/PRST/2020/11, tenth paragraph.

<sup>83</sup> See, for example, resolution 2543 (2020), para. 6 (k).

<sup>84</sup> See, for example, resolution 2552 (2020), eleventh preambular paragraph.

<sup>85</sup> See, for example, resolution 2531 (2020), para. 42.

<sup>86</sup> See, for example, resolution 2512 (2020), para. 16.



Table 3  
Decisions by which the Security Council authorized peacekeeping operations led by regional organizations

<i>Item</i>	<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Peacekeeping operations</i>
The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Resolution <a href="#">2549 (2020)</a> 5 November 2020	Paras. 3 and 5–6	EUFOR-Althea
The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a> 29 May 2020	Paras. 9–12	AMISOM
	Resolution <a href="#">2540 (2020)</a> 28 August 2020	Para. 2	AMISOM
	Resolution <a href="#">2551 (2020)</a> 12 November 2020	Paras. 8, 20 and 24	AMISOM

*Abbreviations:* AMISOM, African Union Mission in Somalia; EUFOR-Althea, European Union military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### **Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan**

In relation to the situation in Afghanistan, the Council authorized the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan to closely coordinate and cooperate, where relevant, with the non-combat Resolute Support Mission agreed upon between NATO and Afghanistan.<sup>87</sup>

### **European Union Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic**

Concerning the situation in the Central African Republic, the Council welcomed the work carried out by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the European Union Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic.<sup>88</sup> The Council also decided that the mandate of MINUSCA would include providing enhanced planning and technical assistance and limited logistical support for the progressive redeployment of a limited number of units of the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic trained or certified by the European Union Military Training Mission.<sup>89</sup>

### **African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur**

Concerning the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the Council underlined the importance of the partnership between the

United Nations and the African Union.<sup>90</sup> In addition, the Security Council supported the call by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union for extreme caution in the withdrawal of UNAMID.<sup>91</sup> The Security Council also underlined that a continued strategic and political partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in the Sudan remained critical, including through UNAMID, and encouraged the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), UNAMID and the African Union to ensure coherence, coordination and complementarity of their support for the Sudan.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, the Council requested the Secretary-General to continue transition planning and management in order to ensure that the eventual transition from UNAMID to UNITAMS was phased, sequenced and efficient, and further requested, in that regard, that UNITAMS and UNAMID establish a coordination mechanism to determine the modalities and timelines for the transition of responsibilities.<sup>93</sup> UNAMID was terminated effective 31 December 2020.<sup>94</sup>

### **Operation Althea of the European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

During the period under review, the Council welcomed the readiness of the European Union to maintain EUFOR-Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina from November 2020,<sup>95</sup> and also renewed its authorization of the mission for a period of

<sup>87</sup> Resolution [2543 \(2020\)](#), para. 6 (k).

<sup>88</sup> Resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), eleventh preambular paragraph.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 32 (a) (iv).

<sup>90</sup> Resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), fifth preambular paragraph.

<sup>91</sup> Resolution [2525 \(2020\)](#), fourth preambular paragraph.

<sup>92</sup> Resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), para. 13.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 14.

<sup>94</sup> Resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), para. 1.

<sup>95</sup> Resolution [2549 \(2020\)](#), para. 2. See also resolution [2549 \(2020\)](#), eleventh preambular paragraph.

12 months.<sup>96</sup> The Council reiterated its authorization to Member States to take “all necessary measures” to effect the implementation of and to ensure compliance with annexes 1-A and 2 to the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and stressed that the parties would be held equally responsible for compliance with those annexes and would be subject to such enforcement action by EUFOR-Althea and the NATO presence as might be necessary.<sup>97</sup> The Council also authorized Member States to take “all necessary measures”, at the request of either EUFOR-Althea or NATO headquarters, in defence of EUFOR-Althea or the NATO presence, respectively, and to assist both organizations in carrying out their missions. In addition, the Council recognized the right of EUFOR-Althea and the NATO presence to “take all necessary measures” to defend themselves from attack or threat of attack.<sup>98</sup>

#### African Union Mission in Somalia

In 2020, the Council adopted resolutions 2520 (2020) of 29 May, 2540 (2020) of 28 August and 2551 (2020) of 12 November, in connection with AMISOM. In its decisions, the Council renewed once the authorization of the member States of the African Union to maintain the deployment of AMISOM, initially authorized in 2007, until 28 February 2021.<sup>99</sup>

By its resolution 2520 (2020), the Council maintained the force levels of AMISOM, with a view to supporting security preparations for the elections scheduled to be held at the end of 2020 or early 2021, conducting tasks in line with the updated Somali-led transition plan and transferring security responsibilities to Somali security forces.<sup>100</sup> In addition, the Council authorized AMISOM to “take all necessary measures” to carry out its mandate.<sup>101</sup>

Concerning its mandate, the Council maintained the primary strategic objectives of AMISOM within the context of the transition plan, which set out the progressive transfer of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security institutions and forces.<sup>102</sup> The Council underlined its intention to assess security

support needed to prepare Somalia towards taking on the leading role for its security by the end of 2021 and post-2021, and take decisions on the reconfiguration of AMISOM on the basis of, inter alia, information shared by the African Union, the Federal Government of Somalia, the European Union and relevant international partners.<sup>103</sup> The Council reiterated the importance of AMISOM and the Somali security forces working jointly with the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) on the delivery of logistics support, including ensuring convoy and airfield security, protection of civilians and protecting main supply routes.<sup>104</sup> In addition, the Council requested the African Union and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia to provide additional support to AMISOM in its provision of combat mentoring support to the Somali National Army and underlined the importance of deploying the Somali National Army forces for the delivery of the tasks set out in the updated transition plan.<sup>105</sup>

Concerning security, the Council welcomed the progress made over the past year, including the recovery of additional territory from Al-Shabaab, the training of Somali security forces and the finalization of the Somali-African Union-United Nations joint threat assessment.<sup>106</sup> In that regard, the Council called upon the Federal Government, the federal member states, AMISOM and the United Nations to deepen cooperation to take a comprehensive approach to security that was collaborative, gender-responsive and stabilizing.<sup>107</sup>

In addition, the Council called upon AMISOM, the United Nations and the African Union to increase comprehensive joint planning, coordination, information-sharing and strategic communications, and the Federal Government, AMISOM and UNSOS to undertake inclusive and integrated planning on transition locations, joint operations and stabilization activities in line with the tasks in an updated Somali-led transition plan.<sup>108</sup>

Concerning logistical and financial support, the Council urged the African Union to finalize its equipment review by September 2020 with the support of the United Nations to, inter alia, strengthen the operational capabilities of AMISOM.<sup>109</sup> In reference to Chapter VIII of the Charter, the Council underlined the need to enhance the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing for African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the Council, and

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., para. 3. For information on the establishment of EUFOR-Althea, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2004–2007*, chap. XII, part III.C.

<sup>97</sup> Resolution 2549 (2020), para. 5.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., para. 6.

<sup>99</sup> Resolution 2520 (2020), para. 9. For information on the establishment of AMISOM, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2004–2007*, chap. XII, part III.C.

<sup>100</sup> Resolution 2520 (2020), para. 9.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., para. 10.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., paras. 11 and 12. See also resolution 2472 (2019), para. 9.

<sup>103</sup> Resolution 2520 (2020), para. 5.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., para. 21.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., para. 8.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., sixth preambular paragraph.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., para. 3.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., para. 6 (c).

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., para. 15.

encouraged the Secretary-General, the African Union and Member States to continue efforts to explore in earnest funding arrangements for AMISOM in order to establish secure future funding arrangements for the Mission.<sup>110</sup>

In resolution 2540 (2020), the Council welcomed the strong relationship between the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, UNSOS, the United Nations country team and AMISOM and underlined the importance of all entities continuing to strengthen the relationship at all levels.<sup>111</sup> In addition, in resolution 2551 (2020), the Council reaffirmed that the Federal Government, in cooperation with the federal member states and AMISOM, should document and register all weapons and military equipment captured as part of offensive operations or in the course of carrying out their mandates, including facilitating inspection by the Panel of Experts on Somalia of all military items before their redistribution or destruction. The Council also reiterated its request that AMISOM support and assist the Federal Government and the federal member states in implementing the total ban on charcoal exports from Somalia and called upon AMISOM to facilitate regular access for the Panel of Experts to charcoal exporting ports.<sup>112</sup>

#### Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel

In 2020, the Council reaffirmed the importance of continuing the fight against terrorism and expressed its support for the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, which was established in February 2017 by the Group of Five for the Sahel, comprising Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and the Niger. The Council also welcomed international and regional support to the Joint Force.<sup>113</sup> The Council also welcomed the Pau Summit of 13 January 2020 and the creation of a Coalition for the Sahel, whose aim included strengthening the military capabilities of the Sahelian States.<sup>114</sup> In addition, the Council encouraged the Group of Five for the Sahel States to ensure that the Joint Force continued to scale up its level of operation, underlined the importance of progress in the operationalization of the Force's police component and encouraged support for it, including through the

training of the component's specialized investigative units. The Council welcomed the increased autonomy of both the executive secretariat of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the Joint Force as steps towards self-sufficiency.<sup>115</sup> The Council also stressed that operational and logistical support from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), in line with the conditions set in resolution 2391 (2017), was a temporary measure, and called upon the Joint Force to continue to develop its own capacity to support itself.<sup>116</sup> In addition, the Council expressed its support for the use of life-support consumables provided by MINUSMA to the Joint Force on the basis of both resolution 2391 (2017) and the technical agreement between the United Nations, the European Union and the Group of Five for the Sahel, stressing that the support of MINUSMA to the Joint Force continued to be subject to full financial reimbursement to the United Nations through the European Union-coordinated financing mechanism. The Council requested the Secretary-General to include in his April 2021 report on the Joint Force an assessment of the implementation of paragraph 13 of resolution 2391 (2017), including on the prospects of the executive secretariat of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the Joint Force improving their autonomy and setting up their own procurement system.<sup>117</sup>

The Council further requested the Secretary-General to continue to ensure close coordination and information-sharing between MINUSMA, the Joint Force, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and subregional organizations, including ECOWAS and the Group of Five for the Sahel.<sup>118</sup>

## B. Discussions concerning peacekeeping operations led by regional arrangements

During the period under review, the Council discussed the role of regional peacekeeping operations such as EUFOR-Althea,<sup>119</sup> AMISOM<sup>120</sup> and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel.<sup>121</sup> With regard to the Joint Force, Council deliberations focused on the importance of its role in combating terrorism in

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., para. 25.

<sup>111</sup> Resolution 2540 (2020), para. 3.

<sup>112</sup> Resolution 2551 (2020), paras. 8 and 24. See also resolution 2520 (2020), para. 12 (i).

<sup>113</sup> S/PRST/2020/10, seventh paragraph. For more information on the deployment of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2016–2017*, part VIII, sect. III.

<sup>114</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), ninth preambular paragraph. See also S/PRST/2020/7, tenth paragraph.

<sup>115</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), para. 36.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., para. 37.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., para. 38.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., paras. 26, 30 and 39.

<sup>119</sup> See S/2020/379 and S/2020/1103.

<sup>120</sup> See S/PV.8731, S/2020/436, S/PV.8755 and S/2020/1136.

<sup>121</sup> See S/2020/286, S/2020/515, S/2020/541, S/2020/1126, and S/PV.8765.

Africa and on the need to provide it with the necessary support, including financially (see case 8).

### Case 8 Peace and security in Africa

At its 8743rd meeting, held on 11 March, convened at the initiative of China, which held the presidency of the Council for the month,<sup>122</sup> the Council held an open debate under the item entitled “Peace and security in Africa” and in connection with the sub-item “Countering terrorism and extremism in Africa”.<sup>123</sup> At the meeting, the briefers, Council members and other Member States<sup>124</sup> underlined the importance of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel with regard to combating terrorism in Africa and the need to provide support to it against the backdrop of the Pau Summit of 13 January 2020, which brought together the Heads of State of the Group of Five for the Sahel and their main multilateral partners, namely, the United Nations, the African Union and the International Organization of la Francophonie.

In addition, on 16 November, Council members held an open videoconference in connection with the same item to consider the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Joint Force submitted pursuant to Council resolution 2391 (2017).<sup>125</sup> Council members heard briefings from the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, the Managing Director for Africa at the European External Action Service, on behalf of the European Union, and the Permanent Representative of Canada in his capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. In addition to the 12 Council members who spoke, a statement was made by the representative of Mali.<sup>126</sup>

In his remarks, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations underscored that the Joint Force remained a vital part of the security responses addressing extremist armed groups in the Sahel. He also reported that the Joint Force had continued to rise in operational strength and that its units had increasingly acquired practical experience and efficiency in their operations. Going forward, the Under-Secretary-General observed that strengthening the police component of the Joint Force would be an

important step in improving, inter alia, the oversight of military operations. In addition, he stated that the responsive operational and logistic support of MINUSMA remained critical to the operations of the Joint Force. The Under-Secretary-General added that, further to the Council’s authorization of MINUSMA to engage commercial contractors to deliver life-support consumables to Joint Force contingents operating outside Mali, the Mission had begun to make appropriate arrangements to implement such support. The Under-Secretary-General emphasized that the issue of predictability of funding remained of concern and that the United Nations, together with the Group of Five for the Sahel and other partners, continued to call for more predictable funding.

The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union reported that the Peace and Security Council of the African Union had renewed the mandate of the Joint Force for 12 months from 13 July 2020, and underscored that the African Union was grateful for the efforts of the international community in supporting the endeavours of the Joint Force. He further stated that the African Union welcomed the extension of the mandate of MINUSMA, which continued to provide logistical support to the Joint Force. The Commissioner also underlined the position of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union that it was of utmost importance for the United Nations to consider taking the necessary steps that would guarantee sustainable and predictable funding for the Joint Force from the United Nations assessed contribution.

The Managing Director for Africa at the European External Action Service recalled the support of the European Union for MINUSMA, in support of the Joint Force, while noting the challenges faced in providing supplies to its troops. He reaffirmed that the European Union was doing everything to ensure the sustainability of support for the Joint Force, noting that the financial support provided by the European Union to the Joint Force had resulted in the delivery of 46 armoured personnel carriers equipped with radios.

Council members welcomed the progress in the operationalization of the Joint Force,<sup>127</sup> and its progress in the fight against terrorism during the reporting period.<sup>128</sup> Some Council members<sup>129</sup> also

<sup>122</sup> The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 26 February 2020 (S/2020/161).

<sup>123</sup> See S/PV.8743.

<sup>124</sup> Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Indonesia, Egypt, Côte d’Ivoire and Togo.

<sup>125</sup> See S/2020/1074.

<sup>126</sup> See S/2020/1126.

<sup>127</sup> Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Belgium, Dominican Republic, Germany, United Kingdom and Russian Federation.

<sup>128</sup> France, Germany, Viet Nam (also on behalf of Indonesia), China, and Russian Federation.

<sup>129</sup> Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia) and Russian Federation.



welcomed the establishment of a joint coordination mechanism between the Joint Force, MINUSMA and other military presences in the region. Other Council members expressed support for the assistance provided to the Joint Force by MINUSMA in line with resolution 2531 (2020),<sup>130</sup> or took note of the formation of the Coalition for the Sahel.<sup>131</sup> The representative of China said that his country was actively implementing initiatives to provide assistance to the Joint Force for security and counter-terrorism operations. He further underlined that the presidential statement on counter-terrorism in Africa (S/PRST/2020/5) must be effectively implemented, and expressed the hope that the Council would give priority to the needs of the Group of Five for the Sahel and offer more sustainable and predictable financial support to the Joint Force.

The representative of the Dominican Republic stated that it was encouraging to hear of the implementation of several needed regional and international security initiatives launched to support the Joint Force and counter-terrorism efforts in the Sahel region, as well as efforts by the African Union, ECOWAS and the Group of Five for the Sahel to increase troop numbers. He also emphasized that challenges remained and should be promptly addressed to pave the way for the full operationalization of the Joint Force, which demanded greater coordination at the tripartite level between the European Union, the Joint Force and MINUSMA to tackle shortcomings with regard to the support model of MINUSMA. The representative of Estonia commended the Joint Force for its efforts and encouraged it to continue to take ownership of making peace a reality in the Sahel. He also underlined that the role of the African Union and ECOWAS in coordinating and mobilizing joint counter-terrorist operations was crucial. The representative of Germany encouraged the continued ownership and efforts by the Joint Force, especially with a view to developing its logistical capacities and increased efficiency. He particularly welcomed the ongoing and future support from bilateral partners and the African Union, and stated that Germany was ready to consider ways to increase United Nations support for the Joint Force. In addition, he encouraged MINUSMA to make full use of available funds, such as European Union funding, in its support for the Joint Force.

The representative of the Niger, speaking also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South

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<sup>130</sup> Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Belgium, United States and Russian Federation.

<sup>131</sup> France, Dominican Republic and Germany.

Africa and Tunisia, welcomed the improvement of the situation in the Liptako-Gourma region as a result of ongoing operations by the Joint Force. He added that the operations of the Joint Force carried out in the past 10 months had made it possible to, inter alia, neutralize and arrest terrorists; arrest traffickers; seize, recover or destroy motorcycles and vehicles; and destroy several logistics depots or sites for manufacturing improvised explosive devices. He further stated that the restructuring of the executive secretariat of the Group of Five for the Sahel had made it more operational, enabling it to provide more effective support to the Joint Force. He stressed that the mode of support for the Joint Force from MINUSMA was neither adequate nor sufficient in the context of the fight against terrorism, and that the recommendations of the assessments relating to support for the Joint Force would have to be ultimately implemented if it was eventually to become self-sustaining.

The representative of the Russian Federation stressed that the full-fledged functioning of the Joint Force depended on two important factors, namely, ensuring stable and predictable funding and providing appropriate transport and logistical support.

The representative of the United Kingdom said that his country would welcome more detail on the measures of success of the Joint Force beyond operational reporting, including an update on how the Joint Force was working with the United Nations country team to create an enabling environment for development and for monitoring the return of national armed forces and local authorities.

The representative of the United States said that his country agreed that the Joint Force and its civilian component were key to addressing some of the root causes of the conflict. He added that the United States, like others, remained committed to bilaterally supporting the Joint Force with equipment, training, supplies and advisers, and encouraged other partners to both honour their pledges to the Joint Force and to consider additional bilateral support to individual countries of the Group of Five for the Sahel. He also reiterated that United Nations assessed contributions were not a viable source of funding and underscored that the United States expected to see the Joint Force fully leverage the support mechanism of MINUSMA in the near term.

The representative of Viet Nam, speaking also on behalf of Indonesia, said that the Joint Force had played an important role in maintaining peace, security and stability in the Sahel region and reaffirmed his country's support for the regional force. He also

commended the significant support that had been given to MINUSMA, which had enabled the Joint Force to implement its tasks more effectively, adding that it was essential that the Joint Force continued to receive sustainable support so that it could provide better protection for its soldiers, security forces and civilians,

and fulfil its mandates. The representative of Mali called for more financial support to the Joint Force and reiterated the call of the Group of Five for the Sahel for a robust mandate under Chapter VII of the Charter and for predictable and sustainable funding, including through the United Nations.

## IV. Authorization of enforcement action by regional arrangements

### Note

Section IV concerns the practice of the Council in utilizing regional and subregional arrangements for enforcement action under its authority, as provided for in Article 53 of the Charter. The present section focuses on the authorization of enforcement action by regional and other organizations outside the context of regional peacekeeping operations; authorizations to use force accorded by the Council to regional peacekeeping operations are covered in section III above. Cooperation with regional arrangements in the implementation of measures adopted by the Council under Chapter VII not involving the use of force is also covered in the present section. The section is divided into two subsections. Subsection A covers decisions concerning the authorization of enforcement action by regional arrangements, and subsection B covers discussions concerning the authorization of enforcement action and the implementation of other Chapter VII measures by regional arrangements.

### A. Decisions concerning the authorization of enforcement action by regional arrangements

In 2020, the Council did not explicitly refer to Article 53 of the Charter in its decisions. The Council did, however, authorize the use of force by regional arrangements beyond the context of regional peacekeeping operations.

With regard to the situation in Libya, the Council welcomed the measures that had been taken to implement resolution 2240 (2015), encouraged the continuation of those measures and, in this regard, also took note of the deployment of the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI (Operation IRINI).<sup>132</sup> Acting under Chapter VII, the Council extended for a further 12 months the authorizations to Member States “acting nationally or through regional

organizations” to inspect vessels on the high seas off the coast of Libya suspected of carrying arms and or related materiel to or from Libya in violation of previous Council resolutions and to use “all measures commensurate to the specific circumstances” to carry out those inspections, as set out in resolution 2473 (2019).<sup>133</sup> Also acting under Chapter VII, the Council renewed the authorizations, set out in paragraphs 7 to 10 of resolution 2240 (2015) to Member States “acting nationally or through regional organizations” to inspect on the high seas off the coast of Libya vessels believed to be used for the smuggling of migrants or trafficking in persons from Libya, and to seize those that were confirmed as being used for those purposes, and authorized Member States to use “all measures commensurate to the specific circumstances” in confronting smugglers of migrants or traffickers in persons in carrying out the aforementioned activities.<sup>134</sup> In both cases, the Council requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the measures within 11 months of the adoption of the resolutions on their implementation.<sup>135</sup>

Concerning the situation in Somalia, the Council commended the efforts of Operation Atalanta and the counter-piracy activities of the African Union onshore in Somalia to suppress piracy and to protect ships transiting through the waters off the coast of Somalia. Acting under Chapter VII, the Council renewed for a further period of 12 months the authorizations as set out in paragraph 14 of resolution 2500 (2019) granted to States and regional organizations cooperating with Somali authorities in the fight against piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia.<sup>136</sup>

Acting under Chapter VII, the Council adopted several decisions not involving the use of force, such as requesting the support of regional and subregional

<sup>132</sup> Resolution 2546 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph.

<sup>133</sup> Resolution 2526 (2020), para. 1. See also resolution 2292 (2016), paras. 3–4.

<sup>134</sup> Resolution 2546 (2020), para. 2.

<sup>135</sup> Resolutions 2526 (2020), para. 2, and 2546 (2020), para. 3. See also resolution 2240 (2015), paras. 17–18.

<sup>136</sup> Resolution 2554 (2020), ninth preambular paragraph and para. 14.



organizations in implementing sanctions measures, or calling for the cooperation of regional and subregional organizations with the various sanctions committees and panels of experts, as outlined in table 4.

In addition, in connection with the situation in South Sudan and acting under Chapter VII, the Council took note of the steps taken by the African Union towards the setting up of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan, and welcomed the formal invitation of the African Union for the United Nations to provide technical assistance towards setting up the Court. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to continue to make available technical assistance to the

Commission of the African Union and to the Government of South Sudan in setting up the Court and the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing and the Compensation and Reparation Authority. The Council further took note of the communiqué of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union dated 8 February 2018 and, in this regard, called upon the Government of South Sudan to sign without further delay the memorandum of understanding with the African Union to establish the Court.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>137</sup> Resolution 2514 (2020), paras. 36–37. See also resolution 2521 (2020), sixth preambular paragraph.

Table 4

**Decisions by which the Security Council requested the cooperation of regional arrangements in the implementation of enforcement action**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Decision and date</i>	<i>Paragraphs</i>
Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2514 (2020) 12 March 2020	Thirteenth preambular paragraph and para. 24
	Resolution 2521 (2020) 29 May 2020	Para. 20
The situation in the Middle East	Resolution 2511 (2020) 25 February 2020	Para. 10

**B. Discussions concerning the authorization of enforcement action and the implementation of other Chapter VII measures by regional arrangements**

In 2020, following established practice, the Council heard two semi-annual briefings under the item entitled “Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan” by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on the Court’s investigation into alleged crimes committed in Darfur.<sup>138</sup> In the context of those briefings, the representative of China discussed issues related to the implementation of resolution 1593 (2005) by which the Council, acting under Chapter VII, had referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court. In this regard, the representative of China noted that the Court needed to attach importance to legitimate appeals of the Government of the Sudan and the African Union regarding its engagement on Darfur.<sup>139</sup>

In addition, under the item entitled “The situation in Mali”, Council members discussed the decision by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union to impose various sanctions measures on Mali following the coup de force of 18 August 2020, including the closure of borders, an air embargo and the suspension of financial transactions by ECOWAS. In addition, they discussed the lifting of the sanctions measures.<sup>140</sup>

In relation to Libya, discussions in the Council also focused on the launch of Operation IRINI on 1 April 2020 by the European Union to support the implementation of the United Nations arms embargo on Libya, in line with resolution 2292 (2016), with several speakers expressing support for the Operation.<sup>141</sup> In

<sup>140</sup> See S/PV.8765 (Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINUSMA, France, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), China, Viet Nam, Estonia, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation and Mali).

<sup>141</sup> See S/2020/421 (Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, Niger, France, United States, Dominican Republic and Libya); S/2020/489 (High Representative of the European Union for Foreign

<sup>138</sup> See S/2020/538 and S/2020/1192.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

addition, the representative of Libya stressed that resolution 2292 (2016) stipulated that implementation should be done in coordination with the Government of Libya, emphasized that any international operation carried out without proper coordination with the Government was considered illegal and not founded on

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Affairs and Security Policy, United States, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Russian Federation, United Kingdom, Belgium and France); S/2020/509, (Germany and Russian Federation); and S/2020/879 (Belgium, Germany, Estonia and Niger).

relevant Council resolutions, and in that regard stated that Libya had announced its rejection of Operation IRINI in its current form.<sup>142</sup> The representative of the Russian Federation emphasized that the Operation should fully comply with international law as well as with the framework established by resolution 2292 (2016), and that any modifications to its activities beyond the scope of resolution 2292 (2016) would require the consent of the Council.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> See S/2020/421.

<sup>143</sup> See S/2020/509.

## V. Reporting by regional arrangements on their activities in the maintenance of international peace and security

### Note

Section V examines the reporting by regional arrangements on their activities in the maintenance of international peace and security within the framework of Article 54 of the Charter. The section is divided into two subsections. Subsection A covers decisions concerning reporting by regional arrangements, and subsection B covers discussions concerning reporting by regional arrangements.

#### A. Decisions concerning the reporting by regional arrangements

During the period under review, the Council made no explicit reference to Article 54 of the Charter in its decisions. The Council did, however, request reporting from regional organizations, particularly the African Union, either directly or through the Secretary-General, on issues such as cooperation on peace and security between the United Nations and the African Union, particularly with respect to peace support operations, such as the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and support for the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms in South Sudan, as described in further detail below.

With regard to the situation in Mali, the Council requested the Secretary-General to report, every three months after the adoption of resolution 2531 (2020) on 29 June, on the coordination, exchange of information and mutual operational and logistical support between the Joint Force, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA),

the Malian Defence and Security Forces, the French forces and the European Union missions in Mali.<sup>144</sup>

On Somalia, in resolution 2520 (2020), the Council requested the Secretary-General to keep it regularly informed on the implementation of the resolution through his regular reports, which had been requested in resolution 2461 (2019). The Council further requested the Secretary-General to assess in his regular reports the progress achieved on the priority measures, the implementation of the human rights due diligence policy and the support provided by the United Nations Support Office in Somalia to AMISOM, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the Somali security forces.<sup>145</sup> The Council also requested the African Union to keep the Council informed every 90 days on the implementation of the mandate of AMISOM. In that regard, the Council requested the African Union to report to the Council through the provision of no fewer than three written reports, with the first report submitted no later than 15 August 2020. The Council further requested specific reporting on the progress of joint operations in support of the transition plan, including the use and effectiveness of coordination mechanisms; proposals for revised tasks in accordance with the reconfiguration of AMISOM; accountability measures taken to address underperformance, including command and control, and conduct and discipline; measures taken to protect civilians; equipment review outcomes and the use of force assets; and the staffing of the civilian component, and encouraged timely reporting to allow the Council to take into account the perspectives of the African Union on the situation in

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<sup>144</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), para. 62 (ii).

<sup>145</sup> Resolution 2520 (2020), para. 37. For more information on the authorization of enforcement action by regional organizations in Somalia, see sect. IV.A.

Somalia.<sup>146</sup> Concerning the issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia, in resolution [2554 \(2020\)](#), the Council requested the Secretary-General to report to it, within 11 months of the adoption of that resolution, on the situation with regard to piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia, including an assessment of national coast guard capabilities, as well as voluntary reports by cooperating States and regional organizations.<sup>147</sup>

In connection with the item entitled “Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan”, the Council invited the African Union to share information on progress made in the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan with the Secretary-General, to inform his report, and expressed its intention, upon receipt of the report of the Secretary-General, to assess the work that had been done with regard to the establishment of the Hybrid Court in line with international standards.<sup>148</sup> On the situation in Darfur, the Council requested the Secretary-General and

the Chairperson of the African Union Commission to provide a special report no later than 31 October that included an assessment of the situation on the ground and recommendations on the appropriate course of action regarding the drawdown of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>149</sup> In its resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), the Council requested the Secretary-General to keep it regularly informed about all relevant developments in relation to the drawdown and withdrawal of UNAMID through the inclusion of an annex to the regular reporting requested on the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan in resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), and the provision of an oral briefing by 31 July 2021 on the completion of the drawdown and closure of UNAMID.<sup>150</sup> The Council also requested the Secretary-General to provide it with an assessment on lessons learned from the experience of UNAMID no later than 31 October 2021.<sup>151</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#), para. 36.

<sup>147</sup> Resolution [2554 \(2020\)](#), para. 29.

<sup>148</sup> Resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#), para. 42.

<sup>149</sup> Resolution [2525 \(2020\)](#), para. 11.

<sup>150</sup> Resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), para. 14.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 15.

Table 5  
Decisions concerning the reporting of activities by regional arrangements

<i>Item</i>	<i>Decisions</i>	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Reporting from</i>
The situation in Mali	Resolution <a href="#">2531 (2020)</a> 29 June 2020	para. 62 (iii)	Secretary-General
The situation in Somalia	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a> 29 May 2020	para. 36	African Union
	Resolution <a href="#">2520 (2020)</a> 29 May 2020	para. 37	Secretary-General
	Resolution <a href="#">2554 (2020)</a> 4 December 2020	para. 29	Secretary-General, voluntary reporting by cooperating States and regional organizations
Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution <a href="#">2514 (2020)</a> 12 March 2020	para. 42	Secretary-General, African Union
	Resolution <a href="#">2525 (2020)</a> 3 June 2020	para. 11	Secretary-General, Chairperson of the African Union Commission
	Resolution <a href="#">2559 (2020)</a> 22 December 2020	paras. 14–15	Secretary-General

## B. Discussions concerning the reporting by regional arrangements

During the period under review, Article 54 of the Charter was explicitly referenced once in the context of discussions of the Council. During the 8714th meeting, held on 6 February 2020,<sup>152</sup> the representative of South Africa said that Article 54 of the Charter, under which the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was briefing the Council, envisaged strong cooperation between the Council and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, as every regional organization faced a unique set of peace and security challenges that were determined by the regions in which they operated and the manner in which such threats were addressed. He further noted that the efforts of regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security and the Council's Charter-mandated responsibilities complemented each other.

<sup>152</sup> See [S/PV.8714](#).

In addition, of relevance for the application and interpretation of Article 54 of the Charter were some of the references made in 2020 by Council members to the reporting by regional organizations. For example, during an open videoconference held on 28 April 2020, under the item entitled "Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan",<sup>153</sup> the representative of Germany encouraged regional actors to actively engage the parties on the question of Abyei, and requested more detailed reporting in the reports of the Secretary-General on the engagement of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel and of the Special Envoy. During an open videoconference held on 10 June under the same item,<sup>154</sup> the representative of France observed that the Council had renewed the mandate of UNAMID, which continued to play a major role in protecting civilians in Darfur and reporting on human rights violations.

<sup>153</sup> See [S/2020/351](#).

<sup>154</sup> See [S/2020/538](#).



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## **Part IX**

### **Subsidiary organs of the Security Council: committees, tribunals and other bodies**



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## **Introductory note**

### *Article 29*

*The Security Council may establish such subsidiary organs as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions.*

### *Rule 28*

*The Security Council may appoint a commission or committee or a rapporteur for a specified question.*

The power of the Security Council to establish subsidiary organs is set out in Article 29 of the Charter of the United Nations and rule 28 of its provisional rules of procedure. Part IX of the present Supplement covers the practice of the Council relating to committees, working groups, investigative bodies, tribunals, ad hoc commissions, and special advisers, envoys and representatives, as well as the Peacebuilding Commission. It also includes instances of subsidiary organs that were proposed but not established, where applicable. Field-based missions, including United Nations peacekeeping and political missions, are covered in part X. Field-based missions led by regional organizations are covered in part VIII. Each subsection below provides a summary of the major developments relating to each subsidiary organ during the period covered by this Supplement.

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## I. Committees

### Note

Section I focuses on the decisions of the Security Council adopted during 2020 concerning the establishment of committees and the implementation of and changes to their mandates, as well as their termination. Subsection A covers standing committees and subsection B covers committees established under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. The description of each committee includes the tasks of the committee, as mandated by the Council in the context of the implementation of sanctions measures such as an arms embargo, an asset freeze and/or a travel ban. Information on measures mandated by the Council pursuant to Article 41 of the Charter is provided in part VII, section III. The committees are discussed within each subsection below in the order of their establishment.

The committees of the Council consist of all 15 members of the Council. Their meetings are held in private, unless a committee itself decides otherwise, and decisions are reached by consensus. The Council has both standing committees that meet only when issues under their purview are being considered and committees established on an ad hoc basis in response to specific requirements of the Council, such as counter-terrorism or sanctions committees.

The Bureau of each committee generally consists of a Chair and a Vice-Chair, who are elected by the Council on an annual basis.<sup>1</sup> Since the issuance in 2012 of a note by the President of the Council on the matter, the process for the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs is conducted with the participation of all Council members.<sup>2</sup> According to the note by the President of the Council dated 31 August 2017, the informal process would be undertaken in a balanced, transparent, efficient and inclusive way “so as to facilitate an exchange of information related to the work of the subsidiary bodies involved” and would be “facilitated jointly by two members of the Council working in full cooperation”.<sup>3</sup> On 27 December 2019, a new note by the President was issued, according to

which the Council members stressed that the “informal consultation process should take into account the need for a shared responsibility and a fair distribution of work for the selection of the Chairs among all members of the Council, bearing in mind the capacities and resources of members”.<sup>4</sup>

### A. Standing committees

During 2020, the standing committees, namely, the Committee of Experts on Rules of Procedure, the Committee of Experts established by the Council at its 1506th meeting to study the question of associate membership, the Committee on the Admission of New Members and the Committee on Council Meetings away from Headquarters, continued to exist but did not meet.

### B. Committees established under Chapter VII of the Charter

Subsection 1 deals with the committees and associated monitoring teams, groups or panels of experts (expert groups) that oversaw specific sanctions measures in 2020.<sup>5</sup> The functioning of the committees and associated monitoring teams, groups and/or panels of experts (expert groups), as with the rest of the work of the Council, was heavily affected by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. As described in more detail below, while many of the mandates of the committees remained largely unchanged, the Council modified some aspects of the mandates of certain committees or requested committees or expert groups to carry out specific tasks. For example, the Council stressed the important role of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da’esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities in identifying possible cases of non-compliance with the measures pursuant to resolution 2368 (2017), and requested the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team to study the basic and extraordinary exemptions procedures set out in resolution 2368 (2017) and provide recommendations to the Committee.<sup>6</sup> The Monitoring Team was also directed to gather

<sup>1</sup> For the bureaux of the committees during the period covered in the present Supplement, see [S/2020/2](#), [S/2020/2/Rev.1](#), [S/2020/2/Rev.2](#), [S/2020/2/Rev.3](#), [S/2020/2/Rev.4](#), [S/2020/2/Rev.5](#) and [S/2020/2/Rev.6](#).

<sup>2</sup> See [S/2012/937](#).

<sup>3</sup> [S/2017/507](#), paras. 111–114. It was also indicated in the note that the Council should make every effort to agree on the appointment of the Chairs for the following year no later than 1 October. Previous notes of this nature were [S/2006/507](#) and [S/2010/507](#).

<sup>4</sup> See [S/2019/991](#).

<sup>5</sup> For information concerning the sanctions measures relevant to each of the committees, see part VII, section III.

<sup>6</sup> Resolution [2560 \(2020\)](#), fifth preambular paragraph and para. 2.

information on instances of non-compliance with the measures imposed by resolution 2255 (2015) and to keep the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) informed of such instances, as well as to facilitate assistance on capacity-building. In addition, the Council directed the Monitoring Team to provide recommendations to the Committee on actions taken to respond to non-compliance.<sup>7</sup> The Panel of Experts on Libya was requested to closely follow and report to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) any information relating to the illicit export from or illicit import to Libya of petroleum.<sup>8</sup>

Subsection 2 deals with subsidiary organs with a thematic scope, namely the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), which have broader mandates relating to terrorism and non-proliferation. Other subsidiary bodies, including the Office of the Ombudsperson, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and expert groups, are discussed together with the relevant committees.

In 2020, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the committees carried out their mandate of, inter alia, listing and delisting individuals and entities,

<sup>7</sup> Resolution 2557 (2020), para. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Resolution 2509 (2020), paras. 3 and 11. The mandate of the Panel of Experts included supporting the Committee, gathering and analysing information on compliance, making recommendations on actions that the Council, the Committee, the Government of Libya or other States may consider to improve implementation of the relevant measures and providing periodic reports.

granting exemptions and processing notifications, monitoring and assessing implementation and reporting to the Council. In addition to reporting by means of written reports, some Committee Chairs delivered briefings to the Council in open meetings and closed consultations.

As outlined in table 1, briefings by Chairs of subsidiary organs took place under both thematic and country-specific items and briefings were delivered as joint or individual briefings, in the context of which Chairs reported at varying intervals on a variety of aspects of the work of subsidiary organs, including their mandates and/or any visits conducted by the Chairs. Owing to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ability of Chairs to deliver briefings to the Council in person was greatly affected in 2020, and Committee Chairs provided briefings to Council members during open videoconferences instead. COVID-19 also caused delays in the holding of those briefings. For example, the joint special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015), and all activities of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) related to the comprehensive review on the status of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) during 2020, pursuant to resolution 1977 (2011), had to be postponed. More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> For more information on the format of meetings and the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

Table 1  
Briefings by Chairs of Security Council subsidiary organs, 2020 (meetings)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Briefing by the Chair</i>	<i>Meeting record and date</i>
<b>Country-specific</b>		
The situation in Libya	Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011)	S/PV.8710 30 January 2020
The situation in Mali	Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017)	S/PV.8777 17 November 2020
The situation in the Middle East	Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014)	S/PV.8725 18 February 2020
The situation in Somalia	Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992)	S/PV.8735 27 February 2020

Table 2  
Briefings by Chairs of Security Council subsidiary organs, 2020 (videoconferences)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Briefing by the Chair</i>	<i>Videoconference record and date</i>
<b>Thematic</b>		
Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council	Committee pursuant to resolutions <a href="#">1267 (1999)</a> , <a href="#">1989 (2011)</a> and <a href="#">2253 (2015)</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1143</a> 23 November 2020
	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1373 (2001)</a>	
	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1540 (2004)</a>	
	Committee pursuant to resolution <a href="#">751 (1992)</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1258</a> 16 December 2020
	Committee pursuant to resolutions <a href="#">1267 (1999)</a> , <a href="#">1989 (2011)</a> and <a href="#">2253 (2015)</a>	
	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1988 (2011)</a>	
	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1540 (2004)</a>	
	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1718 (2006)</a>	
	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1970 (2011)</a>	
	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">2374 (2017)</a>	
	Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict	
<b>Country-specific</b>		
The situation in Afghanistan	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1988 (2011)</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1274</a> 17 December 2020
The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1533 (2004)</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/987</a> 6 October 2020
The situation in Libya	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1970 (2011)</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/421</a> 19 May 2020
		<a href="#">S/2020/879</a> 2 September 2020
The situation in Somalia	Committee pursuant to resolution <a href="#">751 (1992)</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/529</a> 9 June 2020
		<a href="#">S/2020/1079</a> 28 October 2020
Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1591 (2005)</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/528</a> 9 June 2020
		<a href="#">S/2020/913</a> 15 September 2020
		<a href="#">S/2020/1235</a> 11 December 2020
	Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">2206 (2015)</a>	<a href="#">S/2020/1237</a> 15 December 2020

**1. Committees overseeing specific sanctions measures**

During the period under review, the total number of active committees overseeing specific sanctions

measures was 14. Table 3 provides an overview of the committees, including selected categories of the main mandatory measures that they oversaw during 2020.

Table 3  
**Security Council committees responsible for oversight of specific sanctions measures, 2020**

	<i>Arms embargo</i>	<i>Asset freeze</i>	<i>Travel ban or restrictions</i>	<i>Non-proliferation measures/restrictions on ballistic missiles</i>	<i>Financial restrictions</i>	<i>Petroleum related (including bunkering services)</i>	<i>Natural resources<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Other<sup>b</sup></i>
Committee pursuant to resolution <a href="#">751 (1992)</a>	X	X	X				X	X
Committee pursuant to resolutions <a href="#">1267 (1999)</a> , <a href="#">1989 (2011)</a> and <a href="#">2253 (2015)</a>	X	X	X					X
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1518 (2003)</a>	X	X						
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1533 (2004)</a>	X	X	X					X
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1591 (2005)</a>	X	X	X					
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1636 (2005)</a>		X	X					
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1718 (2006)</a>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1970 (2011)</a>	X	X	X		X	X		
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1988 (2011)</a>	X	X	X					
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">2048 (2012)</a>			X					
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">2127 (2013)</a>	X	X	X					
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">2140 (2014)</a>	X	X	X					
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">2206 (2015)</a>	X	X	X					
Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">2374 (2017)</a>		X	X					

<sup>a</sup> Refers to a variety of measures on natural resources, including charcoal, coal, iron, gold, titanium, copper, nickel, silver and zinc.

<sup>b</sup> Including measures relating to, inter alia, transport and aviation measures, the ban on components of improvised explosive devices, trade restrictions and/or diplomatic restrictions.



**Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia**

In 2020, the mandate of the Committee remained largely unchanged.<sup>10</sup> During the year under review, the Chair of the Committee conducted a visit to Mogadishu from 21 to 23 January 2020, on which he provided a briefing to the Council.<sup>11</sup> For more information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>12</sup>

By its resolution 2551 (2020), the Council renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Somalia until 15 December 2021, requested the Secretary-General to include members with dedicated gender expertise, in line with paragraph 11 of its resolution 2467 (2019) and expressed its intent to review the mandate and take appropriate action regarding any extensions of the mandate of the Panel of Experts no later than 15 November 2021.<sup>13</sup> In its resolution 2554 (2020), the Council called upon all States to cooperate fully with the Panel of Experts on Somalia, including on information-sharing regarding possible violations of the arms embargo or charcoal ban.<sup>14</sup>

**Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities**

In 2020, the Council addressed matters relating to the Committee under the item entitled "Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts".<sup>15</sup> The mandates of the Committee, the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team and the Office of the Ombudsperson remained largely unchanged in 2020.<sup>16</sup> For more information on the work of the

Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>17</sup> More information on the work of the Office of the Ombudsperson may be found in its biannual reports.<sup>18</sup>

In its resolution 2560 (2020), the Council stressed the important role of the Committee in identifying possible cases of non-compliance with the measures pursuant to resolution 2368 (2017).<sup>19</sup> The Council also encouraged Member States to more actively submit to the Committee the requests of individuals, groups, undertakings and entities that met the listing criteria in paragraph 2 of resolution 2368 (2017) and to submit to the Committee additional identifying and other information set out in paragraph 85 of resolution 2368 (2017), in order to keep the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions list reliable and up-to-date.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, the Council requested the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team to study the basic and extraordinary exemptions procedures set out in paragraphs 81 (a) and (b) of resolution 2368 (2017) concerning the assets freeze, and to provide recommendations to the Committee to determine whether or not updating those exemptions was required.<sup>21</sup>

**Committee established pursuant to resolution 1518 (2003)**

In 2020, there were no modifications to the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1518 (2003). By its resolution 1518 (2003), adopted on 24 November 2003, the Council established the Committee and mandated it to continue to identify individuals and entities whose funds, other financial assets and economic resources should be frozen and transferred to the Development Fund for Iraq, in

list. The mandate of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team included, inter alia, supporting the Committee, gathering and analysing information on compliance, providing information relevant to the listing of individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures, assisting the Committee in regularly reviewing names on the sanctions list, assisting the Office of the Ombudsperson to the Committee in carrying out its mandate, and providing periodic reports. The mandate of the Office of the Ombudsperson included, inter alia, reviewing requests from individuals and entities seeking to be removed from the sanctions list and making a recommendation to the Committee on those requests.

<sup>17</sup> S/2020/1212.

<sup>18</sup> S/2020/106 and S/2020/782.

<sup>19</sup> Resolution 2560 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., para. 1.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., para. 2. For further information on the mandate of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, see sect. I.B. below on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011).

<sup>10</sup> The mandate of the Committee included, inter alia, designating individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures adopted by the Council, which comprise an arms embargo, an asset freeze, a travel ban, a charcoal ban and a ban on components of improvised explosive devices, monitoring implementation and deciding on requests for exemptions.

<sup>11</sup> See S/PV.8735.

<sup>12</sup> S/2020/1215.

<sup>13</sup> Resolution 2551 (2020), para. 30.

<sup>14</sup> Resolution 2554 (2020), para. 10.

<sup>15</sup> For more information, see part I, sect. 29.

<sup>16</sup> The mandate of the Committee included, inter alia, monitoring implementation, deciding on requests for exemptions, designating individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures adopted by the Council, comprising an arms embargo, an asset freeze and a travel ban, and conducting periodic and specialized reviews of the entries on the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions

accordance with paragraphs 19 and 23 of resolution [1483 \(2003\)](#).<sup>22</sup> For more information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>23</sup>

**Committee established pursuant to resolution [1533 \(2004\)](#) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

In 2020, the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1533 \(2004\)](#) remained largely unchanged.<sup>24</sup> For more information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>25</sup>

By its resolution [2528 \(2020\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of the Group of Experts established pursuant to resolution [1533 \(2004\)](#) until 1 August 2021 and expressed its intention to review the mandate and take appropriate action regarding the further extension of the mandate no later than 1 July 2021.<sup>26</sup> In addition, the Council reaffirmed the reporting provisions set out in resolutions [2360 \(2017\)](#) and [2478 \(2019\)](#),<sup>27</sup> and requested the Group of Experts to provide to the Council, after discussion with the Committee, a midterm report no later than 30 December 2020, and a final report no later than 15 June 2021, as well as to submit monthly updates to the Committee, except in the months where the midterm and final reports were due.<sup>28</sup>

In its resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), by which the Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the Council expressed its full support for the Group of Experts, called for enhanced cooperation between all States, particularly those in the region, and MONUSCO and the Group of Experts, and requested the timely exchange of information between the Mission and the

Group of Experts. The Council also requested that MONUSCO monitor the implementation of the arms embargo as described in paragraph 1 of resolution [2293 \(2016\)](#), in cooperation with the Group of Experts.<sup>29</sup>

**Committee established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) concerning the Sudan**

In 2020, the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) concerning the Sudan and its Panel of Experts remained unchanged.<sup>30</sup> In addition to briefing Council members during open videoconferences,<sup>31</sup> the Chair also submitted three periodic briefings in the form of a letter to the Council.<sup>32</sup> For more information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>33</sup>

In its resolution [2508 \(2020\)](#), by which the mandate of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) was extended until 12 March 2021, the Council requested the Panel to provide periodic reports and expressed its intention to review the Panel's mandate and take appropriate action regarding the further extension of the mandate no later than 12 February 2021.<sup>34</sup>

**Committee established pursuant to resolution [1636 \(2005\)](#)**

During the period under review, there were no changes to the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1636 \(2005\)](#) to register and oversee the travel ban and asset freeze on individuals designated by the International Independent Investigation Commission or by the Government of Lebanon as suspected of involvement in the terrorist bombing in Beirut on 14 February 2005 that killed the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafiq Hariri, and

<sup>22</sup> For background information, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2000–2003*, chap. V, part I.B.2.

<sup>23</sup> [S/2020/1216](#).

<sup>24</sup> The mandate of the Committee included, inter alia, designating individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures adopted by the Security Council comprising an arms embargo, an asset freeze, transport and customs controls and a travel ban, monitoring implementation and deciding on requests for exemptions.

<sup>25</sup> [S/2020/1214](#).

<sup>26</sup> Resolution [2528 \(2020\)](#), para. 3. The mandate of the Group of Experts included, inter alia, supporting the Committee, gathering and analysing information on compliance, providing information relevant to the listing of individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures and providing periodic reports.

<sup>27</sup> Resolution [2528 \(2020\)](#), para. 5.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4.

<sup>29</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), paras. 38–39. For more information on the mandate of MONUSCO, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>30</sup> The mandate of the Committee included monitoring implementation, deciding on requests for exemptions and designating individuals and entities subject to measures adopted by the Council, comprising an arms embargo, an asset freeze and a travel ban. The mandate of the Panel of Experts included supporting the Committee, gathering and analysing information on compliance, providing information relevant to the listing of individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures and providing periodic reports.

<sup>31</sup> See [S/2020/528](#), [S/2020/913](#) and [S/2020/1235](#). For details on the briefings, see tables 1 and 2.

<sup>32</sup> See [S/2020/250](#), [S/2020/526](#) and [S/2020/907](#).

<sup>33</sup> [S/2020/1209](#).

<sup>34</sup> Resolution [2508 \(2020\)](#), para. 2.

22 others.<sup>35</sup> The Committee held no meetings during 2020. As at 31 December 2020, no individual had been registered.

#### **Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006)**

During the period under review, there were no modifications to the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006).<sup>36</sup> As reflected in its annual report, during a closed videoconference on 7 October 2020 the Committee held technical discussions on the conversion rate in relation to paragraph 5 of Council resolution 2397 (2017) concerning the supply, sale or transfer from Member States to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of all refined petroleum products.<sup>37</sup>

By its resolution 2515 (2020), the Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 30 April 2021, requested the Panel to provide periodic reports and expressed its intent to review the Panel's mandate and to take appropriate action regarding the further extension of the mandate no later than 26 March 2021.<sup>38</sup>

#### **Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya**

In 2020, the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya remained unchanged.<sup>39</sup> For more

information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>40</sup>

During the period under review, the Council adopted resolution 2509 (2020), by which it extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Libya until 15 May 2021 and decided that the Panel's mandated tasks would remain as defined in resolution 2213 (2015) and would also apply with respect to the measures updated in resolution 2509 (2020). The Council also requested that the Panel of Experts closely follow and report to the Committee any information relating to the illicit export from or illicit import to Libya of petroleum.<sup>41</sup>

In its resolution 2542 (2020), by which the mandate of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) was renewed, the Council underscored the importance of ensuring that existing sanctions measures were fully implemented and that violations were reported to the Committee. The Council also demanded full compliance, including by all Member States, with the arms embargo imposed under resolution 1970 (2011), welcomed efforts by the Panel of Experts to investigate violations of the arms embargo as well as the cooperation between the relevant United Nations bodies and other interested parties with the Panel of Experts, and noted its intention to hold those who violated the arms embargo accountable through the Committee.<sup>42</sup>

#### **Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011)**

In 2020, the Council addressed matters related to the Committee under two different items of its agenda, namely: (a) The situation in Afghanistan; and (b) Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.<sup>43</sup>

The mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) remained largely

<sup>35</sup> For more information, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2004–2007*, chap. V part I.B.

<sup>36</sup> The mandate of the Committee included, inter alia, monitoring implementation, deciding on requests for exemptions and designating individuals, entities and vessels subject to the sanctions measures adopted by the Council, comprising, inter alia, an arms embargo, an embargo relating to nuclear, ballistic missile and other weapons of mass destruction programmes, sectoral bans on coal, minerals and fuel, a ban on the export of luxury goods, a travel ban, an asset freeze, a ban on the provision of financial services and a ban on specialized teaching and training in disciplines that could contribute to prohibited activities and programmes.

<sup>37</sup> S/2020/1259, para. 13.

<sup>38</sup> Resolution 2515 (2020), paras. 1–2. The mandate of the Panel of Experts included, inter alia, supporting the Committee, gathering and analysing information on compliance, providing information relevant to the listing of individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures and providing periodic reports.

<sup>39</sup> The mandate of the Committee included monitoring implementation, deciding on requests for exemptions and designating individuals, entities and vessels subject to the sanctions measures adopted by the Council, comprising an arms embargo, a travel ban, an asset freeze and measures aimed at preventing illicit exports of petroleum.

<sup>40</sup> S/2020/1256.

<sup>41</sup> Resolution 2509 (2020), paras. 3 and 11. The mandate of the Panel of Experts included supporting the Committee, gathering and analysing information on compliance, making recommendations on actions that the Council, the Committee, the Government of Libya or other States may consider to improve implementation of the relevant measures and providing periodic reports. For more information on the sanctions measures concerning Libya, see part VII, sect. III.

<sup>42</sup> Resolution 2542 (2020), twenty-seventh preambular paragraph and para. 7. For more information on the mandate of UNSMIL, see part X, sect. II.

<sup>43</sup> For more information, see part I, sects. 16 and 29.

unchanged.<sup>44</sup> The Council adopted one resolution in relation to the mandate of the Committee and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team. By its resolution [2557 \(2020\)](#), the Council extended, for a period of 12 months, until 16 December 2021, the mandate of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team in support of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1988 \(2011\)](#), with further details on the mandate set forth in the annex to the resolution.<sup>45</sup> In the resolution, the Council also directed the Monitoring Team to gather information on instances of non-compliance with the measures imposed by resolution [2255 \(2015\)](#) and to keep the Committee informed of such instances, as well as to facilitate, upon request by Member States, assistance on capacity-building. In addition, the Council encouraged Committee members to address issues of non-compliance and bring them to the attention of the Monitoring Team or the Committee and directed the Monitoring Team to provide recommendations to the Committee on actions taken to respond to non-compliance.<sup>46</sup> For more information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>47</sup>

#### **Committee established pursuant to resolution [2048 \(2012\)](#) concerning Guinea-Bissau**

During 2020, no changes were made to the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2048 \(2012\)](#) concerning Guinea-Bissau. The Committee continued to oversee the implementation of the travel ban, designate individuals who met the listing criteria contained in resolution [2048 \(2012\)](#) and to consider and decide on requests for exemptions from the sanctions measures. For more information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>48</sup>

#### **Committee established pursuant to resolution [2127 \(2013\)](#) concerning the Central African Republic**

In 2020, the Council adopted two resolutions relating to the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2127 \(2013\)](#) concerning the Central African Republic.<sup>49</sup> By its resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#), the Council renewed the provisions concerning the travel ban and asset freeze measures, as set out in resolution [2399 \(2018\)](#), for a period of six months until 31 July 2020,<sup>50</sup> and decided to adjust the list of exemptions to the arms embargo.<sup>51</sup>

By its resolution [2536 \(2020\)](#), the Council further expanded the list of exemptions to the arms embargo.<sup>52</sup> The Council again renewed the asset freeze and travel ban measures, as set out in resolution [2399 \(2018\)](#), this time for a period of 12 months until 31 July 2021.<sup>53</sup> For more information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>54</sup>

The Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts twice during the reporting period, for 7 and 13 months, respectively, and requested the Panel to provide periodic reports.<sup>55</sup> Expressing concern about reports of illicit transnational trafficking networks that continued to fund and supply armed groups in the Central African Republic, the Council continued to request the Panel, in the course of carrying out its mandate, to devote special attention to the analysis of such networks, in cooperation with other panels or groups of experts established by the Council.<sup>56</sup> Stressing the importance that the authorities achieve key benchmarks in order to contribute to the advancement of security sector reform, the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation processes and necessary weapons and ammunition management reforms, the Council continued to request the Central African Republic

<sup>44</sup> The mandate of the Committee included, inter alia, monitoring implementation, deciding on requests for exemptions, designating individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures adopted by the Council, comprising an arms embargo, an asset freeze and a travel ban, and conducting periodic and specialized reviews of the entries on the sanctions list. The Committee was also supported by the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team.

<sup>45</sup> Resolution [2557 \(2020\)](#), para. 2. See the annex to the resolution for a comprehensive overview of the mandate of the Monitoring Team.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 3.

<sup>47</sup> [S/2020/1211](#).

<sup>48</sup> [S/2020/1245](#).

<sup>49</sup> The mandate of the Committee included, inter alia, monitoring implementation, deciding on requests for exemptions and designating individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures adopted by the Council, comprising an arms embargo, an asset freeze and a travel ban.

<sup>50</sup> Resolution [2507 \(2020\)](#), para. 4.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 1 (f) and (g).

<sup>52</sup> Resolution [2536 \(2020\)](#), para. 1 (g). For more information on the sanctions measures concerning the Central African Republic, see part VII, sect. III.

<sup>53</sup> Resolution [2536 \(2020\)](#), para. 4. See also resolution [2399 \(2018\)](#), paras. 9, 14 and 16–19.

<sup>54</sup> [S/2020/1251](#).

<sup>55</sup> Resolutions [2507 \(2020\)](#), paras. 6–7, and [2536 \(2020\)](#), paras. 6–7.

<sup>56</sup> Resolutions [2507 \(2020\)](#), para. 8, and [2536 \(2020\)](#), para. 8.



authorities to report to the Committee on the progress achieved in that regard.<sup>57</sup> The Council further requested the Secretary-General, in close consultation with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), including the Mine Action Service, and the Panel of Experts, to conduct assessments on the progress achieved by the authorities on the key benchmarks enumerated in the presidential statement of 9 April 2019.<sup>58</sup>

In its resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), by which the Council extended the mandate of MINUSCA, the Council reiterated the tasks of MINUSCA related to assisting the Committee and the Panel of Experts, including by supporting the Panel in the collection of information on acts of incitement to violence, particularly on religious or ethnic grounds.<sup>59</sup>

#### **Committee established pursuant to resolution [2140 \(2014\)](#)**

In 2020, the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2140 \(2014\)](#) remained largely unchanged.<sup>60</sup> For more information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>61</sup>

By its resolution [2511 \(2020\)](#), the Council renewed until 26 February 2021 the sanctions measures as set out in resolutions [2140 \(2014\)](#) and [2216 \(2015\)](#) and also, emphasizing the importance of facilitating humanitarian assistance, decided that the Committee could, on a case-by-case basis, exempt any activity from the sanctions measures if the Committee determined that such an exemption was necessary to facilitate the work of the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations in Yemen.<sup>62</sup> By the same resolution, the Council also extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 28 March 2021, requested the Panel to provide periodic reports and expressed its intention to review the Panel's mandate and take

appropriate action regarding the further extension of the mandate no later than 28 February 2021.<sup>63</sup>

#### **Committee established pursuant to resolution [2206 \(2015\)](#) concerning South Sudan**

In 2020, the mandates of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2206 \(2015\)](#) concerning South Sudan and its Panel of Experts remained unchanged.<sup>64</sup> For more information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>65</sup>

By its resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution [2206 \(2015\)](#) until 1 July 2021 and requested the Panel to provide periodic reports.<sup>66</sup>

The Council reiterated its request for the Panel to include the necessary gender expertise in line with paragraph 6 of resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#) and encouraged it to integrate gender as a cross-cutting issue across its investigation and reporting.<sup>67</sup> In its resolutions [2514 \(2020\)](#) and [2521 \(2020\)](#), the Council further encouraged the timely exchange of information between the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the Panel of Experts and requested UNMISS to assist the Committee and the Panel of Experts within its mandate and capabilities.<sup>68</sup>

Also in its resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#), the Council requested the Secretariat to provide, by 31 October

<sup>57</sup> Resolutions [2507 \(2020\)](#), para. 12, and [2536 \(2020\)](#), fourth preambular paragraph and para. 12.

<sup>58</sup> Resolutions [2507 \(2020\)](#), para. 13, and [2536 \(2020\)](#), para. 13. See also [S/PRST/2019/3](#).

<sup>59</sup> Resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), para. 33 (a)–(d). For more information on the mandate of MINUSCA, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>60</sup> Resolution [2511 \(2020\)](#), paras. 4 and 11. The mandate of the Committee included monitoring implementation, deciding on requests for exemptions and designating individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures adopted by the Council, comprising an arms embargo, an asset freeze and a travel ban.

<sup>61</sup> [S/2020/1255](#).

<sup>62</sup> Resolution [2511 \(2020\)](#), paras. 2–3.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 7–8.

<sup>64</sup> The mandate of the Committee included monitoring implementation, deciding on requests for exemptions and designating individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures adopted by the Council, comprising an arms embargo, an asset freeze and a travel ban.

<sup>65</sup> [S/2020/1225](#).

<sup>66</sup> Resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#), para. 18. The mandate of the Panel of Experts included supporting the Committee, gathering, examining and analysing information on compliance and, as of 2018, information regarding the supply, sale or transfer of arms and related materiel and related military or other assistance, providing information relevant to the listing of individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures and providing periodic reports. Resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#) was adopted with 12 votes in favour (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam) and 3 abstentions (China, Russian Federation, South Africa). For more information on the outcome of the vote, see part I, sect. 8.

<sup>67</sup> Resolution [2521 \(2020\)](#), para. 19.

<sup>68</sup> Resolutions [2514 \(2020\)](#), para. 24, and [2521 \(2020\)](#), para. 23. For more information on the mandate of UNMISS, see part X, sect. I.

2020, a report assessing the role of the arms embargo in facilitating implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (Revitalized Agreement) and articulating options for the elaboration of benchmarks to assess the arms embargo measures according to progress on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement, including adherence to the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access and ceasefire provisions of the Revitalized Agreement, and expressed its intention to review the options by 15 December 2020.<sup>69</sup>

### **Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali**

In 2020, the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) remained unchanged.<sup>70</sup> For more information on the work of the Committee, see its annual report for 2020.<sup>71</sup>

By its resolution 2541 (2020), the Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 30 September 2021. The Council also requested the Panel to provide periodic reports and expressed its intention to review the Panel's mandate and to take appropriate action regarding its further extension no later than 31 August 2021.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, in its

<sup>69</sup> Resolution 2521 (2020), para. 5. Further to resolution 2521 (2020), in his report dated 31 October 2020 (S/2020/1067), the Secretary-General submitted an assessment of the role of the arms embargo in facilitating the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and articulating options for the elaboration of benchmarks. In a letter dated 16 December 2020 from the President of the Council addressed to the Secretary-General, Council members requested the Secretary-General to conduct a Headquarters-based desk review and consultations and to report to the Council with recommendations on benchmarks to assess the arms embargo measures by 31 March 2021 (S/2020/1277). The Headquarters-based desk review included consultations with the Panel of Experts on South Sudan. For more information on the sanctions measures concerning South Sudan, see part VII, sect. III.

<sup>70</sup> The mandate of the Committee included, inter alia, monitoring implementation, deciding on requests for exemptions and designating individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures adopted by the Council, comprising an asset freeze and a travel ban.

<sup>71</sup> S/2020/1222.

<sup>72</sup> Resolution 2541 (2020), paras. 3–4. In its resolution 2374 (2017), the Council set out the mandate of the Panel of Experts, which included, inter alia, supporting the Committee, gathering and analysing information, especially on non-compliance, providing information relevant to the listing of individuals and entities subject to the sanctions measures and providing periodic reports.

resolution 2531 (2020), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) until 30 June 2021, the Council encouraged the Panel of Experts to identify parties responsible for the potential lack of implementation of the priority measures set out in the resolution through its regular reporting and interim updates.<sup>73</sup> In its resolutions 2531 (2020) and 2541 (2020), the Council further reiterated its request to MINUSMA to assist and exchange information with the Committee and the Panel of Experts.<sup>74</sup>

## **2. Other committees**

During the period under review, both the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate established by resolution 1535 (2004) to support the Counter-Terrorism Committee remained active. In 2020, the Council did not adopt any resolutions relevant to the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate.

During the period under review, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) continued to meet, holding three formal and three informal sessions during the year.<sup>75</sup> The Council did not adopt any resolutions related to the Committee.

### **Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism**

In 2020, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted a report on actions taken by Member States to disrupt terrorist financing, as requested by the Council in its resolution 2462 (2019).<sup>76</sup> However, the joint special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015), which had been requested by the Council in the same resolution to feature a presentation of that report,<sup>77</sup> was postponed owing to restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), para. 5.

<sup>74</sup> Resolutions 2531 (2020), para. 29 (b), and 2541 (2020), para. 3. For more information on the mandate of MINUSMA, see part X, sect. I.

<sup>75</sup> See S/2020/1308.

<sup>76</sup> Resolution 2462 (2019), para. 37. For the report, see S/2020/493.

<sup>77</sup> Resolution 2462 (2019), para. 36.

<sup>78</sup> See S/2020/1143.



### Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)

In 2020, the Security Council did not adopt any resolutions related to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). In fulfilment of its responsibilities under resolutions 1540 (2004), 1673 (2006), 1810 (2008), 1977 (2011) and 2325 (2016), the Committee submitted its nineteenth programme of work covering the period from 1 February 2020 to 31 January 2021,<sup>79</sup> and its annual review of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) for 2020,<sup>80</sup> pursuant to paragraph 2 of resolution 2325 (2016).

Owing to the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee did not conduct a comprehensive review on the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) during 2020, pursuant to resolution 1977 (2011). In that regard, the Committee decided that all activities related to the review, including the open consultations, would be postponed until 2021, with the exception of activities that could be undertaken in an online format.<sup>81</sup>

On 29 April 2020, the Chair of the Committee transmitted to the Council, in the form of a letter, his annual briefing pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).<sup>82</sup>

<sup>79</sup> See S/2020/120.

<sup>80</sup> See S/2020/1308.

<sup>81</sup> See S/2020/847.

<sup>82</sup> See S/2020/347.

He noted that States had made significant progress in the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Nevertheless, he recognized that many gaps remained, and that the full and effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) was a long-term task. In the past year, the Committee had focused its attention on the latest information on the status of national implementation, including with regard to States that had yet to submit their first report. The Chair also gave an overview of the work performed by the Committee on the comprehensive review of the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) prior to the renewal of the Committee's mandate in April 2021, as stipulated in resolution 1977 (2011). The status of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by Member States would be a central theme of the review. The Committee would also address three other themes, namely, the Committee's role in facilitating assistance matchmaking; collaboration with relevant international, regional and subregional organizations and other United Nations bodies; and outreach. The Chair emphasized the importance of contributions by Member States to the comprehensive review. International, regional and subregional organizations would also be invited to contribute. A report on the comprehensive review would be submitted to the Council.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

## II. Working groups

### Note

During the period under review, working groups of the Council continued to meet. As in the case of the committees, the working groups were composed of all 15 members of the Council and meetings were held in private unless otherwise decided. Decisions were reached by consensus. In 2020, five of the six existing working groups of the Council continued to hold meetings despite the impact of the COVID-19

pandemic on their ability to conduct those meetings in person.<sup>84</sup>

Table 4 provides information on the establishment, mandate, key provisions and Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the informal and ad hoc working groups of the Council in 2020.

<sup>84</sup> Of 33 meetings held, 28 were held by videoconference and 5 were in person. The Working Group established pursuant to resolution 1566 (2004) did not meet during the period under review.

Table 4  
Working Groups of the Security Council, 2020

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Mandate</i>	<i>Chair (Vice-Chair)</i>
<b>Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations</b>		
Established on 31 January 2001 ( <a href="#">S/PRST/2001/3</a> )	To address both generic peacekeeping issues relevant to the responsibilities of the Council, and technical aspects of individual peacekeeping operations, without prejudice to the competence of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations  Where appropriate, to seek the views of the troop-contributing countries, including through meetings between the Working Group and the troop-contributing countries, so that their views are taken into account by the Council	Tunisia (United Kingdom)
<b>Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa</b>		
Established in March 2002 ( <a href="#">S/2002/207</a> ) <sup>d</sup>	To monitor the implementation of recommendations contained in the presidential statement <a href="#">S/PRST/2002/2</a> and previous presidential statements and resolutions regarding conflict prevention and resolution in Africa  To propose recommendations on the enhancement of cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council as well as with other United Nations agencies dealing with Africa  To examine, in particular, regional and cross-conflict issues that affect the Council's work on African conflict prevention and resolution  To propose recommendations to the Security Council to enhance cooperation in conflict prevention and resolution, between the United Nations and regional (Organization of African Unity [now African Union]) and subregional organizations	South Africa (Niger)
<b>Working Group established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1566 (2004)</a></b>		
Established on 8 October 2004 (resolution <a href="#">1566 (2004)</a> )	To consider and submit recommendations to the Council on practical measures to be imposed upon individuals, groups or entities involved in or associated with terrorist activities, other than those designated by the Committee established pursuant to resolution <a href="#">1267 (1999)</a> concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, including more effective procedures considered to be appropriate for bringing them to justice through prosecution or extradition, freezing their financial assets, preventing their movement through the territories of Member States and preventing supply to them of all types of arms and related material, and on the procedures for implementing these measures  To consider the possibility of establishing an international fund to compensate victims of terrorist acts and their families, which might be financed through voluntary contributions which could consist in part of assets seized from terrorist organizations, their members and sponsors, and submit its recommendations to the Council	Niger (France, Russian Federation, South Africa)
<b>Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict</b>		
Established on 26 July 2005 (resolution <a href="#">1612 (2005)</a> )	To review the reports of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict  To review progress in the development and implementation of the action plans called for in resolutions <a href="#">1539 (2004)</a> and <a href="#">1612 (2005)</a>	Belgium (Niger)

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Mandate</i>	<i>Chair (Vice-Chair)</i>
	To consider other relevant information presented to it	
	To make recommendations to the Council on possible measures to promote the protection of children affected by armed conflict, including through recommendations on appropriate mandates for peacekeeping missions and recommendations with respect to the parties to the conflict	
	To address requests, as appropriate, to other bodies within the United Nations system for action to support implementation of resolution 1612 (2005) in accordance with their respective mandates	

#### **Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions**

Established in June 1993 (no formal decision was taken)	To deal with issues related to documentation and other procedural questions	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (Estonia)
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#### **Informal Working Group on International Tribunals**

Established in June 2000 pursuant to a proposal made by some Council members at the 4161st meeting (no formal decision was taken) <sup>b</sup>	To deal with a specific issue pertaining to the statute of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and subsequently mandated to deal with other (legal) issues pertaining to the Tribunals	Viet Nam (Germany)
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<sup>a</sup> In notes by the President of the Council, the Council renewed the mandate of the Working Group for periods of one year until 31 December 2011 (see S/2003/1138, S/2004/1031, S/2005/814, S/2007/6, S/2008/795, S/2009/650 and S/2010/654). From that date onward, the Working Group has continued to meet without the annual renewal of its mandate.

<sup>b</sup> See S/PV.4161.

### **III. Investigative bodies**

#### **Note**

During the period under review, the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) for 12 months until 18 September 2021.<sup>85</sup> The Council did not authorize the establishment of any new investigative bodies.

#### **United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant**

UNITAD formally commenced its activities on 20 August 2018.<sup>86</sup> On 11 May and 11 November 2020,

the Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD submitted to the Council the fourth and fifth reports on the activities of the Team,<sup>87</sup> which included work on evidentiary consolidation and legal analysis, the identification of new evidentiary sources, expanding cooperation with Iraqi counterparts and strengthening partnerships with communities, non-governmental organizations and religious leaders, as well as providing training and support to Iraqi judicial and executive organs. In 2020, Council members held two videoconferences to hear briefings by the Special Adviser on the activities of UNITAD and its progress in implementing its mandate further to its fourth and fifth reports.<sup>88</sup>

In addition, in 2020, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2544 (2020), reaffirming resolution

<sup>85</sup> Resolution 2544 (2020), para. 2.

<sup>86</sup> S/2018/1031, para. 4. For more information on the establishment and history of UNITAD, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2016–2017* and *Supplement 2018*, part IX, sect. III.

<sup>87</sup> S/2020/386 and S/2020/1107. For more information on the investigative priorities, see previous reports of the Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD (S/2018/1031, S/2019/407 and S/2019/878).

<sup>88</sup> See S/2020/547 and S/2020/1193. For additional information, see part I, sect. 34.

2379 (2017), by which UNITAD had been established, and recalled the terms of reference approved by the Council.<sup>89</sup> By the same resolution, the Council decided to extend the mandate of the Special Adviser and the Investigative Team until 18 September 2021.<sup>90</sup> As with previous extensions, the Council noted that any further extension of the mandate would be decided at the

request of the Government of Iraq or any other Government that had requested UNITAD to collect evidence of acts that may amount to war crimes.<sup>91</sup> In addition, the Special Adviser was requested to continue to submit and present reports to the Council on the Team's activities every 180 days.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Resolution 2544 (2020), para. 1. For the terms of reference approved by the Council for UNITAD, see S/2018/118, annex.

<sup>90</sup> Resolution 2544 (2020), para. 2.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. See also resolution 2379 (2017), paras. 2–3, and a letter dated 16 September 2020 from the representative of Iraq addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2020/909).

<sup>92</sup> Resolution 2544 (2020), para. 4.

## IV. Tribunals

### Note

In a note by the President of the Council dated 2 February 2018,<sup>93</sup> the Council agreed that issues pertaining to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals would be considered under an item entitled “International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals”,<sup>94</sup> under which would be subsumed the earlier consideration by the Council of issues pertaining to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.<sup>95</sup> During the period under review, the Council adopted one presidential statement and one resolution under Chapter VII of the Charter concerning, inter alia, the reappointment of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism, as well as other aspects regarding the management, reporting and completion of functions of the Tribunal. The Council also took note of the intention of the

Secretary-General to reappoint 25 judges, including the President of the Mechanism.<sup>96</sup>

### Developments in 2020

On 28 February 2020, the Council issued a presidential statement<sup>97</sup> in which it recalled its decision that the Mechanism should operate for an initial period of four years starting from 1 July 2012, and its decision to review the progress of the work of the Mechanism, including in completing its functions, before the end of that initial period and every two years thereafter. The Council also recalled its decision that the Mechanism should continue to operate for subsequent periods of two years following each such review, unless the Council decided otherwise, and that the Mechanism should be a small, temporary and efficient structure, whose functions and size would diminish over time, with a small number of staff commensurate with its reduced functions.

By its resolution 2529 (2020), adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council appointed the Prosecutor of the Mechanism with effect from 1 July 2020 until 30 June 2022.<sup>98</sup> In the resolution, the Council once again emphasized that, in view of the substantially reduced nature of the residual functions, the Mechanism was established to be a small, temporary and efficient structure, whose functions and size would diminish over time, with a small number of staff commensurate with its reduced functions, and requested the Mechanism to continue to be guided in its activities by those elements.<sup>99</sup> In addition, the Council welcomed the report submitted by the Mechanism to the Council pursuant to its presidential

<sup>93</sup> S/2018/90.

<sup>94</sup> By its resolution 1966 (2010), the Council established the Mechanism to carry out the residual functions of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia) and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 1994 (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda) after the completion of their mandates. For more information on the activities of the Council during 2019 in connection with the Mechanism, see part I, sect. 24.

<sup>95</sup> See *Repertoire, Supplement 2014–2015*, part I, sect. 26; *Supplement 2016–2017*, part I, sect. 28; and *Supplement 2018*, part I, sect. 27.

<sup>96</sup> For more information on the appointment procedure, see part IV, sect. I.D.

<sup>97</sup> S/PRST/2020/4, second and third paragraphs.

<sup>98</sup> Resolution 2529 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., para. 6.

statement of 28 February 2020 for the purposes of the review of the progress of the work of the Mechanism, including in completing its functions, as required by paragraph 17 of resolution [1966 \(2010\)](#), and the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the evaluation of the methods and work of the Mechanism. The Council also took note of the conclusions of OIOS on the Mechanism's implementation of the OIOS recommendations and paragraph 8 of resolution [2422 \(2018\)](#).<sup>100</sup> The Council

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 7. For the report submitted by the Mechanism to the Council pursuant to its presidential statement of 28 February 2020 ([S/PRST/2020/4](#), fifth paragraph) for

further noted the views and recommendations made with regard to the Mechanism's work by the Council's Informal Working Group on International Tribunals, and requested the Mechanism to take into account those views and implement the recommendations, enumerating a series of steps the Mechanism should continue to take to further enhance efficiency and effective and transparent management.<sup>101</sup>

the purposes of the review of the progress of the work of the Mechanism, see [S/2020/309](#). For the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, see [S/2020/236](#).

<sup>101</sup> Resolution [2529 \(2020\)](#), para. 9.

## V. Ad hoc commissions

### Note

No new commissions were created during 2020. The United Nations Compensation Commission, established pursuant to resolutions [687 \(1991\)](#) and [692 \(1991\)](#) to process claims and pay compensation for losses and damage suffered as a direct result of the invasion and occupation of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990 to 1991, continued to function, without any changes to its

mandate. In a letter dated 29 October 2020,<sup>102</sup> the Vice-President of the Governing Council of the Compensation Commission stated that the Council had noted that the timeline for the completion of the Commission's mandate was likely to extend beyond 2021.

<sup>102</sup> [S/2020/1053](#).

## VI. Special advisers, envoys and representatives

### Note

Section VI provides a list of special advisers, envoys and representatives in whose appointment the Security Council has been involved and whose mandates relate to the Council's responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Special representatives appointed as heads of peacekeeping or special political missions are covered in part X and those authorized by the General Assembly are covered in part IV. Previous supplements should be consulted for information concerning special advisers, envoys and representatives whose functions have ceased.

During the period under review, the following envoys, advisers and representatives of the Secretary-General continued to exercise their functions:

- Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara
- Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus
- Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide

- Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#)
- Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect
- Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict
- Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa
- Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen
- Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region
- Special Adviser and Head of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant

On 15 September 2020, by its resolution [2542 \(2020\)](#), the Council requested that the Secretary-General appoint a Special Envoy on Libya to lead the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, focusing in

particular on good offices and mediation with Libyan and international actors to end the conflict. In December, the Secretary-General and the President of the Council exchanged letters on the appointment of the Special Envoy,<sup>103</sup> but the Secretary-General had not made an official announcement by the end of 2020.

On 4 December 2020, the Council issued a presidential statement in which it noted that the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi had completed his assignment on 30 November 2019 and requested the Secretary-General to cease his periodic reporting on the situation in Burundi.<sup>104</sup> In the same

statement, the Council also encouraged the discussions between the Secretary-General and the Government of Burundi to allow sufficient time for a smooth transition of the Office of the Special Envoy for Burundi, while taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the strategic assessment mission for United Nations engagement in Burundi with respect to its relevant recommendations.<sup>105</sup>

Decisions of the Council acknowledging the appointment of special envoys, advisers and representatives of the Secretary-General, their mandate and any developments that occurred during the period under review are listed in table 5.

<sup>103</sup> [S/2020/1217](#) and [S/2020/1218](#).

<sup>104</sup> [PRST/2020/12](#), last paragraph. For more information on the Council's discussions on Burundi, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2019*, part I, sect. 3.

<sup>105</sup> [PRST/2020/12](#), third paragraph. See also [S/2020/1078](#), para. 50.

Table 5  
**Developments relating to special advisers, envoys and representatives, 2020**

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*Establishment/appointment*      *Decisions*

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**Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara**

[S/1997/236](#)      Resolution [2548 \(2020\)](#), second, third, fourth, sixth, thirteenth and fourteenth preambular  
19 March 1997      paragraphs and paras. 3 and 6

**Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus**

[S/1997/320](#)      There were no developments in 2020<sup>a</sup>  
17 April 1997

[S/1997/321](#)  
21 April 1997

**Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide**

[S/2004/567](#)      Resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#), nineteenth preambular paragraph and para. 8 (d) (iii)  
12 July 2004

[S/2004/568](#)  
13 July 2004

**Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#)**

[S/PRST/2004/36](#)      There were no developments in 2020  
19 October 2004

[S/2004/974](#)  
14 December 2004

[S/2004/975](#)  
16 December 2004

**Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect**

[S/2007/721](#)      There were no developments in 2020  
31 August 2007

[S/2007/722](#)  
7 December 2007



**Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict**

- Resolution 1888 (2009)      Resolution 2521 (2020), para. 21  
30 September 2009      Resolution 2551 (2020), para. 21
- S/2010/62      Resolution 2552 (2020), fourteenth preambular paragraph  
29 January 2010      Resolution 2556 (2020), para. 10
- S/2010/63      Resolution 2556 (2020), para. 10  
2 February 2010

**Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa**

- S/2018/955      Resolution 2519 (2020), fourth preambular paragraph  
24 October 2018      Resolution 2524 (2020), para. 12
- S/2018/979      Resolution 2550 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph and paras. 10, 30 and 33  
31 October 2018

**Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen**

- S/2012/469      Resolution 2505 (2020), paras. 3–4  
18 June 2012      Resolution 2511 (2020), seventh preambular paragraph
- S/2012/470      Resolution 2534 (2020), paras. 3–4  
21 June 2012

**Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region**

- S/2013/166      Resolution 2556 (2020), sixth preambular paragraph and paras. 14, 26, 29 (ii) (b) and 56  
15 March 2013
- S/2013/167  
18 March 2013

**Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi**

- S/2017/396      S/PRST/2020/12, third and last paragraphs  
3 May 2017
- S/2017/397  
4 May 2017

**Special Adviser and Head of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant**

- Resolution 2379 (2017)      Resolution 2522 (2020), para. 2 (d)  
21 September 2017      Resolution 2544 (2020), paras. 1–4
- S/2018/118  
9 February 2018
- S/2018/119  
13 February 2018

**Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya**

- S/2020/1217      Resolution 2542 (2020), sixth, seventh, ninth, eleventh and twenty-fifth preambular paragraphs and  
19 November 2020      paras. 2–3
- S/2020/1218  
15 December 2020

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<sup>a</sup> In 2020, the Council referred to the senior United Nations official in resolution 2537 (2020) (fifteenth preambular paragraph and para. 2).

## VII. Peacebuilding Commission

### Note

The Peacebuilding Commission was established by the Council in resolution 1645 (2005) of 20 December 2005.<sup>106</sup> During the period under review, the Commission implemented a substantive programme of work with the highest number of meetings since its inception, including a series of electronic consultations on the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture.<sup>107</sup> Its programme of work was also adjusted to serve as a platform in support of national and regional responses to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>108</sup> In 2020, the Commission addressed the situations in Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone and Somalia and the regional situations in Central Africa, West Africa, the Sahel, the Great Lakes region, the Lake Chad basin and, for the first time, the Pacific islands.<sup>109</sup>

### Appointments to the Organizational Committee

In 2020, the Dominican Republic and the Niger were the two elected members of the Council that were selected to participate in the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission.<sup>110</sup>

### Developments in 2020

In 2020, consistent with past practice, the Council invited the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Chairs of its country-specific configurations to provide briefings on their activities,

and on the situations on the agenda of the Commission, as described below.<sup>111</sup>

### (i) Briefings and discussions

The Chair of the Central African Republic configuration delivered a briefing after his visit to the country concerning, inter alia, the presidential, legislative and local elections in the country scheduled to take place in December 2020, the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, and the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan.<sup>112</sup> During the briefing, the Chair also presented his observations emphasizing the need for adequate funding for the upcoming elections, the firm support of the Council and the provision of human and financial resources to MINUSCA for the implementation of resolution 2499 (2019). He also said that it was advisable to reflect on ways to simplify the monitoring processes for both the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation and the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan, and emphasized the potential of partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations as well as international financial organizations.<sup>113</sup>

The Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration delivered a briefing to the Council on two occasions, pertaining to the political developments in the country and the drawdown of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS).<sup>114</sup> During his first briefing on 14 February 2020, he noted that the Peacebuilding Commission could assist UNIOGBIS and the Government of Guinea-Bissau by providing a platform for coherence and coordination among stakeholders,

<sup>106</sup> In its resolution 1645 (2005), the Council, acting concurrently with the General Assembly, decided that the main purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission would be to, inter alia, bring together all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations involved in peacekeeping and peacebuilding to marshal the resources and advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, to focus attention on the reconstruction and institution-building efforts necessary for recovery from conflict, and to provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations. For more information, see part I, sect. 33.

<sup>107</sup> Report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its fourteenth session (S/2021/139, para. 3).

<sup>108</sup> S/2021/139, para. 3.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., paras. 5–19.

<sup>110</sup> See S/2020/76.

<sup>111</sup> The practice of inviting the Chairs of country-specific configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission to participate in formal Council meetings was established in the note by the President of the Council dated 26 July 2010 (S/2010/507, para. 61) and was reaffirmed in the note by the President dated 30 August 2017 (S/2017/507, para. 95).

<sup>112</sup> See S/PV.8728. For more information, see part I, sect. 5. The Chair of the Central African Republic configuration also shared the report on the Chair's visit to the country in a letter dated on 20 February 2020 (S/2020/131), as well as advice pertaining to the renewal of the mandate of MINUSCA through a letter dated 30 October 2020 (S/2020/1068).

<sup>113</sup> See S/PV.8728.

<sup>114</sup> The Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration also provided advice on peacebuilding priorities in the country and the mandate of UNIOGBIS through a letter dated 24 February 2020 (S/2020/144).

and noted that the Peacebuilding Fund had been instrumental in furthering political inclusion.<sup>115</sup> During his second briefing on 10 August, the Chair updated the Council on the configuration's consultations and highlighted the fact that the challenges to stability and development in the country had deepened with the COVID-19 pandemic during a year of three transitions: the drawdown of UNIOGBIS, the country's transition to new political leadership and the closure of the mission of the Economic Community of West African States in the country.<sup>116</sup>

During a videoconference held on 12 August 2020 in connection with the item entitled "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace", which focused on pandemics and the challenges of sustaining peace, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission submitted a written statement in which she described the continuing efforts of the Commission to support national and regional stakeholders in addressing peacebuilding challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic in conflict-affected contexts.<sup>117</sup> The Chair of the Commission also submitted a written statement in connection with a videoconference regarding the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security", which focused on the humanitarian effects of environmental degradation and peace and security, in which she shared the Commission's observations and recommendations on different regions on its agenda, including on the Lake Chad basin, the Sahel and the Pacific islands.<sup>118</sup>

During an open videoconference, held on 16 November 2020 in connection with the item entitled "Peace and security in Africa", on the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission briefed the Council on the challenges in the region, the elements of the discussions and the recommendations from women peacebuilders and business leaders from the region and the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in mobilizing support for the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel.<sup>119</sup>

Consistent with established practice, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission was also invited to an

informal interactive dialogue of the Security Council in 2020.<sup>120</sup>

## (ii) Decisions

The Council referred to the Peacebuilding Commission and to its mandate in several decisions adopted under thematic as well as country- and region-specific items.

### *Thematic decisions*

In connection with the item entitled "Children and armed conflict", in its presidential statement of 12 February 2020, the Council renewed its call to the Peacebuilding Commission, and to Member States and other United Nations entities concerned, to integrate child protection provisions from the early stages of all peace processes,<sup>121</sup> and to ensure that the protection, rights, well-being and empowerment of children affected by armed conflict were fully incorporated and prioritized in all post-conflict recovery and reconstruction planning, programmes and strategies, as well as in efforts on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and to encourage and facilitate the consideration of the views of children in these processes.<sup>122</sup>

On 14 July 2020, under the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security", the Security Council adopted resolution [2535 \(2020\)](#), in which it welcomed the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission to advance the youth, peace and security agenda and its increased engagement in support of young peacebuilders and include, in its discussion and advice, ways to engage with youth in a meaningful manner.<sup>123</sup> In the same resolution, the Council also encouraged the Commission to continue to support the important peacebuilding role that young people play, and the participation and views of youth-led organizations, in planning and stabilization efforts with regard to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and to continue to bring its observations and advice to the attention of the Council, as appropriate.<sup>124</sup> Under the same item, on 3 December 2020, the Council adopted resolution [2553 \(2020\)](#), in which it noted the important work of the Peacebuilding Commission as a dedicated

<sup>115</sup> See [S/PV.8724](#). For more information, see part I, sect. 6.

<sup>116</sup> See [S/PV.8754](#).

<sup>117</sup> See [S/2020/799](#), annex 44. For more information, see part I, sect. 33.

<sup>118</sup> See [S/2020/929](#), annex 30. For more information, see part I, sect. 35.

<sup>119</sup> See [S/2020/1126](#), annex IV. For more information, see part I, sect. 10.

<sup>120</sup> On 22 July 2020, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission provided a briefing to the Council at an informal interactive dialogue on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. For further information on informal interactive dialogues, see part II, sect. I.C.

<sup>121</sup> [S/PRST/2020/3](#), seventh paragraph.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, eighth paragraph.

<sup>123</sup> Resolution [2535 \(2020\)](#), para. 15.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

intergovernmental advisory body that brought a strategic approach and coherence to international peacebuilding efforts,<sup>125</sup> and stressed the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund in supporting security sector reform.<sup>126</sup> Acknowledging the important role of the United Nations, including its Peacebuilding Commission, and Member States, regional and subregional organizations in assisting States in that regard, the Council encouraged Member States to take the lead in defining an inclusive national vision and strategy on security sector reform and to continue to be engaged and to facilitate strategic discussions on strengthening the United Nations approach and role in that critical area.<sup>127</sup>

On 4 December 2020, the Council issued a presidential statement under the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”, in which it encouraged the continued engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission as a viable platform for dialogue between Burundi and its partners.<sup>128</sup>

On 21 December 2020, under the item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, the Council adopted resolution 2558 (2020), in which it welcomed in particular the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission, and called on the Commission to continue strengthening its advisory, bridging and convening roles in support of nationally owned priorities and efforts in the countries and regions under its consideration, as well as to continue strengthening its working methods to enhance its efficiency and impact in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace,<sup>129</sup> while encouraging the Peacebuilding Commission and relevant United Nations bodies and organs to consider the input from thematic and regional consultations for the 2020 review of

the peacebuilding architecture of the Peacebuilding Commission.<sup>130</sup>

#### *Country- and region-specific decisions*

Decisions of the Council with regard to country- and region-specific items also mentioned the Peacebuilding Commission. In connection with the item entitled “Peace consolidation in West Africa”, the Council issued a presidential statement on 12 February 2020 in which it encouraged joint annual reporting to the Peacebuilding Commission on the work to strengthen United Nations integrated efforts, particularly as they related to the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel.<sup>131</sup>

In connection with the situation in Guinea-Bissau, the Council recognized the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in enhancing the continued efforts of international partners in helping to sustain and promote peace, stability and development, with a view to supporting the long-term peacebuilding priorities of Guinea-Bissau.<sup>132</sup> Welcoming the continued engagement of the Commission with the authorities of Guinea-Bissau and other relevant stakeholders in the country, as well as its regular briefings to the Council on its work, the Council encouraged the Commission to follow closely and support the UNIOGBIS transition process and the long-term peacebuilding efforts in the country.<sup>133</sup>

In addition, in a letter dated 27 April 2020, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission transmitted the Commission’s advice on youth and peace and security, stressing the full, effective and meaningful participation of youth in peace processes, public decision-making mechanisms and national governing bodies, and encouraging the Council to consult youth and include their perspectives, when relevant and as appropriate.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Resolution 2553 (2020), fourteenth preambular paragraph.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, eighteenth preambular paragraph.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 3 and 16.

<sup>128</sup> S/PRST/2020/12, fourth paragraph.

<sup>129</sup> Resolution 2558 (2020), para. 2.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, eighth preambular paragraph.

<sup>131</sup> S/PRST/2020/2, nineteenth paragraph.

<sup>132</sup> Resolution 2512 (2020), ninth preambular paragraph.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 17.

<sup>134</sup> See S/2020/335.

## VIII. Subsidiary organs of the Security Council proposed but not established

During the period under review, there were no instances in which a subsidiary organ was formally proposed but not established.

In a letter dated 27 August 2020 addressed to the Secretary-General, the Chargé d’affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations

transmitted a letter, on behalf of 10 members of the Council,<sup>135</sup> stating that they would convene an informal

<sup>135</sup> The following 10 Council members signed a letter annexed to the letter dated 27 August 2020 (S/2020/849): Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, Viet Nam and United Kingdom.

expert group of the Council on climate and security, which would be advisory and non-decision-making and be open to all Council members. The 10 Council members noted that the informal expert group would improve the flow of information and analysis with regard to the peace and security implications of climate change in country- and region-specific situations and sharpen the focus and specificity of Council deliberations and actions. The 10 Council members suggested that the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs act as the secretariat of the informal expert group, coordinating the provision of information to Council members and facilitating its meetings.<sup>136</sup> In a letter dated 21 September 2020

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<sup>136</sup> See [S/2020/849](#).

addressed to the Secretary-General, the Permanent Representatives of China and the Russian Federation expressed their objection to the request that the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs fulfil that role, stating that it was inappropriate for the Secretariat to fulfil such a role owing to the absence of a specific intergovernmental mandate. The representatives also disagreed with providing such a mandate to the Secretariat under any pretext and expressed concern that the initiative to convene the informal expert group was creating a precedent whereby certain “voluntary” expert bodies would be established without official decisions of the Council.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> See [S/2020/934](#).

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## **Part X**

### **Subsidiary organs of the Security Council: peacekeeping operations and special political missions**



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## Introductory note

### Article 29

*The Security Council may establish such subsidiary organs as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions.*

### Rule 28

*The Security Council may appoint a commission or committee or a rapporteur for a specified question.*

The powers of the Security Council to establish subsidiary organs are set out in Article 29 of the Charter of the United Nations and reflected in rule 28 of its provisional rules of procedure. Part X of the present Supplement covers decisions of the Council relating to field-based subsidiary organs that the Council established for the performance of its functions under the Charter and that were active during 2020. These field-based subsidiary organs can be divided into two categories: peacekeeping operations (covered in section I); and special political missions (covered in section II).

Other subsidiary organs, such as committees, working groups, investigative bodies, tribunals, ad hoc commissions, special advisers, envoys, representatives and coordinators, and the Peacebuilding Commission, are covered in part IX. Peace operations led by regional organizations are covered in part VIII, which deals with the Council's cooperation with regional organizations.

Peacekeeping operations and special political missions covered in part X are presented by region and in the order in which they were established. Successor missions are listed immediately after their predecessors. The introduction to each main section includes overview tables identifying the mandates assigned to each mission (tables 1, 2, 4 and 5) and provides an analysis of the key trends and developments during the reporting period. The mandates of the missions are presented in those tables according to 21 categories of mandated tasks, which are based exclusively on the language of the decisions of the Council and do not necessarily reflect the specific structure or activities of the mission. The categories are provided only as a convenience for readers and do not reflect any practice or position of the Council.

Subsections provide a summary of major developments concerning the mandate and composition of each mission, reflecting the decisions of the Council adopted during the period under review. For information on the mandate and composition of missions in the past, see previous supplements to the *Repertoire*.

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## I. Peacekeeping operations

### Note

Section I focuses on the decisions adopted by the Council during the period under review concerning the establishment and termination of peacekeeping operations, as well as changes to their mandates and composition.

### Overview of peacekeeping operations during 2020

During the period under review, the Council oversaw 13 peacekeeping operations.<sup>1</sup> Seven of the operations were in Africa, three in the Middle East, two in Europe and one in Asia. The Council did not establish any new operations in 2020 and one completed its mandate.

#### *Terminations and extensions of mandates*

In 2020, by resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#) of 22 December, the Council terminated the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) as of 31 December 2020.<sup>2</sup> The Council extended the mandates of the following peacekeeping operations:

- United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)
- United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)
- United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA)
- United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)
- United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)
- United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA)
- United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)

- United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)
- United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

The mandates of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) remained open-ended.

#### *Mandates of peacekeeping operations, including authorization of the use of force*

In 2020, the most common tasks of peacekeeping operations mandated by the Council related to the provision of good offices, mediation and technical support to peace processes, the protection of civilians and United Nations personnel and humanitarian workers, and the facilitation of humanitarian assistance. The Council also tasked missions with human rights monitoring, reporting and protection, gender mainstreaming and, as part of stabilization activities, the capacity-building of national security forces. The Council continued to highlight the importance of cooperation and coordination between peacekeeping operations and United Nations country teams, as well as international, regional and subregional stakeholders in the implementation of mission mandates. The mandated tasks of more long-standing missions, such as MINURSO, UNMOGIP, UNTSO and UNDOF, remained more narrowly focused on the monitoring of ceasefires.

The Council reauthorized the use of force by MONUSCO, UNMISS, MINUSMA and MINUSCA.<sup>3</sup> UNAMID, UNISFA and UNIFIL were reauthorized to take all necessary action in fulfilling only certain elements of their mandates, such as protecting civilians, United Nations personnel and equipment, ensuring their freedom of movement and that of

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<sup>1</sup> For Council decisions and deliberations relating to the item entitled “United Nations peacekeeping operations”, see part I, sect. 23. For Council discussions concerning individual peacekeeping operations, see the respective country-specific studies in part I.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), paras. 1–2.

<sup>3</sup> In connection with MONUSCO, see resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), paras. 27 and 29 (i) (a); in connection with UNMISS, see resolution [2514 \(2020\)](#), paras. 10 and 14; in connection with MINUSMA, see resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), para. 18; and, in connection with MINUSCA, see resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), para. 30. For more information on the authorization by the Council in 2020 of the use of force, see part VII, sect. IV.

humanitarian workers, and protecting the mission area of responsibility.<sup>4</sup>

In instances where mandates were modified, the Council placed particular emphasis on strengthening peacekeeping early warning mechanisms and the protection of civilians from sexual and gender-based violence, good offices and other forms of support for political transitions and electoral cycles, and the facilitation of humanitarian assistance in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Specifically, MONUSCO, UNMISS and MINUSMA were requested to strengthen their early warning and response mechanisms, and MONUSCO and MINUSMA were required to record and analyse their rate of response.<sup>5</sup> MONUSCO was also requested to ensure that risks of sexual violence in conflict were included in its data collection, threat analysis and early warning system.<sup>6</sup> With the decrease in political violence in South Sudan and the Mission's transition from static duties at protection of civilians sites, the Council requested UNMISS to focus deterrence and protection activities on areas of high risk of conflict or where there were emerging protection risks or threats such as high rates of sexual and gender-based violence.<sup>7</sup>

The good offices support of MINUSCA for the preparation and delivery of peaceful presidential, legislative and local elections in the Central African Republic in 2020 and 2021 was defined to include encouraging dialogue among all political stakeholders and mitigating tensions throughout the electoral period, as well as providing security, operational, logistical and technical support.<sup>8</sup> Following the establishment of a transitional Government in Mali, the Council tasked MINUSMA with supporting the political transition in the country, including through good offices, confidence-building and facilitation and by supporting the holding of elections through technical assistance and security arrangements.<sup>9</sup>

In accordance with resolution 2532 (2020) of 1 July, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to instruct peacekeeping operations to provide support to host country authorities in their efforts to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, UNAMID and MINUSCA were assigned additional responsibilities to help to alleviate the consequences of the pandemic, support national authorities in containing its spread, and support unhindered humanitarian access.<sup>10</sup> In connection with the mandate of UNIFIL, the Council commended the Force for the preventive measures taken to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and, more generally, authorized it to take temporary and special measures to provide support to Lebanon and its people in the aftermath of the explosion in the port of Beirut.<sup>11</sup>

Regarding cross-cutting issues, the Council requested UNFICYP to fully take into account gender considerations throughout its mandate.<sup>12</sup> UNMISS and MINUSMA, meanwhile, were assigned the role of supporting the meaningful participation of women and youth, among other marginalized groups, in political leadership, peace processes, transitional authorities, and the implementation of the peace agreements in South Sudan and Mali.<sup>13</sup> The Council requested MONUSCO to promote intercommunal and gender-responsive reconciliation while paying specific attention to the needs of women, in addition to children, as part of its support to the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and resettlement process.<sup>14</sup>

With regard to the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, the Council underscored the need to better address allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse and, further to resolution 2518 (2020) of 30 March, introduced new language regarding the safety and security of peacekeepers. In this regard, the Council requested several missions to take appropriate steps to ensure full accountability in cases involving their personnel, including through timely investigations by troop- and police-contributing countries and the

<sup>4</sup> In connection with UNAMID, see resolution 2525 (2020), para. 1; in connection with UNISFA, see resolutions 2519 (2020), para. 1, and 2550 (2020), paras. 1 and 12; and, in connection with UNIFIL, see resolution 2539 (2020), para. 21.

<sup>5</sup> In connection with MONUSCO, see resolution 2556 (2020), para. 29 (i) (h); in connection with UNMISS, see resolution 2514 (2020), para. 8 (a) (iii); and, in connection with MINUSMA, see resolution 2531 (2020), para. 28 (c) (ii).

<sup>6</sup> Resolution 2556 (2020), para. 29 (i) (h).

<sup>7</sup> Resolution 2514 (2020), paras. 8 (a) (ii) and 19.

<sup>8</sup> Resolution 2552 (2020), para. 31 (c).

<sup>9</sup> S/PRST/2020/10, tenth paragraph.

<sup>10</sup> Resolution 2532 (2020), para. 6. In connection with UNAMID, see resolution 2525 (2020), para. 8; and, in connection with MINUSCA, see resolution 2552 (2020), para. 31 (d).

<sup>11</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph and para. 28.

<sup>12</sup> Resolution 2506 (2020), para. 14.

<sup>13</sup> In connection with UNMISS, see resolution 2514 (2020), paras. 5 and 31; and, in connection with MINUSMA, see resolution 2531 (2020) para. 28 (a) (v).

<sup>14</sup> Resolution 2556 (2020), paras. 29 (ii) (c) and (i).

missions as appropriate.<sup>15</sup> The Council requested the Secretary-General and troop- and police-contributing countries to seek to increase the number of women in MONUSCO, MINUSMA and UNDOF, including in leadership positions, and to implement other relevant provisions of resolution 2538 (2020) on the role of women in peacekeeping.<sup>16</sup> With regard to MINUSMA and MINUSCA, the Council requested the Secretary-General, Member States and national authorities to continue to take all appropriate measures to review and enhance the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel, in line with resolution 2518 (2020).<sup>17</sup> Similarly, UNDOF and UNIFIL were requested to protect the safety, security and health of all personnel in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, in line with resolutions 2518 (2020) and 2532 (2020), respectively,<sup>18</sup> while UNAMID was tasked with the provision of training to personnel in this context.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, the Council expanded on the modalities regarding the planning and implementation of mission transitions. For example, with regard to MONUSCO, the Council endorsed a strategy on the progressive and phased drawdown of the Mission and its transition, and

requested the Secretary-General to present a transition plan defining the practical modalities of transfer of tasks to the Government, the United Nations country team and other stakeholders, as well as detailed, measurable and realistic benchmarks.<sup>20</sup> The Council also called upon the Secretary-General to develop options for the final drawdown and follow-on presence to UNAMID and requested both MONUSCO and UNAMID to establish mechanisms for their respective transitions and transfer of tasks to other stakeholders.<sup>21</sup> Taking a more long-term perspective, the Council tasked the Secretary-General with developing options and conditions, including benchmarks, for the future drawdown and eventual exit of UNISFA and MINUSMA, while MINUSCA was requested to continue reporting on the conditions required for such a transition.<sup>22</sup>

Tables 1 and 2 provide an overview of the mandates of peacekeeping operations in 2020, showing the wide range of tasks mandated by the Council. The mandates reflected in the tables include: (a) tasks mandated by the Council in decisions adopted during the reporting period; and (b) tasks mandated in previous periods and reiterated by the Council during the period under review. The tables also include the tasks of peacekeeping operations with open-ended mandates adopted in decisions of previous periods. The tables are provided for information purposes only and do not reflect any position or view of the Council with regard to the status of the mandates of the operations concerned.

<sup>15</sup> In connection with UNISFA, see resolution 2550 (2020), para. 29; in connection with MINUSMA, see resolution 2531 (2020), para. 57; in connection with MINUSCA, see resolution 2552 (2020), para. 41; in connection with UNFICYP, see resolution 2506 (2020), para. 16; and, in connection with UNIFIL, see resolution 2539 (2020), para. 24.

<sup>16</sup> In connection with MONUSCO, see resolution 2556 (2020), para. 43; in connection with MINUSCA, see resolution 2552 (2020), para. 39; and, in connection with UNDOF, see resolution 2555 (2020), para. 13.

<sup>17</sup> In connection with MINUSMA, see resolution 2531 (2020), para. 47; and, in connection with MINUSCA, see resolution 2552 (2020), para. 37.

<sup>18</sup> In connection with UNDOF, see resolutions 2530 (2020) and 2555 (2020), para. 8; and, in connection with UNIFIL, see resolution 2539 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph.

<sup>19</sup> Resolution 2525 (2020), para. 8.

<sup>20</sup> Resolution 2556 (2020), paras. 49–50.

<sup>21</sup> In connection with UNAMID, see resolution 2525 (2020), para. 5; and, in connection with MONUSCO, see resolution 2556 (2020), paras. 50–51.

<sup>22</sup> In connection with UNISFA, see resolution 2550 (2020), para. 31; in connection with MINUSMA, see resolution 2531 (2020), para. 64; and, in connection with MINUSCA, see resolution 2552 (2020), para. 53.

**Table 1  
Mandates of peacekeeping operations, 2020: Africa**

<i>Mandate</i>	<i>MINURSO</i>	<i>UNAMID</i>	<i>MONUSCO</i>	<i>UNISFA</i>	<i>UNMISS</i>	<i>MINUSMA</i>	<i>MINUSCA</i>
Chapter VII		X	X	X	X	X	X
Authorization of the use of force		X	X	X	X	X	X
Ceasefire monitoring	X				X	X	
Civil-military coordination		X	X		X	X	X
Demilitarization and arms management	X	X	X	X	X	X	X



## Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2020

<i>Mandate</i>	<i>MINURSO</i>	<i>UNAMID</i>	<i>MONUSCO</i>	<i>UNISFA</i>	<i>UNMISS</i>	<i>MINUSMA</i>	<i>MINUSCA</i>
Electoral assistance	X					X	X
Human rights-related <sup>a</sup>		X	X	X	X	X	X
Humanitarian support	X	X	X		X	X	X
International cooperation and coordination	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mission impact assessment			X			X	X
Political process	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Protection of civilians	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Protection of humanitarian/United Nations personnel and facilities; ensuring free movement of personnel and equipment		X	X	X	X	X	X
Public information			X			X	X
Rule of law/judicial matters		X	X	X		X	X
Security monitoring; patrolling; deterrence		X	X	X	X	X	X
Security sector reform			X			X	X
Support to military			X			X	X
Support to police	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support to sanctions regimes		X	X		X	X	X
Support to State institutions		X	X		X	X	X

*Abbreviations:* MINURSO, United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara; UNAMID, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur; MONUSCO, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; UNISFA, United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei; UNMISS, United Nations Mission in South Sudan; MINUSMA, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali; MINUSCA, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

<sup>a</sup> Includes tasks related to human rights; children and armed conflict; women and peace and security; and youth and peace and security.

Table 2  
Mandates of peacekeeping operations, 2020: Asia, Europe and Middle East

<i>Mandate</i>	<i>UNMOGIP</i>	<i>UNFICYP</i>	<i>UNMIK</i>	<i>UNTSO</i>	<i>UNDOF</i>	<i>UNIFIL</i>
Chapter VII			X			
Authorization of the use of force						X
Civil-military coordination			X			
Ceasefire monitoring	X	X		X	X	X
Demilitarization and arms management						X
Electoral assistance						
Human rights-related <sup>a</sup>		X	X			X
Humanitarian support		X	X			X

**Part X. Subsidiary organs of the Security Council:  
peacekeeping operations and special political missions**

<i>Mandate</i>	<i>UNMOGIP</i>	<i>UNFICYP</i>	<i>UNMIK</i>	<i>UNTSO</i>	<i>UNDOF</i>	<i>UNIFIL</i>
International cooperation and coordination		X	X	X	X	X
Political process		X	X			
Protection of civilians						X
Protection of humanitarian/United Nations personnel and facilities; ensuring free movement of personnel and equipment						X
Public information						
Rule of law/judicial matters						
Security monitoring-patrolling-deterrence						X
Security sector reform						
Support to military						X
Support to police		X	X			
Support to sanctions regimes						
Support to State institutions			X			X

*Abbreviations:* UNMOGIP, United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan; UNFICYP, United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus; UNMIK, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; UNTSO, United Nations Truce Supervision Organization; UNDOF, United Nations Disengagement Observer Force; UNIFIL, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

<sup>a</sup> Includes tasks related to human rights; children and armed conflict; women and peace and security; and youth and peace and security.

*Authorized strength of peacekeeping operations*

As illustrated in table 3, during the period under review, the Council modified the composition of one peacekeeping operation by decreasing the number of military personnel in UNIFIL.

**Table 3  
Changes in composition of peacekeeping operations, 2020**

<i>Mission</i>	<i>Changes in composition</i>	<i>Decision</i>
United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon	The Council decided to reduce the authorized troop ceiling from 15,000 to 13,000 personnel	Resolution <a href="#">2539 (2020)</a>

## Africa

### United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

The United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) was established by the Council on 29 April 1991, by resolution 690 (1991), in accordance with the settlement proposals accepted by Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO). MINURSO was mandated to monitor the ceasefire, provide security for the repatriation of refugees, and support the organization of a free and fair referendum.<sup>23</sup>

In 2020, by resolution 2548 (2020) of 30 October, the Council extended the mandate of MINURSO for one year, until 31 October 2021.<sup>24</sup> The resolution was adopted with 13 votes in favour and 2 abstentions.<sup>25</sup> The Council did not modify the mandate or composition of MINURSO during the period under review.

### African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

The Council established the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) by resolution 1769 (2007) of 31 July 2007 and, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, authorized UNAMID to take the necessary action to support the implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement, protect civilians and United Nations personnel and equipment and ensure the security and freedom of its own personnel and humanitarian workers.<sup>26</sup>

In 2020, the Council adopted resolutions 2517 (2020) of 30 March, 2523 (2020) of 29 May, 2525 (2020) of 3 June and 2559 (2020) of 22 December. By resolution 2525 (2020), acting under Chapter VII of the Charter and ahead of the expiry of the mandate as contained in resolution 2495 (2019), the Council extended the mandate of UNAMID for two months, until 31 December 2020.<sup>27</sup> By resolution 2559 (2020), the Council decided to terminate the mandate of UNAMID as of 31 December 2020.<sup>28</sup>

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 and the resulting impact on the operations and drawdown of UNAMID, by resolutions 2517 (2020), 2523 (2020) and 2525 (2020), acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council decided to maintain the Mission's troop and police ceilings and extended the timelines for its decision on the courses of action regarding the responsible drawdown and exit of UNAMID from 31 March to 31 May, 3 June and 31 December 2020, respectively.<sup>29</sup>

By resolution 2525 (2020), the Council adjusted the strategic priorities of UNAMID and requested the mission to focus on the protection of civilians as set out in resolution 2495 (2019), including by supporting the capacity of the Government of the Sudan to protect civilians and by preserving the requisite capacity, particularly in Jebel Marra.<sup>30</sup> In the same resolution, the Council requested UNAMID to provide support, within its mandate and capacities and existing resources, to the Sudan in its efforts to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular to facilitate and support unhindered humanitarian access, including to internally displaced persons and refugee camps.<sup>31</sup> UNAMID was also requested to take all appropriate steps to protect the safety, security and

<sup>23</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of MINURSO, see previous supplements covering the period 1991–2019.

<sup>24</sup> Resolution 2548 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>25</sup> See S/2020/1063. The Russian Federation and South Africa abstained in the vote on resolution 2548 (2020): the representative of the Russian Federation expressed concern regarding the consultations process on the draft resolution and stressed the need to maintain the previously agreed parameters of the Western Saharan settlement, and the representative of South Africa raised the issue of the working methods on the Western Sahara file and of the draft resolution not reflecting the current realities on the ground (see also S/2020/1075). For more information on the situation concerning Western Sahara, see part I, sect. 1.

<sup>26</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNAMID, see previous supplements covering the period

2007–2019. For more information on the item entitled “Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan”, see part I, sect. 8.

<sup>27</sup> Resolution 2525 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Resolution 2559 (2020), paras. 1–2.

<sup>29</sup> Resolutions 2517 (2020), 2523 (2020) and 2525 (2020), paras. 1–2. By its resolution 2495 (2019), the Council had expressed its intention to decide by 31 March 2020 courses of action regarding the drawdown and exit of UNAMID and the establishment of a follow-on presence to the mission. In its resolution 2525 (2020), the Council took note of the special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General providing recommendations on the appropriate course of action regarding the drawdown of UNAMID and options for a follow-on presence to the mission (S/2020/202).

<sup>30</sup> Resolution 2525 (2020), para. 3.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 8.

health of all of its personnel, in line with resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#), and to take further steps towards the provision of training for the personnel on issues related to preventing the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>32</sup>

In the same resolution, the Council also requested UNAMID and the newly established special political mission, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), to establish a coordination mechanism to determine the modalities and timelines for the transition of responsibilities where the two missions had common strategic objectives and priorities in Darfur and in order to ensure close coordination and cooperation, information and analysis sharing, to maximize synergies, leverage resources and prevent the duplication of efforts.<sup>33</sup> The Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission were requested to provide a special report no later than 31 October 2020, which was to include an assessment of the situation on the ground, including the impact of the peace process on the security situation in Darfur, the capacity of the Government, including the Sudanese Police Force, to protect civilians, and recommendations on the appropriate course of action regarding the drawdown of UNAMID, taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>34</sup> The Council also expressed its intention to decide by 31 December 2020, taking into account the findings of the requested special report, courses of action regarding the responsible drawdown and exit of UNAMID.<sup>35</sup>

By resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), the Council took note of the special report of the Chairperson of the African Union and the Secretary-General dated 13 November 2020,<sup>36</sup> in particular the recommendation that the mandate of UNAMID be terminated by 31 December 2020 and the estimate that the environmental clean-up, the removal of the mission's footprint and the repatriation from closed locations of staff, troops and police would take an estimated six months, subject to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rainy season. The Council underscored that a reasonable time would be required for the liquidation of UNAMID following its withdrawal.<sup>37</sup>

In accordance with the recommendations, in addition to terminating the mandate of UNAMID as of

31 December 2020, the Council requested the Secretary-General to commence the drawdown of the mission personnel on 1 January 2021 and to complete the withdrawal of all uniformed and civilian personnel by 30 June 2021, other than those required for the mission's liquidation.<sup>38</sup> The Council called upon UNAMID to establish with the United Nations country team, as part of the transition and drawdown process, appropriate arrangements enabling the country team to oversee the residual activities of programmatic cooperation initiated by UNAMID in 2020 to ensure a smooth transition of peacebuilding and support for capacity development of the Government in Darfur.<sup>39</sup> The Council reiterated the mandate of UNAMID to protect the safety, security and health of all personnel, emphasizing the need to prevent the spread of COVID-19 during the course of the drawdown and withdrawal.<sup>40</sup> The Council requested the Secretary-General to keep it regularly informed about all relevant developments in relation with the drawdown and withdrawal as an annex to the regular reporting requested on UNITAMS and to provide an oral briefing on 31 July 2021 on the completion of the process.<sup>41</sup>

The Council expressed its deep appreciation for the work of UNAMID in the Sudan and its overall contribution to the maintenance of peace and security in Darfur since its establishment in 2007, commended the contribution of troop- and police-contributing countries and underlined the importance of the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in the Sudan.<sup>42</sup> Finally, the Council requested the Secretary-General to provide an assessment on lessons learned from the experience of UNAMID no later than 31 October 2021.<sup>43</sup>

### **United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) was established by the Council on 28 May 2010 by resolution [1925 \(2010\)](#), under Chapter VII of the Charter, to succeed the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). MONUSCO was authorized to use all necessary means to carry out its protection

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., para. 5. For more information on the mandate of UNITAMS, see sect. II.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., para. 11.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., para. 2.

<sup>36</sup> [S/2020/1115](#).

<sup>37</sup> Resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), eleventh preambular paragraph.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., paras. 1–2.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., para. 9.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., para. 13.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., para. 14.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., fifth preambular paragraph.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., para. 15.

mandate as set out in the resolution and tasked with, inter alia, ensuring the effective protection of civilians and supporting the efforts of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on stabilization and peace consolidation.<sup>44</sup>

In 2020, by resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#) of 18 December, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council extended the mandate of MONUSCO for one year, until 20 December 2021.<sup>45</sup> The resolution was adopted with 14 votes in favour and 1 abstention.<sup>46</sup>

By the same resolution, the Council maintained the two strategic priorities of MONUSCO to protect civilians and support the stabilization and strengthening of State institutions and key governance and security reforms.<sup>47</sup> The Council also reiterated the corresponding priority tasks of MONUSCO with the addition of new language on the protection of civilians and human rights, the Intervention Brigade, security sector reform, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

Specifically, the Council requested MONUSCO to strengthen its early warning and response mechanisms, including by systematically recording and analysing its rate of response, and to ensure that risks of sexual violence in conflict were included in its data collection, threat analysis and early warning system.<sup>48</sup> While reiterating the mandate of MONUSCO to carry out targeted offensive operations, either unilaterally or jointly with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), the Council specified that the task would be carried out through a reconfigured and effective Intervention Brigade that included additional combat units from additional troop- and police-contributing countries as quick reaction forces, able to cope with asymmetric warfare.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, the Council expressed support for the efforts of the Secretary-General to improve the performance of the Intervention Brigade, including in the light of the independent assessment report on the protection of civilians and neutralization of armed

groups in Beni and Mambasa territories, as appropriate and consistent with the Mission's mandate, including through the expeditious deployment of combat units functioning as quick reaction forces.<sup>50</sup>

The Council underlined that MONUSCO would support the United Nations system in-country to ensure that any support provided by the United Nations would be in strict compliance with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces.<sup>51</sup> On security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the Council noted that MONUSCO would provide good offices and advice to the Government, particularly in North and South Kivu and Ituri provinces.<sup>52</sup>

With regard to cross-cutting issues, the Council requested MONUSCO to promote intercommunal and gender-responsive reconciliation and to pay specific attention to the needs of women and children, as part of its support to the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration process.<sup>53</sup> Beyond the priorities, the Council reiterated the Mission's tasks related to cooperation with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region,<sup>54</sup> the protection of United Nations personnel, facilities and equipment,<sup>55</sup> child protection,<sup>56</sup> gender and sexual violence,<sup>57</sup> humanitarian support,<sup>58</sup> support to the implementation of the sanctions regime<sup>59</sup> and management of the environmental impact of its operations.<sup>60</sup>

Regarding the exit strategy, the Council endorsed the Joint Strategy on the Progressive and Phased Drawdown of MONUSCO and the broad parameters of the Mission's transition, as well as its planned withdrawal from the Kasai in 2021 and progressively from Tanganyika in 2022 and the gradual consolidation of the Mission's footprint in the three provinces where active conflict persisted.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, the Council

<sup>44</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of MONUSCO, see previous supplements covering the period 2010–2019.

<sup>45</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 22.

<sup>46</sup> See [S/2020/1265](#). The Russian Federation abstained in the vote on the draft resolution, as the delegation could not agree with the new wording of the paragraphs on international humanitarian assistance proposed by the authors of the draft resolution. For more information on the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, see part I, sect. 4.

<sup>47</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 24.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 29 (i) (h).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 29 (i) (e).

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 44. See also [S/2020/214](#), para. 62.

<sup>51</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 29 (ii) (e).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 29 (ii) (f)–(g).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 29 (ii) (c) and (i).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 26.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 30.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 31.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 32.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 36.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 38. For more information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1533 \(2004\)](#) and the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, see part IX, sect. I.

<sup>60</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 46.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 49. See also [S/2020/1041](#), in which the Secretary-General transmitted the strategy.

requested the Secretary-General to present, no later than September 2021, a transition plan on the basis of the Joint Strategy defining the practical modalities of the transfer of tasks to the Government, the United Nations country team and other stakeholders, including a set of detailed, measurable and realistic benchmarks with indicative timelines, roles and responsibilities, risk assessment and mitigation strategies, as appropriate for the progressive and phased drawdown of MONUSCO.<sup>62</sup> The Council also requested the establishment of a working group composed of representatives from MONUSCO, the Government and the United Nations country team to enhance coordination and planning, in liaison with civil society, for the transition, including the transfer of tasks.<sup>63</sup> Finally, the Council stressed that the Mission's activities should be conducted in such a manner to facilitate progress towards sustainable and inclusive peace and development and address the root causes of conflict, to reduce the threat posed by domestic and foreign armed groups to a level that could be managed by the security forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.<sup>64</sup>

By resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), the Council maintained the Mission's authorized troop and police ceiling. As was the case in 2019, the Council agreed to a temporary deployment of up to 360 personnel of formed police units provided that they were deployed in replacement of military personnel, as proposed by the Secretary-General,<sup>65</sup> and invited the Secretariat to consider further reductions in military deployment and area of operations based on the positive evolution of the situation on the ground.<sup>66</sup>

### United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

The Council established the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) by resolution [1990 \(2011\)](#) of 27 June 2011, taking into account the Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area of 20 June 2011. The Council mandated UNISFA to, inter alia, monitor and verify the redeployment of any Sudanese Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army or its successor from the Abyei area, participate in relevant

bodies as stipulated in the Agreement, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and strengthen the capacity of the Abyei Police Service. By the same resolution, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council authorized UNISFA to take the actions necessary, inter alia, to protect United Nations and humanitarian personnel and property, protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, and ensure security in the Abyei area. By resolution [2024 \(2011\)](#) of 14 December 2011, the Council expanded the mandate of UNISFA to include assisting South Sudan and the Sudan in ensuring the observance of their agreement on border security and supporting the operational activities of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism.<sup>67</sup>

In 2020, the Council adopted resolutions [2519 \(2020\)](#) of 14 May and [2550 \(2020\)](#) of 12 November concerning UNISFA. By those resolutions, the Council extended the mandate of UNISFA for periods of six months each time, the second time until 15 May 2021.<sup>68</sup>

The Council largely maintained the existing mandate of UNISFA during the period under review. By resolution [2550 \(2020\)](#), the Council invited UNISFA to coordinate with the Juba-appointed administration in Abyei, the Misseriya administration in Muglad and the Khartoum-appointed administration, using appropriate civilian expertise, to maintain stability, foster intercommunal reconciliation and facilitate the return of displaced persons to their villages and the delivery of services.<sup>69</sup> By resolution [2519 \(2020\)](#), in addition to the regular reporting of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei, the Council requested him to continue to inform it of progress in implementing the mandate of UNISFA as set out in resolution [2497 \(2019\)](#).<sup>70</sup>

Regarding the future mandate of UNISFA, the Council requested the Secretary-General to hold a joint consultation with the Governments of the Sudan, South Sudan and Ethiopia and relevant stakeholders to

<sup>62</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 50.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 51.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 52.

<sup>65</sup> See [S/2019/905](#).

<sup>66</sup> Resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), para. 23.

<sup>67</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNISFA, see previous supplements covering the period 2011–2019. For more information on the item entitled "Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan", see part I, sect. 8.

<sup>68</sup> Resolutions [2519 \(2020\)](#) and [2550 \(2020\)](#), paras. 1–2.

<sup>69</sup> Resolution [2550 \(2020\)](#), para. 16.

<sup>70</sup> Resolution [2519 \(2020\)](#), para. 6. See also [S/2020/767](#), in which the Secretary-General reported on progress in mandate implementation, including on the increase in the police contingent, the appointment of a civilian Deputy Head of Mission, the usage of Athony airport, the issuance of visas, and progress and challenges related to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism.



discuss the exit strategy for the mission and develop options for its responsible drawdown and exit. The Secretary-General was requested to report no later than 31 March 2021, elaborating on those options, prioritizing the safety and security of civilians, accounting for the stability of the region and including an option for a responsible drawdown and exit that was not limited by the implementation of the 2011 agreements.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, the Council expressed its intention to request an independent review of UNISFA in the context of recent political developments between and within South Sudan and the Sudan and based on the outcomes of the joint consultation.<sup>72</sup>

In 2020, the Council decided to maintain the authorized ceiling of 3,550 troops and 640 police personnel, including 148 individual police officers and three formed police units.<sup>73</sup> In addition, by resolution 2519 (2020), the Council decided to allow the postponement of the withdrawal of 295 troops above the authorized troop ceiling only until the Secretary-General lifted the COVID-19-related suspension on troop repatriations.<sup>74</sup> By resolution 2550 (2020), the Council requested the United Nations to take the necessary steps to deploy additional police sequentially in order to meet the authorized police ceiling and expressed its intention to reduce the authorized police ceiling as the Abyei Police Service was gradually established and providing effective law enforcement throughout the Abyei area.<sup>75</sup> The Council also reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to appoint a civilian Deputy Head of Mission and add civilian staff within existing resources to further facilitate liaison between and engagement with the parties in a manner consistent with the Agreement of 20 June 2011, including the agreement to establish the Abyei Police Service.<sup>76</sup>

### United Nations Mission in South Sudan

By resolution 1996 (2011) of 8 July 2011, the Council established the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) under Chapter VII of the Charter, with a mandate to support peace consolidation and foster longer-term State-building and economic development; support the Government of South Sudan in exercising its responsibilities for conflict prevention,

mitigation and resolution and to protect civilians; and support the Government, in cooperation with the United Nations country team and other international partners, in developing its capacity to provide security, to establish the rule of law and to strengthen the security and justice sectors. UNMISS was authorized to use all necessary means to carry out its protection of civilians mandate.<sup>77</sup>

In 2020, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council adopted resolutions 2514 (2020) of 12 March and 2521 (2020) of 29 May in connection with UNMISS. By resolution 2514 (2020), the Council extended the mandate of UNMISS for one year, until 15 March 2021.<sup>78</sup>

By resolution 2514 (2020), the Council welcomed the encouraging developments in the peace process of South Sudan, including the beginning of the formation of a Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity and the reduction in political violence,<sup>79</sup> and decided to maintain the overall mandate of UNMISS with some modifications and the addition of new tasks. Specifically, the Council reauthorized the Mission to use all necessary means to protect civilians, create conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, support the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and the peace process, and monitor and investigate abuses and violations of human rights.<sup>80</sup> The Council also reiterated the existing tasks related to the provision of a secure environment in and around Juba, the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence, the implementation of the action plan to prevent violations against children, and assistance to the Committee and the Panel of Experts on South Sudan.<sup>81</sup>

In terms of modifications and additions, the Council placed particular emphasis on the Mission's protection of civilians mandate in areas of return, relocation, resettlement and integration, the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, and the participation of women and other groups in the peace

<sup>71</sup> Resolution 2550 (2020), para. 31.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 32.

<sup>73</sup> Resolutions 2519 (2020), para. 3, and 2550 (2020), paras. 4–5.

<sup>74</sup> Resolution 2519 (2020), para. 3.

<sup>75</sup> Resolution 2550 (2020), para. 5.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 6.

<sup>77</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNMISS, see previous supplements covering the period 2011–2019.

<sup>78</sup> Resolution 2514 (2020), para. 6.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, seventh preambular paragraph and para. 4. For more information on the item entitled “Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan”, see part I, sect. 8.

<sup>80</sup> Resolution 2514 (2020), para. 8.

<sup>81</sup> For more information on the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan, see part IX, sect. I.

process and political decision-making. Specifically, the Council requested UNMISS to ensure that its deterrence of violence against civilians, proactive deployment and identification of threats and attacks against civilians also included areas of potential return.<sup>82</sup> In addition to safe, informed, voluntary and dignified return and relocation, the role of UNMISS in fostering a secure environment would also apply to the resettlement or integration of internally displaced persons into host communities.<sup>83</sup> UNMISS was requested to strengthen the implementation of a mission-wide early warning strategy which would include the establishment of an Information Acquisition Plan.<sup>84</sup>

The Council requested UNMISS to continue to intensify and extend its presence and active patrolling in areas of high risk of conflict, or where there were emerging protection risks or threats such as high rates of sexual and gender-based violence, among others, in order to contribute to a secure environment for the safe, informed, voluntary and dignified return, relocation, resettlement or integration into host communities for internally displaced persons and refugees.<sup>85</sup> The Council also requested UNMISS to prioritize enhanced force mobility to better execute its mandate in areas of emerging protection risks and emerging threats, including in remote locations, and encouraged the Mission to prioritize the deployment of forces with appropriate air, land and water assets.<sup>86</sup>

With regard to the political process, the Council called upon the Mission to assist all parties in their efforts to ensure the full, effective and meaningful participation of youth, women, diverse communities, faith groups and civil society in all conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts.<sup>87</sup> In the same resolution, UNMISS was tasked with assisting the parties to do more to ensure that the minimum commitments to the inclusion of women in the Revitalized Agreement, including the minimum of 35 per cent women's representation, were achieved and to ensure the full, effective and meaningful participation and involvement of women in all spheres and levels of political leadership, the peace process and the Transitional Government.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, the Council requested UNMISS to assist the parties in the implementation of

specific commitments and measures related to the prevention of and accountability for sexual violence.<sup>89</sup>

Regarding the future mandate of UNMISS, by resolution 2514 (2020), the Council requested the Secretary-General, in accordance with best practices, to conduct and provide, no later than 15 December 2020, an independent strategic review of UNMISS assessing the challenges to peace and security in South Sudan and providing detailed recommendations for the possible reconfiguration of the UNMISS mandate and its civilian, police and military components to account for developments in the peace process, based on broad consultations, including, but not limited to, relevant transitional government bodies, humanitarian and development actors and civil society organizations.<sup>90</sup>

By resolution 2521 (2020), in addition to reiterating the mandate of UNMISS to assist the Committee and the Panel of Experts on South Sudan, the Council recalled the mandate of UNMISS, as outlined in resolution 2514 (2020), regarding the monitoring, investigating, verifying and reporting of abuses and violations of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law.<sup>91</sup>

By resolution 2514 (2020), while deciding to maintain the overall force levels of UNMISS with a troop ceiling of 17,000, which included a regional protection force, and a police ceiling of 2,101 personnel, the Council specified that the ceiling included 88 corrections officers.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, by an exchange of letters dated 22 and 23 December between the Secretary-General and the President of the Council, the Council, noting emergency circumstances, approved the temporary redeployment, for a two-month period, of two infantry companies and two military utility helicopters from UNMISS to assist MINUSCA in reinforcing security in critical areas while maintaining the security of Bangui. The Council stated that any forces temporarily redeployed should continue to be counted against the authorized ceiling on military and civilian personnel of UNMISS.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Resolution 2514 (2020), para. 8 (a) (ii).

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 8 (a) (vii).

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 8 (a) (iii).

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 19.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 16.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 5.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 31.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 32.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 39. See also S/2020/1224, in which the Secretary-General transmitted the report on the independent strategic review of UNMISS.

<sup>91</sup> Resolution 2521 (2020), paras. 22–23. The resolution was adopted with 12 votes in favour and 3 abstentions. For more information on the adoption of the draft resolution, see part I, sect. 8.

<sup>92</sup> Resolution 2514 (2020), para. 7.

<sup>93</sup> See S/2020/1290 and S/2020/1291.

## United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

The Council established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) by resolution 2100 (2013) of 25 April 2013, under Chapter VII of the Charter. MINUSMA was authorized to use all necessary means to stabilize population centres and support the re-establishment of State authority, support the implementation of a transitional road map, protect civilians and United Nations personnel and property, assist the Malian authorities in promoting and protecting human rights, and support humanitarian assistance, national and international justice and cultural preservation.<sup>94</sup>

In 2020, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council adopted resolutions 2531 (2020) of 29 June and 2541 (2020) of 31 August concerning MINUSMA. The Council also adopted a presidential statement on 15 October addressing the Mission's mandate.<sup>95</sup> By resolution 2531 (2020), the mandate of MINUSMA was extended by one year, until 30 June 2021.<sup>96</sup>

During the period under review, the Council maintained the overall mandate of MINUSMA with several modifications and additions. By resolution 2531 (2020), the Council welcomed and expressed its full support for the implementation of the adaptation plan of MINUSMA with a view to improving the Mission's support to the implementation of the 2015 Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, the stabilization and restoration of State authority in the centre of the country and enhancing the protection of civilians.<sup>97</sup> The Council reiterated the strategic priorities of MINUSMA, namely to support the implementation of the Agreement and to facilitate the implementation of the *Stratégie de stabilisation du centre du Mali* in a comprehensive and politically led manner, with a view to protecting civilians, reducing intercommunal violence and re-establishing State authority, State presence and basic social services in central Mali.<sup>98</sup> The Council reiterated that the mandate of MINUSMA should be implemented based on a

prioritization of tasks,<sup>99</sup> and it maintained the priority tasks related to support to the implementation of the Agreement; support to the stabilization and restoration of State authority in the centre; the protection of civilians; good offices and reconciliation; the promotion and protection of human rights; and humanitarian assistance.<sup>100</sup>

The Council made several modifications to the tasks of MINUSMA in the framework of those priorities. Regarding the implementation of the Agreement, the support, monitoring and supervision of the ceasefire by MINUSMA was expanded to include the designation of weapon-free areas.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, the Mission's support to the implementation of the reconciliation and justice measures of the Agreement would encompass the follow-up of the recommendations of the International Commission of Inquiry.<sup>102</sup> MINUSMA was tasked with promoting the meaningful participation of women peacebuilders and youth peacebuilders, among other groups, in the implementation of the Agreement and with helping the Government of Mali to raise awareness on its content and objectives.<sup>103</sup> In connection with the stabilization and restoration of State authority in the centre, MINUSMA was requested to support Malian authorities in fully and effectively implementing the stabilization strategy and meeting the priority measures set out in the resolution with respect to the re-establishment of State presence and State authority and fighting against impunity for violations and abuses of international human rights law and violations of international and humanitarian law, by bringing to justice the individuals accused of perpetrating the massacres that killed hundreds of civilians in 2019 and 2020 and by holding the corresponding trials.<sup>104</sup>

Regarding the protection of civilians, in addition to strengthening early warning mechanisms, the Council requested MINUSMA to systematically record and analyse its rate of response and to deploy civilian and uniformed gender advisers and focal points who will provide specific protection and assistance for women and children affected by armed conflict.<sup>105</sup> In connection with good offices and reconciliation, the resolution provided that the Mission's electoral support would include regional, local and legislative

<sup>94</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of MINUSMA, see previous supplements covering the period 2012–2019. For more information on the situation in Mali, see part I, sect. 12.

<sup>95</sup> See [S/PRST/2020/10](#).

<sup>96</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), para. 16.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, nineteenth preambular paragraph and para. 23. See also [S/2019/983](#), paras. 58–66.

<sup>98</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), para. 19.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 20.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 28.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 28 (a) (iii).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 28 (a) (iv). For more information on the International Commission of Inquiry on Mali, see part VI, sect. II.B.

<sup>103</sup> Resolution 2531 (2020), para. 28 (a) (v).

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 14 and 28 (b) (i).

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 28 (c) (ii)–(iii).

by-elections, as needed, and, as appropriate, a constitutional referendum, including through the provision of technical assistance and security arrangements.<sup>106</sup> MINUSMA was requested to improve efforts to monitor, document, conduct fact-finding missions on, help to investigate and report on violations of international humanitarian law and human rights violations and abuses, including trafficking in persons, and by liaising with relevant partners, as appropriate.<sup>107</sup> With regard to humanitarian assistance, MINUSMA was requested to closely coordinate its activities with humanitarian actors, including relevant United Nations agencies.<sup>108</sup>

The Council maintained the Mission's other tasks, with two modifications. By resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), the Council broadened the scope of the Mission's communication efforts to underscore the role and responsibilities of the Malian authorities to protect civilians and implement the Agreement.<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, while reiterating the task of MINUSMA of assisting and exchanging information with the Committee and the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution [2374 \(2017\)](#) on Mali, the Council requested the Mission to ensure that its activities in Mali were consistent with efforts to promote the implementation of the sanctions measures.<sup>110</sup>

The Council requested the Secretary-General, in coordination with the Instance de coordination au Mali and the Government of Mali and in consultation with other relevant partners, including United Nations agencies, Member States, regional organizations and independent experts, to develop a long-term road map assessing the continued challenges to peace and security in Mali and focusing on a set of realistic, relevant and clearly measurable benchmarks and conditions to be presented to the Council by 31 March 2021. The benchmarks and conditions would include progress in the implementation of the Agreement, the redeployment of the reformed and reconstituted Malian Defence and Security Forces, the full operationalization of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the implementation of the Mission's adaptation plan. The objective of the road map would be to ensure a phased, coordinated and deliberate transition of security responsibilities

opening the way for a possible exit strategy for MINUSMA, when the conditions were met, without jeopardizing the stability of Mali and its region.<sup>111</sup>

In its presidential statement adopted on 15 October, the Council, welcoming the establishment of the transitional arrangements in Mali, also requested MINUSMA, within its mandate and existing resources, to support the political transition in the country, particularly by exercising good offices, confidence-building and facilitation at the national and local levels and by supporting, together with the United Nations country team, the holding of inclusive, free, fair, transparent and credible elections, conducted in a peaceful environment, including through the provision of technical assistance and security arrangements, consistent with the provisions of the Agreement.<sup>112</sup>

The Council maintained the composition of MINUSMA during the reporting period.<sup>113</sup>

### **United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) was established by the Council on 10 April 2014 by resolution [2149 \(2014\)](#), under Chapter VII of the Charter. MINUSCA was authorized to take all necessary means to, inter alia, protect civilians and United Nations personnel and property; support the implementation of the transition process; facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance; promote and protect human rights; support justice and the rule of law; and support the implementation of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation strategies.<sup>114</sup>

In 2020, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council adopted resolutions [2507 \(2020\)](#) of 31 January, [2536 \(2020\)](#) of 28 July and [2552 \(2020\)](#) of 12 November concerning MINUSCA. By resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of MINUSCA for one year, until 15 November 2021.<sup>115</sup>

By resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), the Council maintained the strategic objective of MINUSCA to

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., para. 28 (d) (iii).

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., para. 28 (e) (ii).

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., para. 28 (f).

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., para. 27.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., para. 29 (b). In paragraph 3 of resolution [2541 \(2020\)](#), the Council reiterated the request to MINUSMA to assist the Committee and the Panel of Experts, within its mandate and capabilities.

<sup>111</sup> Resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), para. 64.

<sup>112</sup> [S/PRST/2020/10](#), first and last paragraphs.

<sup>113</sup> Resolution [2531 \(2020\)](#), para. 17.

<sup>114</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of MINUSCA, see previous supplements covering the period 2014–2019. For more information on the situation in the Central African Republic, see part I, sect. 5.

<sup>115</sup> Resolution [2552 \(2020\)](#), para. 26.



support the creation of the political, security and institutional conditions conducive to the sustainable reduction of the presence of, and threat posed by, armed groups through a comprehensive approach and proactive and robust posture.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, recalling that the mandate of MINUSCA should be implemented based on a prioritization of tasks, the Council reiterated, with several modifications, the Mission's five priority tasks, namely the protection of civilians; the provision of good offices and support to the peace process, including the implementation of the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic; preparation for the presidential, legislative and local elections in 2020 and 2021; the creation of a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance; and the protection of United Nations personnel, installations, equipment and goods.<sup>117</sup>

In terms of modifications to the Mission's tasks, the Council specified that the assistance of MINUSCA to the Central African Republic authorities for the 2020 and 2021 elections would consist of providing good offices, including to encourage dialogue among all political stakeholders, in an inclusive manner, and to mitigate tensions throughout the electoral period. The Mission would also provide security, operational, logistical and, as appropriate, technical support, in particular to facilitate access to remote areas, and coordinate international electoral assistance.<sup>118</sup> With regard to humanitarian assistance, the Council, expressing serious concern about the dire humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic and recalling its resolution 2532 (2020), expanded the mandate to include alleviating the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>119</sup>

The Council reiterated, also with certain modifications, the other tasks of MINUSCA, while underscoring that they were mutually reinforcing with the aforementioned priority tasks. Those tasks related to support for the extension of State authority, the deployment of security forces and the preservation of territorial integrity; security sector reform; disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation; the promotion and protection of human rights; and support for national and international justice, the fight against impunity and the rule of law.<sup>120</sup> Regarding security sector reform, the Council mandated MINUSCA to coordinate with the newly

established European Union Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic and the African Union Observer Mission in the Central African Republic, in addition to the European Union Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic and other international partners of the Central African Republic, including China, France, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, in providing strategic and technical advice to the national authorities in implementing the national strategy on security sector reform and the national defence plan.<sup>121</sup> The Council also tasked MINUSCA with coordinating technical assistance and training between the international partners in the country, in particular with the European Union Military Training and Advisory Missions in the Central African Republic, in order to ensure a clear distribution of tasks in the field of security sector reform.<sup>122</sup>

The Council also reiterated the Mission's additional tasks of managing the environmental impact of its operations,<sup>123</sup> child protection,<sup>124</sup> gender mainstreaming<sup>125</sup> and weapons and ammunition management, which was expanded to include technical assistance to the national authorities in the implementation of the national action plan of the National Commission to Combat the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Commission nationale de lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères et de petit calibre).<sup>126</sup> By resolution 2552 (2020), the Council reiterated the tasks of MINUSCA in support of the Committee and the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013).<sup>127</sup> By resolutions 2507 (2020) and 2536 (2020), the Council also reiterated the task of MINUSCA to report on the contribution to security sector reform of the sanctions exemption for supplies of non-lethal equipment and provision of assistance to the security forces of the Central African Republic, including State civilian law enforcement institutions.<sup>128</sup>

Regarding the effectiveness of the Mission, the Council requested the Secretary-General, Member States and the Central African Republic authorities to

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., para. 28.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., para. 31.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., para. 31 (c).

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., fifteenth preambular paragraph and para. 31 (d).

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., para. 32.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., para. 32 (b) (i).

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., para. 32 (b) (iii).

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., para. 42.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., para. 43.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., para. 44.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., paras. 45–46.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., para. 33.

<sup>128</sup> Resolutions 2507 (2020) and 2536 (2020), para. 1 (b). For more information on the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic, see part IX, sect. I.

continue to take all appropriate measures to review and enhance the safety and security of the Mission's personnel, in line with resolution 2518 (2020).<sup>129</sup> On the Mission's future, the Council requested the Secretary-General to continue reviewing and reporting on a regular basis on the conditions required for the transition, drawdown and withdrawal of MINUSCA, in a manner which did not prejudice overall efforts to support long-term objectives for peace and stability.<sup>130</sup>

During the period, the Council decided to maintain the Mission's authorized troop and police levels.<sup>131</sup> Following rising tensions in the Central

<sup>129</sup> Resolution 2552 (2020), para. 37.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 53.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 27.

African Republic ahead of the presidential and legislative elections scheduled for 27 December, by an exchange of letters dated 22 and 23 December between the Secretary-General and the President of the Council, the Council, noting emergency circumstances, approved the temporary redeployment, for a two-month period, of two infantry companies and two military utility helicopters from UNMISS to assist MINUSCA in reinforcing security in critical areas while maintaining the security of Bangui. The Council stated that any forces temporarily redeployed should continue to be counted against the authorized ceiling on military and civilian personnel of UNMISS and not be counted against the ceiling of MINUSCA.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>132</sup> See S/2020/1290 and S/2020/1291.

## Asia

### United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan

The Council established the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) by resolution 47 (1948) of 21 April 1948. The first team of military observers, who eventually formed the nucleus of UNMOGIP, was deployed in January 1949 to the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan established by resolution 39 (1948). Following the termination of the Commission, the Council, by resolution 91 (1951), decided that

UNMOGIP would continue to supervise the ceasefire in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Since the renewed hostilities in 1971, the task of UNMOGIP has been to monitor developments pertaining to the strict observance of the ceasefire of 17 December 1971. In 2020, the Council did not discuss UNMOGIP or make changes to its composition or mandate, which remained open-ended.<sup>133</sup>

<sup>133</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNMOGIP, see *Repertoire, Supplement 1946–1951*, and subsequent supplements covering the period 1952–2019.

## Europe

### United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

The Council established the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) by resolution 186 (1964) of 4 March 1964. In the interest of preserving international peace and security, UNFICYP was mandated to use its best efforts to prevent a recurrence of fighting and, as necessary, to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and a return to normal conditions.<sup>134</sup>

In 2020, the Council adopted resolutions 2506 (2020) of 30 January and 2537 (2020) of 28 July in relation to UNFICYP. The Council extended the

mandate of the mission twice for a period of six months, the second time until 31 January 2021.<sup>135</sup>

By the two resolutions, the Council renewed the existing mandate of UNFICYP, with several new elements. By resolution 2506 (2020), the Council called for the establishment of an effective mechanism for direct military contacts between the sides and the relevant involved parties, and urged UNFICYP, as facilitator through its liaison role, to submit proposals in this regard.<sup>136</sup> The Council requested UNFICYP to take fully into account gender considerations as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate, while reiterating its request to the Secretary-General and troop- and police-contributing countries to increase the number of women

<sup>134</sup> For further information on the history of the mandate of UNFICYP, see previous supplements covering the period 1964–2019. For more information on the situation in Cyprus, see part I, sect. 17.

<sup>135</sup> Resolutions 2506 (2020), para. 10, and 2537 (2020), para. 11.

<sup>136</sup> Resolution 2506 (2020), para. 6. See also resolution 2537 (2020), para. 6.



in the mission and ensure their full, equal and meaningful participation in all aspects of operations.<sup>137</sup>

The Council did not modify the composition of UNFICYP during the review period under review.

### **United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo**

The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established by the Council on 10 June 1999, by resolution [1244 \(1999\)](#), under Chapter VII of the Charter. The Council mandated

<sup>137</sup> Resolutions [2506 \(2020\)](#), para. 14, and [2537 \(2020\)](#), para. 15.

UNMIK to carry out a range of tasks, including promoting the establishment of substantial autonomy and self-government in Kosovo, performing basic civilian administrative functions, and organizing and overseeing the development of provisional institutions for democratic and autonomous self-government.<sup>138</sup> In 2020, the Council did not adopt any decisions relating to UNMIK and made no change to its composition or to its mandate, which remained open-ended.<sup>139</sup>

<sup>138</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNMIK, see previous supplements covering the period 1996–2019.

<sup>139</sup> For more information on Security Council resolutions [1160 \(1998\)](#), [1199 \(1998\)](#), [1203 \(1998\)](#), [1239 \(1999\)](#) and [1244 \(1999\)](#), see part I, sect. 18.B.

## **Middle East**

### **United Nations Truce Supervision Organization**

The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) was established by the Council on 29 May 1948, by resolution [50 \(1948\)](#), to assist the United Nations Mediator and the Truce Commission in supervising the observance of the truce following the end of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict. Since the establishment of UNTSO, the Council has assigned it different tasks without formally changing its mandate, including the supervision of the General Armistice, the supervision of the armistice following the Suez war, the supervision of the armistice between Egypt and Israel in the Sinai, and the supervision of the truce between Israel and Lebanon and Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic, in collaboration with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), respectively.<sup>140</sup>

In 2020, the Council did not make changes to the mandate or the composition of UNTSO, which remained open-ended. By resolutions [2530 \(2020\)](#) of 29 June and [2555 \(2020\)](#) of 18 December concerning the mandate of UNDOF, the Council encouraged the Department of Peace Operations, UNDOF and UNTSO to continue relevant discussions on recommendations from the 2018 independent review of UNDOF to improve mission performance and implementation of the mandate of UNDOF.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>140</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNTSO, see *Repertoire 1946–1951* and subsequent supplements covering the period 1952–2019. For more information on the situation in the Middle East, see part I, sect. 20.

<sup>141</sup> Resolutions [2530 \(2020\)](#) and [2555 \(2020\)](#), para. 12.

### **United Nations Disengagement Observer Force**

The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was established by the Council on 31 May 1974, by resolution [350 \(1974\)](#), following the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces, in the Golan Heights. Since then, UNDOF has remained in the area to maintain the ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic and to supervise the implementation of the Agreement and the areas of separation and limitation.<sup>142</sup>

In 2020, the Council adopted resolutions [2530 \(2020\)](#) of 29 June and [2555 \(2020\)](#) of 18 December concerning UNDOF. The Council extended the mandate of the mission twice for a period of six months each time, the second time until 30 June 2021.<sup>143</sup>

By resolution [2530 \(2020\)](#), the Council requested UNDOF, within existing capacities and resources, to take all appropriate steps to protect the safety, security and health of all mission personnel, in line with resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#), taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>144</sup> By resolution [2555 \(2020\)](#), the Council requested the Secretary-General and troop- and police-contributing countries to seek to increase the number of women in UNDOF, as well as

<sup>142</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNDOF, see previous supplements covering the period 1972–2019.

<sup>143</sup> Resolutions [2530 \(2020\)](#) and [2555 \(2020\)](#), para. 15. For more information on the situation in the Middle East, see part I, sect. 20.

<sup>144</sup> Resolution [2530 \(2020\)](#), para. 8. See also resolution [2555 \(2020\)](#), para. 8.

to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of uniformed and civilian women at all levels, and in all positions, including senior leadership positions, and to implement other relevant provisions of resolution 2538 (2020).<sup>145</sup> By resolutions 2530 (2020) and 2555 (2020), the Council reiterated its encouragement to the Department of Peace Operations, UNDOF and UNTSO to continue relevant discussions on recommendations from the 2018 independent review of UNDOF to improve its performance and the implementation of its mandate.<sup>146</sup> The Council did not modify the composition of UNDOF during the reporting period.

### United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was established by the Council on 19 March 1978, by resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978), to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon, restore international peace and security, and assist the Government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in the area. By resolution 1701 (2006), to address the continuing hostilities in Lebanon, the Council expanded the mandate of UNIFIL to include monitoring the cessation of hostilities; accompanying and supporting the Lebanese Armed Forces; extending its assistance to help to ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons; and assisting the Government of Lebanon in securing its borders and other entry points to prevent the entry of arms or related materiel.<sup>147</sup>

In 2020, by resolution 2539 (2020) of 28 August, the Council extended the mandate of UNIFIL for one year, until 31 August 2021.<sup>148</sup> The resolution was adopted further to the letter dated 29 July from the Secretary-General to the President of the Council recommending the extension of the mandate of the mission.<sup>149</sup>

In resolution 2539 (2020), the Council welcomed the Secretary-General's assessment of UNIFIL dated 1 June, submitted pursuant to resolution 2485 (2019), and it noted with appreciation the recommendations to further increase the efficiency and effectiveness of UNIFIL.<sup>150</sup> The Council reiterated the overall mandate of UNIFIL, with several additions. In the aftermath of the explosions that occurred in the port of Beirut on 4 August 2020, the Council authorized UNIFIL, without prejudice to the implementation of its mandate and within existing resources, to take temporary and special measures to provide support to Lebanon and its people. The Council requested the Secretary-General to conduct an assessment of the impact of those explosions on UNIFIL personnel, capacities and operations, together with recommendations to address such impact, with a view to maintaining the continuity and effectiveness of the mission's operations.<sup>151</sup>

Welcoming the constructive role played by the tripartite mechanism in facilitating coordination and in de-escalating tensions, the Council encouraged UNIFIL, in close coordination with the parties, to implement measures to further reinforce the capacities of the mechanism, including the creation of additional ad hoc subcommittees, as recommended in the assessment report of the Secretary-General.<sup>152</sup> Reiterating the request to UNIFIL to fully take into account gender considerations as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate, the Council tasked the mission with supporting the implementation of the national action plan on women and peace and security, including to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence, and requested enhanced reporting on the issue.<sup>153</sup>

The Council welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the assessment of the continued relevance of the resources of UNIFIL and options for improving efficiency and effectiveness between UNIFIL and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon. In that connection, the Council requested the Secretary-General to elaborate a detailed plan, with timelines and specific modalities, in full and close consultation with the parties, including Lebanon, the troop-contributing countries and the members of the Council, to implement recommendations, as appropriate, and to present the

<sup>145</sup> Resolution 2555 (2020), para. 13.

<sup>146</sup> Resolutions 2530 (2020) and 2555 (2020), para. 12. See also S/2018/1088, in which the Secretary-General provided an overview of the recommendations of the independent review of the Force's mandate.

<sup>147</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNIFIL, see previous supplements covering the period 1975–2019. For more information on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question and the situation in the Middle East, see part I, sects. 20 and 21.

<sup>148</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., sixth preambular paragraph. See also S/2020/760.

<sup>150</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), thirty-third preambular paragraph. See also S/2020/473.

<sup>151</sup> Resolution 2539 (2020), para. 28.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., para. 12.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., para. 26.

first elements of the plan within 60 days after the adoption of the resolution.<sup>154</sup>

The Council commended UNIFIL for the preventive measures taken to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and recalled resolution 2532 (2020) and its request to the Secretary-General to instruct peacekeeping operations to provide support to host country authorities in their efforts to contain the pandemic and its request to take all appropriate steps to protect the safety, security and health of all United Nations personnel in United Nations peace operations, while maintaining the continuity of operations, and to take further steps towards the provision of training for peacekeeping personnel related to preventing the spread of COVID-19.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., para. 8.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., fifth preambular paragraph.

Recognizing that UNIFIL had successfully implemented its mandate since 2006 and had allowed for maintaining peace and security since then, the Council authorized the reduction of the troop ceiling set out in resolution 1701 (2006) from 15,000 troops to 13,000 troops, without prejudice to the possibility for the force strength to be increased in the future in case a degraded security situation required such increase for the implementation of resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978) and 1701 (2006).<sup>156</sup> The Council reiterated its call for the Government of Lebanon to present a plan to increase its naval capabilities as soon as possible with the goal of ultimately decreasing the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force and transitioning its responsibilities to the Lebanese Armed Forces.<sup>157</sup>

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., para. 29.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., para. 7.

## II. Special political missions

### Note

Section II focuses on the decisions adopted by the Security Council during the period under review concerning the establishment and termination of special political missions,<sup>158</sup> as well as the changes to their mandates.<sup>159</sup>

### Overview of special political missions during 2020

In 2020, the Council oversaw 13 special political missions. Six were based in Africa, three in the Middle East and two each in the Americas and Asia. Their nature varied, from regional offices such as the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), to missions with limited mandates to monitor and support the implementation of ceasefires and peace agreements such as the United

<sup>158</sup> Special political missions described in the present part include regional offices and offices in support of political processes. Other types of special political missions, such as offices of special and personal envoys, advisers or representatives of the Secretary-General, sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels and other entities and mechanisms, are covered in parts VII and IX of the present Supplement.

<sup>159</sup> For information on the envoys, advisers and representatives of the Secretary-General whose mandates relate to the Council's responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, other than those appointed as heads of peacekeeping operations or special political missions, see part IX, sect. VI.

Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA), and larger assistance missions such as the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

### *Newly established special political missions, terminations and extensions of mandates*

The Council established one and terminated one special political mission during the period under review. By resolution 2524 (2020) of 3 June, the Council established the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) for an initial period of 12 months.<sup>160</sup> By resolution 2512 (2020) of 28 February, the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) for a final period of 10 months, until 31 December 2020.<sup>161</sup> The Council extended the mandates of UNSMIL, UNSOM, UNOWAS, the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), UNAMA, UNAMI and UNMHA. The mandate of UNOCA had been renewed in 2018 for a three-year period until 31 August 2021, while the mandates of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for

<sup>160</sup> Resolution 2524 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>161</sup> Resolution 2512 (2020), para. 1.

Central Asia and the Office of the Special Coordinator for Lebanon remained open-ended.

*Mandates of special political missions*

In 2020, for most special political missions, the Council prioritized mandated tasks related to the provision of good offices support for the implementation of peace agreements, inclusive peace processes, political dialogue and national and local-level reconciliation, as well as good offices and technical support for political transitions involving elections and constitutional review processes. The Council also underlined the importance of strengthening good governance and the capacity of national institutions, the rule of law, and support for the promotion of human rights and ensuring accountability. As part of those priorities, most missions were mandated to coordinate and support the mobilization of humanitarian and development assistance among a broad spectrum of United Nations, international, regional and subregional partners and stakeholders. Moreover, gender mainstreaming, including ensuring the full, meaningful and effective participation of women in political decision-making, featured as the most common cross-cutting element of mandates.

Regional offices, such as UNOCA and UNOWAS, continued to monitor and analyse emerging threats to peace and security, to support the strengthening of local capacities for conflict prevention and early warning and to address cross-border and cross-cutting issues and challenges such as transnational organized crime, terrorism and violent extremism, illicit trafficking, transhumance and conflicts between farmers and herders, and the security implications of climate change. The mandates of BINUH and the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia placed particular emphasis on the capacity-building of national justice and rule of law institutions and the political, economic and social reincorporation of former armed group members, respectively. UNMHA retained its relatively narrow mandate to oversee and facilitate the implementation of ceasefire arrangements.

The Council modified the mandates of six missions, namely UNIOGBIS, UNSMIL, UNSOM, UNOWAS, UNAMA and UNAMI, and defined the new mandate of UNITAMS.

In the context of the political transition in the Sudan, UNITAMS was given a broad mandate to support various aspects of the process, including technical assistance for constitution drafting and preparations for elections, and the implementation of human rights, equality, accountability and the rule of

law, in particular the promotion of women's rights.<sup>162</sup> In view of the further progress in peace talks between the Government of the Sudan and Sudanese armed groups in Juba and the beginning of the intra-Afghan negotiations in Doha, the Council emphasized the good offices role of UNITAMS and UNAMA, respectively, with the former also tasked with supporting the future implementation of an agreement, should one be reached.<sup>163</sup> UNSMIL was requested to use its good offices and mediation to help to achieve a ceasefire in Libya, and UNSMIL and UNITAMS were tasked with the implementation of ceasefires once they were achieved.<sup>164</sup>

Electoral support continued to feature prominently in the Council's changes to mandates of special political missions. For example, UNSOM and UNAMI were requested to provide good offices, technical, operational and logistical support to national institutions for the preparation of future elections in Somalia and Iraq, respectively.<sup>165</sup> UNSOM was also requested to strengthen the coordination of international electoral support to Somalia.<sup>166</sup> Following the completion of the electoral cycle in Guinea-Bissau in 2019, UNIOGBIS was requested to support national authorities in bringing the resulting electoral dispute to a peaceful, stable and democratic conclusion and to support the implementation of electoral legislative reforms.<sup>167</sup>

The Council also made several additions to the peacebuilding-related tasks of missions. For example, as part of its new mandate, UNITAMS was tasked with supporting various aspects of national peacebuilding efforts, including conflict prevention, mitigation and reconciliation, community violence reduction and durable solutions for internally displaced persons and refugees.<sup>168</sup> UNSOM was requested to support efforts to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Somalia and to provide strategic advice to institutional capacity-building.<sup>169</sup> Both missions were requested to collaborate with international financial institutions on the mobilization

<sup>162</sup> Resolution 2524 (2020), para. 2 (i).

<sup>163</sup> In connection with UNITAMS, see resolution 2524 (2020), para. 2 (ii); and, in connection with UNAMA, see resolution 2543 (2020), para. 6 (a).

<sup>164</sup> In connection with UNSMIL, see resolution 2542 (2020), paras. 1 (iv) and 2; and, in connection with UNITAMS, see resolution 2524 (2020), para. 2 (ii).

<sup>165</sup> In connection with UNSOM, see resolution 2540 (2020), para. 5 (c); and, in connection with UNAMI, see resolution 2522 (2020), para. 2 (b) (i).

<sup>166</sup> Resolution 2540 (2020), para. 5 (c).

<sup>167</sup> Resolution 2512 (2020), paras. 2 (a) and 4 (a).

<sup>168</sup> Resolution 2524 (2020), para. 2 (iii).

<sup>169</sup> Resolution 2540 (2020), para. 5 (l).



of economic and development assistance and to ensure integrated cooperation with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.<sup>170</sup> Similarly, UNOWAS was tasked with coordinating with international donors to promote conditions and capacities for sustainable peace and development and with international partners to conduct analysis and research on transnational issues relevant to peace and security and the links to humanitarian action and sustainable development.<sup>171</sup>

On cross-cutting issues, UNITAMS and UNAMI were requested to take into account gender considerations and to mainstream gender as part of their mandates, and UNSOM, UNITAMS and UNAMI were mandated to assist national authorities in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation and the empowerment of women in political decision-making at all levels.<sup>172</sup> UNSMIL was requested to provide enhanced reporting on the participation of women in political processes and the protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence.<sup>173</sup> UNOWAS was tasked with implementing the youth and peace and security agenda, UNSOM and UNAMA with paying particular attention to the empowerment and protection of minority communities, and UNITAMS with supporting the political participation of civil society, women, youth, internally displaced persons and other marginalized groups.<sup>174</sup> The Council specified that UNOWAS would take into consideration the adverse implications of climate change, energy poverty, ecological changes and natural disasters, among other factors, including by assisting the Governments in West Africa and the Sahel and the United Nations system in undertaking risk assessments and risk management strategies relating to those factors.<sup>175</sup>

With regard to protection and human rights mandates, UNITAMS was mandated to provide support to national and local authorities on civilian protection and the strengthening of the protection of human rights.<sup>176</sup> UNSMIL and UNSOM

were requested to include the protection of women and girls, including from sexual and gender-based violence, in their human rights monitoring, reporting and capacity-building mandates, with UNSMIL also being encouraged to deploy women and child protection advisers;<sup>177</sup> UNAMA was requested to strengthen its capacity to report on violations and abuses against children and to support national efforts to strengthen the protection of children.<sup>178</sup>

As several special political missions were undergoing transitions, the Council either outlined or provided additional details to existing modalities to guide those processes. In the context of the drawdown and closure of UNIOGBIS, the Secretary-General was requested to conduct capacity mapping of the United Nations country team and other partners to which the mission would transfer its tasks and develop a vision and plan for the future United Nations footprint in Guinea-Bissau.<sup>179</sup> UNIOGBIS was also tasked with reducing the impact of its closure on the host country environment.<sup>180</sup> In the same context, the Council encouraged UNOWAS to continue its preparations for the assumption of some of the former tasks of UNIOGBIS and, as part of its monitoring and good offices role, to support countries in which United Nations presences were undergoing reconfiguration or transition through conflict prevention and peace consolidation efforts.<sup>181</sup> With the expected closure of UNAMID, the Council requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the transition to UNITAMS was phased, sequenced and efficient, and requested the two missions to establish a coordination mechanism to determine the modalities and timelines for the transition of responsibilities.<sup>182</sup> The Council tasked UNSOM with providing additional support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) on combat mentoring to the Somali National Army in accordance with the plans for the transition of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the national forces.<sup>183</sup>

Tables 4 and 5 provide an overview of the mandates of special political missions in 2020, showing the range of tasks mandated by the Council. The mandates reflected in the tables include: (a) tasks mandated by the Council in decisions adopted during the reporting period; (b) tasks mandated in previous periods and specifically reiterated by the Council

<sup>170</sup> In connection with UNSOM, see resolution 2540 (2020), para. 5 (l); and, in connection with UNITAMS, see resolution 2524 (2020), para. 2 (iv).

<sup>171</sup> S/2020/85, annex, functions 1.4 and 2.3.

<sup>172</sup> In connection with UNSOM, see resolution 2540 (2020), para. 5 (d); in connection with UNITAMS, see resolution 2524 (2020), para. 8; and, in connection with UNAMI, see resolution 2522 (2020), para. 2 (e).

<sup>173</sup> Resolution 2542 (2020), para. 8.

<sup>174</sup> In connection with UNOWAS, see S/2020/85, annex, function 1.4; in connection with UNSOM, see resolution 2540 (2020), para. 5 (d); in connection with UNAMA, see resolution 2543 (2020), para. 6 (f); and, in connection with UNITAMS, see resolution 2524 (2020), para. 2 (ii).

<sup>175</sup> S/2020/85, annex, function 2.4.

<sup>176</sup> Resolution 2524 (2020), para. 2 (iii).

<sup>177</sup> In connection with UNSMIL, see resolution 2542 (2020), para. 1 (ix); and, in connection with UNSOM, see resolution 2540 (2020), para. 5 (h).

<sup>178</sup> Resolution 2543 (2020), para. 6 (g).

<sup>179</sup> Resolution 2512 (2020), para. 6.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 7.

<sup>181</sup> S/PRST/2020/7, sixteenth paragraph, and S/2020/85, annex, function 1.3.

<sup>182</sup> Resolution 2524 (2020), para. 14.

<sup>183</sup> Resolution 2520 (2020), para. 8.

during the period under review; and (c) tasks of missions with open-ended or multi-year mandates adopted in previous periods. The tables are provided for information purposes only and do not reflect any position or view of the Council with regard to the status of the mandates of the field missions concerned.

Table 4  
Mandates of special political missions, 2020: Africa

Mandate	UNIOGBIS <sup>a</sup>	UNOCA	UNSMIL	UNSOM	UNOWAS	UNITAMS
Chapter VII						
Ceasefire monitoring			X			X
Civil-military coordination						
Demilitarization and arms management		X	X	X		X
Electoral assistance	X	X	X	X	X	X
Human rights-related <sup>b</sup>	X	X	X	X	X	X
Humanitarian support			X		X	X
International cooperation and coordination	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maritime security		X		X	X	
Mission impact assessment	X					
Political process	X	X	X	X	X	X
Protection of civilians						X
Public information					X	X
Rule of law/judicial matters	X		X	X	X	X
Security sector reform		X		X	X	X
Support to military				X		
Support to police				X		X
Support to sanctions regimes			X			X
Support to State institutions	X		X	X		X

*Abbreviations:* UNIOGBIS, United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau; UNOCA, United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa; UNSMIL, United Nations Support Mission in Libya; UNSOM, United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia; UNOWAS, United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel; UNITAMS, United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan.

<sup>a</sup> By resolution 2512 (2020), the Council extended the mandate of UNIOGBIS, as set out in the table, for a final period until 31 December 2020.

<sup>b</sup> Includes tasks related to human rights; children and armed conflict; women and peace and security; and youth and peace and security.



Table 5  
 Mandates of special political missions, 2020: Americas, Asia and Middle East

<i>Mandate</i>	<i>United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia</i>	<i>BINUH</i>	<i>UNAMA</i>	<i>United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia</i>	<i>UNAMI</i>	<i>Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon</i>	<i>UNMHA</i>
Chapter VII							
Ceasefire monitoring	X						X
Civilian-military coordination			X				
Demilitarization and arms management	X	X			X		X
Electoral assistance		X	X		X		
Human rights-related <sup>a</sup>		X	X		X		
Humanitarian support			X		X		
International cooperation and coordination	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Political process	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Protection of civilians			X				
Public information							
Rule of law/judicial matters		X	X		X		
Security monitoring; patrolling; deterrence							X
Security sector reform					X		
Support to police		X					
Support to sanctions regimes							
Support to State institutions			X		X		

*Abbreviations:* BINUH, United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti; UNAMA, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan; UNAMI, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq; UNMHA, United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement.

<sup>a</sup> Includes tasks related to human rights; children and armed conflict; women and peace and security; and youth and peace and security.

## Africa

### United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau

The United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) was established by the Council by resolution [1876 \(2009\)](#) of 26 June 2009 to succeed the United Nations Peacebuilding

Support Office in Guinea-Bissau. UNIOGBIS was mandated to, inter alia, assist the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in Guinea-Bissau, strengthen the capacities of national institutions to maintain constitutional order, public security and full respect for the rule of law, support an inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation process,

provide strategic and technical support in security sector reform, undertake human rights promotion, protection and monitoring, and enhance cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.<sup>184</sup>

In 2020, by resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#) of 28 February, the Council extended the mandate of UNIOGBIS for a final period of 10 months, until 31 December 2020.<sup>185</sup>

By resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#), following the peaceful holding of legislative and presidential elections in Guinea-Bissau in 2019, the Council proceeded with the planned reconfiguration and closure of UNIOGBIS and modified the Mission's final mandate.<sup>186</sup> The Council commended the successful completion of phase I (electoral phase) in the reconfiguration of UNIOGBIS and the closure of all of the mission's regional offices, based on the recommendations of the Secretary-General and as provided in resolution [2458 \(2019\)](#).<sup>187</sup> The Council endorsed the reprioritization of the mission's tasks and planning for its phased drawdown outlined in the report of the Secretary-General, including through the implementation of joint programmatic activities with national partners and the United Nations country team, supported by the Peacebuilding Fund, and adjusted the phases for the mission's reconfiguration.<sup>188</sup>

During phase II (post-electoral phase), the Council requested UNIOGBIS to focus on continuing to perform its good offices function, in coordination with international partners, including the group of five international partners represented in Guinea-Bissau, to support the Bissau-Guinean authorities in bringing the electoral dispute to a peaceful, stable and democratic conclusion.<sup>189</sup> The Council also requested UNIOGBIS to focus on establishing the conditions conducive to the implementation of the reform agenda, in accordance with the Conakry Agreement and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Road Map for the Resolution of the Political Crisis in Guinea-Bissau, including through the United Nations transition plan, encapsulated in the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021–2025).<sup>190</sup> As part of phase III (transition phase),

UNIOGBIS was requested to continue to implement its transition plan for the gradual drawing down and transfer of tasks to the United Nations country team, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and other regional and international partners, towards mandate completion by 31 December 2020.<sup>191</sup>

In terms of the mandated tasks, the Council reiterated the two existing priorities of UNIOGBIS with some modifications. The Council noted that, as the first priority, the mission's support for the full implementation of the Conakry Agreement and the ECOWAS six-point Road Map, particularly with regard to strengthening democratic governance, would include the reform of the Constitution, the electoral law and the Framework Law on Political Parties.<sup>192</sup> The Council reiterated the priority to provide support, including technical assistance, to the national authorities to expedite and complete the review of the Constitution and, with the completion of the electoral cycle, removed the mission's priority to provide good offices support to the electoral process.<sup>193</sup> Beyond the priority tasks, resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#) provided that UNIOGBIS would continue to support the Government of Guinea-Bissau in strengthening democratic institutions, promoting and protecting human rights, combating drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, incorporating a gender perspective into peacebuilding, and mobilizing international assistance for the implementation of the reforms.<sup>194</sup> In the same resolution, the Council decided that UNIOGBIS would continue its efforts to reduce the impact of its closure on the host country environment, ensuring that an environmental assessment was carried out of the sites remaining to be closed.<sup>195</sup>

In connection with the reconfiguration and closure of UNIOGBIS, the Council requested the Secretary-General to conduct comprehensive capacity mapping of the United Nations country team and other partners to which the Mission would transfer tasks and develop a complementary inclusive vision and plan for the United Nations country team footprint.<sup>196</sup> The Secretary-General was also requested to ensure that the transition process was consistently gender-responsive.<sup>197</sup> Finally, the Council requested the Secretary-General to start the liquidation of UNIOGBIS immediately following the mandate completion date of 31 December 2020, once all

<sup>184</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNIOGBIS, see previous supplements covering the period 2008–2019.

<sup>185</sup> Resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#), para. 1.

<sup>186</sup> For more information on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, see part I, sect. 6.

<sup>187</sup> Resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#), para. 2. See also resolution [2458 \(2019\)](#), paras. 2 (a) and (b), and [S/2018/1086](#).

<sup>188</sup> Resolution [2512 \(2020\)](#), para. 2.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2 (a).

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2 (b).

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4 (a).

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 4 (b).

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 5.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 7.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 6.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 18.

substantive staff had left the mission, and end the liquidation process no later than 28 February 2021.<sup>198</sup>

### United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa

The United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) was established by an exchange of letters dated 11 December 2009 and 30 August 2010 between the Secretary-General and the President of the Council.<sup>199</sup> The functions of UNOCA included cooperating with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and other regional partners in the promotion of peace and stability in the broader subregion, to carry out good offices roles in the areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, to strengthen the capacity of the Department of Political Affairs to advise the Secretary-General on matters relating to peace and security in the region, to promote an integrated subregional approach and facilitate coordination and information exchange among United Nations organizations and partners in the subregion, and to report to Headquarters on developments of subregional significance. UNOCA was subsequently mandated to promote efforts to address emerging security and cross-border threats, to incorporate gender perspectives in the implementation of its mandate and to take into consideration in its activities climate and ecological change and natural disasters on the stability of the Central African region.<sup>200</sup>

In 2020, the Council did not adopt any decisions concerning UNOCA, including with regard to its mandate, which had been renewed from 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2021 by an exchange of letters between the Secretary-General and the President of the Council.<sup>201</sup>

### United Nations Support Mission in Libya

By resolution 2009 (2011) of 16 September 2011, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council established the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) with a mandate to support Libyan national efforts to restore public security and order and promote the rule of law, undertake inclusive political

dialogue and promote national reconciliation, extend State authority, promote and protect human rights and support transitional justice, initiate economic recovery, and coordinate international support.<sup>202</sup>

In 2020, the Council adopted resolutions 2509 (2020) of 11 February and 2542 (2020) of 15 September in connection with the mandate of UNSMIL. By resolution 2542 (2020), the Council extended the mandate of UNSMIL for one year, until 15 September 2021.<sup>203</sup>

By resolution 2509 (2020), acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council reiterated the mandate of UNSMIL to cooperate fully with the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya and the Panel of Experts.<sup>204</sup>

By resolution 2542 (2020), the Council reiterated the existing mandate of UNSMIL as defined by resolution 2486 (2019) and removed the distinction between tasks that the Mission was to undertake “within operational and security constraints” and those for which no such limitation was indicated.<sup>205</sup> The Council also made some adjustments to tasks related to ceasefire monitoring, international and regional coordination, facilitation of humanitarian assistance, and human rights. Underscoring the importance of the central role of the United Nations in facilitating a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned inclusive political process and in achieving a lasting ceasefire, the Council decided that UNSMIL would exercise mediation and through its good offices further an inclusive political process and security and economic dialogue; further the continued implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement; help consolidate the governance, security and economic arrangements of the Government of National Accord; and support subsequent phases of the Libyan transition process. Furthermore, the Council added the task to help achieve a ceasefire and, once it was agreed by the Libyan parties, provide appropriate support for its implementation.<sup>206</sup>

The Council also modified the mandate of UNSMIL by requesting the Mission to coordinate and engage closely with international actors, including neighbouring and regional organizations, specified that

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 8.

<sup>199</sup> S/2009/697 and S/2010/457.

<sup>200</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNOCA, see previous supplements covering the period 2008–2019.

<sup>201</sup> S/2018/789 and S/2018/790. For more information on the Central African region, see part I, sect. 7.

<sup>202</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNSMIL, see previous supplements covering the period 2010–2019. For more information on the situation in Libya, see part I, sect. 11.

<sup>203</sup> Resolution 2542 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>204</sup> Resolution 2509 (2020), para. 13.

<sup>205</sup> See resolution 2486 (2019), para. 2, compared with resolution 2542 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>206</sup> Resolution 2542 (2020), fifth preambular paragraph and paras. 1 (i)–(v).

the Mission's provision of essential services and humanitarian assistance would include the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and decided that UNSMIL would monitor and report abuses and violations of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law, including sexual violence in conflict, notably through the effective deployment of women and child protection advisers.<sup>207</sup> The Council also reiterated the tasks related to supporting key Libyan institutions; supporting the securing of uncontrolled arms and related materiel and countering their proliferation; and coordinating international assistance and the provision of advice to Government of National Accord-led efforts to stabilize post-conflict zones, including those liberated from Da'esh.<sup>208</sup>

The Council reiterated its request for UNSMIL to take fully into account a gender perspective throughout its mandate and to assist the Government of National Accord in ensuring the full, effective and meaningful participation of women in the democratic transition, reconciliation efforts, the security sector and in national institutions, as well as the protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence, in line with resolution 1325 (2000), and requested enhanced reporting by UNSMIL on those issues.<sup>209</sup>

The Council modified the structure of UNSMIL and decided that the Mission would be led by a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General who would exercise overall leadership of the Mission with a particular focus on good offices and mediation with Libyan and international actors to end the conflict. Furthermore, under the authority of the Special Envoy, an UNSMIL Coordinator would be in charge of the Mission's management and day-to-day operations.<sup>210</sup>

The Council requested the Secretary-General to assess the steps required to reach a lasting ceasefire and the possible role of UNSMIL in providing scalable ceasefire support alongside his interim report on the proposals for effective ceasefire monitoring under the auspices of the United Nations and his recommendations to the Council on the options reflected in the operationalization paper, as requested in resolution 2510 (2020),<sup>211</sup> as well as the steps required to advance the

political process from its current trajectory, to be submitted no later than 60 days from the adoption of the resolution.<sup>212</sup> The Council also requested the Secretary-General to include a report on progress towards those objectives in his regular reporting.<sup>213</sup> The Council further requested the Secretary-General to conduct and provide an independent strategic review of UNSMIL, including an assessment and recommendations for improving the efficiency of the Mission's structure, the prioritization of tasks and the capacity and effectiveness of staffing, as well as a further assessment of the options for effective ceasefire monitoring under the auspices of the United Nations.<sup>214</sup> In addition, the Council requested the Secretary-General to include in his regular reporting the efforts of the United Nations to address the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of the pandemic on the ability of UNSMIL to deliver its mandated tasks.<sup>215</sup>

### United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia

By resolution 2102 (2013) of 2 May 2013, the Council established the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) with the mandate, inter alia, to provide good offices functions to support the Federal Government of Somalia in the peace and reconciliation process and to provide strategic policy advice on peacebuilding and State-building; to assist in the coordination of international donor support, in particular on security sector assistance and maritime security; to help to build the capacity of the Federal Government to promote respect for human rights, women's empowerment, child protection and the prevention of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence and the strengthening of justice institutions; and to monitor, help to investigate and report on abuses or violations of human rights.<sup>216</sup>

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., paras. 1 (vi), (viii) and (ix).

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., paras. 1 (vii), (x) and (xi).

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., para. 8.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., para. 2.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., para. 4. See also S/2020/63, annex II, in which the operationalization paper was transmitted to the Council. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 2510 (2020), the Council had requested the Secretary-General to make recommendations on the options reflected in the operationalization paper.

<sup>212</sup> Resolution 2542 (2020), para. 4. See also S/2020/1124, in which the Secretary-General transmitted the assessment and requested an extension of the deadline for the submission of the interim report until 30 December 2020; S/2020/1125, in which the President of the Council granted the request; and S/2020/1309, in which the Secretary-General transmitted the interim report on the proposed ceasefire monitoring arrangements in Libya.

<sup>213</sup> Resolution 2542 (2020), para. 4.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., para. 5.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., para. 6.

<sup>216</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNSOM, see previous supplements covering the period 2013–2019. For more information on the situation in Somalia, see part I, sect. 2.

In 2020, the Council adopted resolutions 2516 (2020) of 30 March, 2520 (2020) of 29 May, 2527 (2020) of 22 June and 2540 (2020) of 28 August concerning UNSOM. By resolutions 2516 (2020) and 2527 (2020), the Council provided for technical rollovers of the mandate of UNSOM for periods of three and two months, respectively.<sup>217</sup> By resolution 2540 (2020), the Council extended the mandate of UNSOM for a period of one year, until 31 August 2021.<sup>218</sup>

By resolution 2520 (2020), while extending its authorization for the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council underlined the necessity of taking a coordinated and cohesive approach to Somali-led political and security reforms and reiterated its call upon AMISOM, UNSOM, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), the Federal Government of Somalia and federal member states to increase coordination and collaboration at all levels.<sup>219</sup> The Council requested the African Union and UNSOM to provide additional support to AMISOM in its provision of combat mentoring support to the Somali National Army and underlined the importance of deploying those forces for delivery of the tasks set out in the updated Somali-led Transition Plan for the progressive transfer of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security institutions.<sup>220</sup>

By resolution 2540 (2020), the Council reiterated the mandate of UNSOM as defined by resolution 2461 (2019) and added several new tasks and additional elements to existing ones. Specifically, resolution 2540 (2020) provides that the support of UNSOM to inter- and intra-clan reconciliation should also include efforts in Galmudug and Jubaland and that the Mission should support efforts to strengthen the dialogue between the Federal Government and “Somaliland”.<sup>221</sup> Furthermore, the Council decided that the technical advice and capacity-building support of UNSOM to the Federal Government for the participation of all Somalis in reconciliation efforts, conflict resolution, peacebuilding and elections would also include support for the participation of minority clans.<sup>222</sup> The overall support of UNSOM to the Federal Government and the federal member states to accelerate government-led, inclusive politics, and reach a political agreement, would focus on delivering shared political and security

commitments.<sup>223</sup> The Mission would also support Somali commitments to ensure that women filled at least 30 per cent of the seats in both houses of Parliament and increase the participation and empowerment of women, minority communities and other marginalized groups at all decision-making levels.<sup>224</sup>

The Council expanded the Mission’s electoral support mandate even as it welcomed the commitments by Somali stakeholders to deepen federalism and conduct elections in 2020 and 2021 and the enactment in February 2020 of the Electoral Law.<sup>225</sup> Specifically, UNSOM was requested to provide support, through the exercise of its good offices and through technical, operational and logistical assistance to the Federal Government, the Somali Parliament and the National Independent Electoral Commission, for the delivery of elections which were free, fair, timely, peaceful, transparent, credible and inclusive, incorporating a direct voting component enabling as many citizens as possible to vote in 2020 and 2021. UNSOM was also to continue to support efforts to make progress towards the objective of universal elections and support strengthened coordination of international electoral support to Somalia.<sup>226</sup>

Regarding Somali security sector reform, in accordance with resolution 2540 (2020), UNSOM would provide support to the Federal Government and the federal member states to accelerate implementation of key reforms, in conjunction with international partners, AMISOM and UNSOS, including a coherent national security architecture with a military and civilian component, the delivery of the Somali-led Transition Plan, agreement on a federated justice and corrections model, and the establishment and strengthening of effective, accountable and constitutional rule of law institutions.<sup>227</sup> The Council decided that UNSOM would provide coordination and strategic advice to improve the operation of the comprehensive approach to security and collaboration between the Federal Government and international partners.<sup>228</sup> Moreover, the support of UNSOM to the implementation of the Somalia national strategy and action plan for preventing and countering violent extremism would also include efforts to strengthen the country’s capacity to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and support for its efforts to

<sup>217</sup> Resolutions 2516 (2020) and 2527 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>218</sup> Resolution 2540 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>219</sup> Resolution 2520 (2020), paras. 6 (a) and 9. For more information on AMISOM, see part VIII, sect. III.

<sup>220</sup> Resolution 2520 (2020), para. 8.

<sup>221</sup> Resolution 2540 (2020), para. 5 (b).

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (d).

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (a).

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (d).

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., ninth and eleventh preambular paragraphs.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (c).

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (e).

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (f).



become a State party to the international counter-terrorism conventions and protocols.<sup>229</sup>

The Council added a new task for UNSOM to provide support, within its mandate and existing resources, to the Federal Government in the implementation of the 2019 Mutual Accountability Framework.<sup>230</sup> The Council further elaborated on the peacebuilding aspect of the work of UNSOM and requested the Mission to support the country's efforts to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Specifically, working closely with the United Nations country team, UNSOM would provide strategic advice to institutional capacity-building, collaborate with the international financial institutions to support the mobilization of economic and development assistance, and ensure effective and integrated cooperation of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and promote cooperation with relevant partners, with a view to making maximum use of development financing in Somalia, including in response to flooding, locusts and the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>231</sup> UNSOM was also tasked with helping the Federal Government to establish frameworks for managing resources and power-sharing, in order to enable Somalia to strengthen revenue mobilization, resource allocation, budget execution and anti-corruption measures.<sup>232</sup>

In connection with the human rights mandate of UNSOM, the Council requested the Mission to provide support to United Nations entities to ensure system-wide implementation of the human rights due diligence policy across all United Nations support to AMISOM and the Somali security sector, to include a strong focus on strengthening engagement with the Government, including on implementation of mitigation, compliance and accountability measures.<sup>233</sup> UNSOM was also requested to focus its human rights-related technical advice and capacity-building support on protecting women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence; promoting accountability for human rights violations and abuses, including through working with civil society, reinforcing and aligning human rights across the security-related and humanitarian agendas; and monitoring and including information on the human rights situation in the Secretary-General's reporting.<sup>234</sup>

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (j).

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (i).

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (l).

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (k).

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (g).

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., para. 5 (h).

Finally, recalling its request in resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#) that the Secretary-General conduct an independent assessment by 10 January 2021 and present options on international support to the whole security environment in Somalia beyond 2021, the Council reiterated that options on the role of UNSOM in that regard should be provided as part of the independent assessment.<sup>235</sup>

## United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel

The United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) was established by an exchange of letters dated 14 and 28 January 2016 between the Secretary-General and the President of the Council, merging the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel with the United Nations Office for West Africa. The Council mandated UNOWAS to, inter alia, monitor political developments in West Africa and the Sahel and carry out good offices on behalf of the Secretary-General to assist in peacebuilding, sustaining peace efforts and enhancing subregional capacities for conflict prevention and mediation; enhance subregional capacities to address cross-border and cross-cutting threats to peace and security; support the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel and the coordination of international and regional engagements; and promote good governance, respect for the rule of law, and human rights and the mainstreaming of gender into conflict prevention and management initiatives. UNOWAS was subsequently mandated to take into account in its activities the adverse effects of climate and ecological change and natural disasters on the stability of West Africa and the Sahel region.<sup>236</sup>

By an exchange of letters dated 19 December 2019 and 31 January 2020 between the Secretary-General and the President of the Council, the mandate of UNOWAS was extended for a period of three years, from 1 February 2020 to 31 January 2023.<sup>237</sup> The Council also adopted two presidential statements concerning UNOWAS, on 11 February and 28 July.<sup>238</sup>

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., para. 14.

<sup>236</sup> For more information on the mandate of UNOWAS, see previous supplements covering the period 2016–2019. For more information on peace consolidation in West Africa, see part I, sect. 9.

<sup>237</sup> See [S/2019/1009](#) and [S/2020/85](#). See also [S/2019/1010](#), by which the Council provided for a one-month technical rollover of the existing mandate of UNOWAS until 31 January 2020.

<sup>238</sup> [S/PRST/2020/2](#) and [S/PRST/2020/7](#).



While maintaining the overall structure of the UNOWAS mandate, the Council made several modifications to the mission's four objectives: UNOWAS was mandated to monitor political developments in West Africa and the Sahel and carry out good offices and special assignments on behalf of the Secretary-General to support conflict prevention, peacebuilding, sustaining peace and mediation efforts in the subregion, in partnership with regional and subregional entities and other national and international actors, with specific attention to countries in which the United Nations presences were undergoing reconfiguration or transition, while mindful of the sustainable development context in the region; enhance regional and subregional partnerships to address cross-border and cross-cutting threats to peace and security in West Africa and the Sahel, in particular with regional and subregional entities; support, through political advocacy and convening, the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, and in line with United Nations reforms, enhance collaboration across the United Nations system and promote coherence in the international and regional response to the root causes and impact of the conflict in the Sahel; and promote good governance, respect for the rule of law, human rights and the mainstreaming of gender in conflict prevention, management and resolution initiatives in West Africa and the Sahel.<sup>239</sup>

Within the framework of those objectives, the Council also modified and added several new tasks. As part of the mission's first objective to monitor developments in West Africa and the Sahel and to carry out good offices, the Council requested UNOWAS to support countries in which United Nations presences were undergoing reconfiguration or transition through conflict prevention and peace consolidation efforts.<sup>240</sup> The mission's monitoring and analysis work would include updates on the humanitarian situation and humanitarian access.<sup>241</sup> In addition, UNOWAS was requested to perform its good offices role in West African countries in order to prevent conflict and election-related tensions, promote the youth and peace and security agenda and, in coordination with international donors, promote conditions for sustainable peace and development.<sup>242</sup>

Regarding cross-border and cross-cutting threats to peace and security, UNOWAS was requested to collate, analyse and/or, where appropriate, conduct regional research and analysis on transnational issues relevant to peace and security and the links to humanitarian action and sustainable development, in collaboration with the Regional United Nations Sustainable Development

Group, resident coordinators, humanitarian coordinators, United Nations country teams and other United Nations entities, as well as with international partners, regional and subregional organizations, think tanks and civil society.<sup>243</sup> Furthermore, UNOWAS would be required to take into consideration the adverse implications of climate change, energy poverty, ecological changes and natural disasters, among other factors, including by assisting the Governments of the region and the United Nations system in undertaking risk assessments and risk management strategies relating to those factors.<sup>244</sup> The Council added that the mission's awareness-raising and promotion of integrated and holistic responses would be conducted in collaboration with sustainable development efforts in West Africa and the Sahel and UNOCA in the Lake Chad basin region and that the development of networks of practitioners and subregional frameworks and mechanisms to address challenges in the subregion should also focus on conflict between farmers and herders.<sup>245</sup>

In connection with the promotion of good governance, UNOWAS was requested to focus on social cohesion and inclusive political dialogue by providing support for the building of local and national capacities to foster peace, strengthening the rule of law institutions and promoting good governance, promoting dialogue and mediation at the community, local and national levels, facilitating the full, effective and meaningful participation of women, youth and other relevant stakeholders and improving electoral processes.<sup>246</sup> Finally, the Council also made adjustments to the tasks of UNOWAS on the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel and the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in conflict prevention and management initiatives.<sup>247</sup>

In its presidential statement of 11 February concerning peace consolidation in West Africa, the Council reiterated its call upon UNOWAS to encourage all political stakeholders to use dialogue to resolve their differences with regard to the process of amendment or revision of their constitution.<sup>248</sup> Furthermore, the Council called upon UNOWAS, working with all elements of the United Nations system in headquarters, in West Africa and the Sahel, in particular the Regional United Nations Sustainable Development Group, to strengthen integrated responses to the challenges facing the region in order to ensure better coordination and efficiency of the international response to the needs of the people and communities of the Sahel region, and

<sup>239</sup> S/2020/85, annex, objectives 1–4.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., function 1.3.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., function 1.1.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., functions 1.2 and 1.4.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., function 2.3.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., function 2.4.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., functions 2.1 and 2.2.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., function 4.1.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., functions 3.1–3.4 and 4.3.

<sup>248</sup> S/PRST/2020/2, thirteenth paragraph.

encouraged joint annual reporting to the Peacebuilding Commission on the work to strengthen United Nations integrated efforts in that regard, particularly as related to the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel.<sup>249</sup>

Finally, in its presidential statement dated 28 July, the Council called once again upon all political stakeholders in Guinea to resume dialogue without delay, with a view to ensuring that electoral processes as well as political reforms were conducted with broad consensus, and encouraged the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNOWAS to continue carrying out good offices in that regard.<sup>250</sup> As the end of the mandate of UNIOGBIS approached, the Council encouraged UNOWAS to continue its preparations for the assumption of some of the former mission's functions.<sup>251</sup>

### United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan

By resolution 2524 (2020) of 3 June 2020, the Council established the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) for an initial period of 12 months, in the context of the drawdown and exit of UNAMID.<sup>252</sup> The Council decided that UNITAMS, as part of an integrated and unified United Nations structure in the Sudan, would have four strategic objectives, namely to assist the political transition in the Sudan, progress towards democratic governance, in the protection and promotion of human rights, and sustainable peace; to support peace processes and the implementation of future peace agreements; to assist peacebuilding, civilian protection and the rule of law, in particular in Darfur and Blue Nile and South Kordofan (Two Areas); and to support the mobilization of economic and development assistance and coordination of humanitarian assistance.<sup>253</sup>

Within the framework of the four strategic objectives, UNITAMS was requested to undertake several specific mandated tasks. As part of its support to the political transition in the Sudan, UNITAMS was requested to support the realization of the objectives of the Constitutional Document of 17 August 2019, provide technical assistance to the constitution drafting process, population census and preparation for elections, and support the implementation of the human rights, equality, accountability and rule of law

provisions of the Constitutional Document, in particular those that guaranteed women's rights.<sup>254</sup> Regarding the ongoing peace processes in the Sudan, UNITAMS would provide good offices and support the negotiations, including the meaningful participation of civil society, women, youth, refugees and internally displaced persons and members of marginalized groups. UNITAMS would also provide, if so requested by the parties to the negotiations, support to the implementation of any future peace agreements, including in specific areas such as accountability and transitional justice, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as well as the monitoring and verification of possible ceasefires with particular focus on the Two Areas and Darfur.<sup>255</sup>

Under the third strategic objective, UNITAMS was tasked with supporting Sudanese-led peacebuilding, in particular conflict prevention, mitigation and reconciliation, community violence reduction, mine action, the collection of arms and small weapons, and durable solutions for internally displaced persons and refugees, and their safe, voluntary and dignified return, reintegration and relocation with host populations as appropriate. Furthermore, UNITAMS would assist, advise and support the Government's capacity to extend State presence and inclusive civilian governance, provide effective support to national and local authorities on civilian protection, including in implementing the National Plan for Civilian Protection, and support the strengthening of the protection of human rights.<sup>256</sup> UNITAMS was also tasked with collaborating with international financial institutions in the mobilization of international economic and development assistance, supporting the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and ensuring effective and integrated cooperation of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and promoting cooperation with relevant partners, with a view to making maximum use of existing and forthcoming bilateral and multilateral assistance in the Sudan, including in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>257</sup>

Beyond the strategic objectives and their corresponding tasks, the Council requested UNITAMS and its integrated United Nations country team partners to establish an appropriate mechanism for joint and coordinated peacebuilding support, based on the lessons learned from the state liaison functions established under the mandate of UNAMID.<sup>258</sup> UNITAMS was tasked with integrating gender considerations as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate and assisting the Government in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women at all levels of peace and political processes, and in all social and economic aspects of life.<sup>259</sup> The Council requested UNITAMS to ensure that any support to non-United Nations security forces was provided in strict compliance with the human rights due

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, penultimate paragraph.

<sup>250</sup> S/PRST/2020/7, fifteenth paragraph.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, sixteenth paragraph.

<sup>252</sup> Resolution 2524 (2020), para. 1. For more information on the mandate of UNAMID, see sect. I. For more information on the item entitled "Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan", see part I, sect. 8.

<sup>253</sup> Resolution 2524 (2020), paras. 2 (i)–(iv).

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2 (i).

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2 (ii).

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2 (iii).

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2 (iv).

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 7.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 8.

diligence policy, and to cooperate with the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) in order to facilitate the Panel's work.<sup>260</sup>

In the context of the drawdown and closure of UNAMID, the Council requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the eventual transition to UNITAMS was phased, sequenced and efficient and requested the two missions to establish a coordination mechanism to determine the modalities and timelines for the transition of responsibilities where they had common strategic objectives and priorities in Darfur.<sup>261</sup> More generally, the Council urged close coordination between UNITAMS and United Nations missions in the region, including UNAMID, UNISFA, UNMISS, UNSMIL, MINUSCA and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa.<sup>262</sup> By resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), which provided for the termination of UNAMID, the Council reiterated its request for UNAMID and UNITAMS to continue to closely cooperate via the established coordination mechanism.<sup>263</sup>

In terms of the structure of UNITAMS, by resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), the Council requested the Secretary-General to appoint expeditiously a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and Head of UNITAMS who would assume overall authority and provide strategic direction for all activities of the Mission and the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in the country and would perform a good offices, advisory and advocacy role at the political level and coordinate efforts of the international

<sup>260</sup> Ibid., paras. 9 and 11. For more information on the Committee and the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#), see part IX, sect. I.

<sup>261</sup> Resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), para. 14.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., para. 12.

<sup>263</sup> Resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), para. 8.

community in support of the strategic objectives of the UNITAMS mandate.<sup>264</sup> A Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General would also be appointed to support the Special Representative and serve as Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator.<sup>265</sup> The Council requested the Secretary-General to swiftly initiate the planning for and establishment of UNITAMS, with a view to reaching full operational capacity as soon as possible and in order to ensure that the Mission was able to start delivering against all its strategic objectives no later than 1 January 2021. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to provide the Council, for its information, with a suggested structure and geographical deployment of the Mission, within 60 days of the adoption of the resolution.<sup>266</sup>

The Council requested the Secretary-General to report on clear and measurable core and contextual benchmarks and indicators, to be provided to the Council in his first 90-day report on UNITAMS, to track the Mission's progress against its strategic objectives and to enable early planning for a future reconfiguration of the United Nations presence in the Sudan.<sup>267</sup>

<sup>264</sup> Resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), para. 3.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid., para. 4.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid., para. 5.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid., para. 16. See also annex II to the report of the Secretary-General on UNITAMS ([S/2020/912](#)). The report of the Secretary-General and the suggested structure and geographical deployment of UNITAMS were submitted further to two extensions of the time frame for their submission for periods of one month and two weeks, respectively (see [S/2020/749](#), [S/2020/750](#), [S/2020/868](#) and [S/2020/869](#)). The benchmarks and indicators requested by the Council were not submitted during the period under review.

## Americas

### United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia

The Council established the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia by resolution [2366 \(2017\)](#) of 10 July 2017 after the completion of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Colombia. The Verification Mission was mandated to, *inter alia*, verify the implementation of the process of political, economic and social reincorporation of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) and of the personal and collective security guarantees provided under the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and

Lasting Peace of 24 November 2016 between the Government of Colombia and FARC-EP.<sup>268</sup>

By resolution [2545 \(2020\)](#) of 25 September, the Council, acknowledging the request from the President of Colombia in this regard, extended the existing mandate of the Verification Mission for a period of one year, until 25 September 2021.<sup>269</sup> The Council recalled that the Final Agreement envisaged a role for the Verification Mission in verifying compliance with the sentences of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and expressed its readiness to consider the addition of the task to the mandate, based on the outcome of the ongoing consultation process coordinated by the

<sup>268</sup> For more information on the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, see previous supplements covering the period 2016–2019.

<sup>269</sup> Resolution [2545 \(2020\)](#), para. 1.

Government of Colombia.<sup>270</sup> The Council expressed its willingness to work with the Government to further extend the mandate of the Mission on the basis of agreement between the parties.<sup>271</sup>

### United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti

By resolution 2476 (2019) of 25 June 2019, the Council established the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), subsequent to the closure of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH). BINUH was mandated to advise the Government of Haiti in promoting and strengthening political stability and good governance, including the rule of law; preserving and advancing a peaceful and stable environment, including through supporting an inclusive inter-Haitian national dialogue; and promoting and protecting human rights. BINUH was further tasked with assisting the Government in planning and executing free, fair and transparent elections; reinforcing the capacity of the Haitian National Police;

<sup>270</sup> Ibid., para. 3.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid., para. 2. For more information on the item entitled “Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)”, see part I, sect. 14.

developing an inclusive approach to reduce community violence; addressing human rights abuses and violations and complying with international human rights obligations; improving penitentiary administration management and oversight of prison facilities; and strengthening the justice sector.<sup>272</sup>

By resolution 2547 (2020) of 15 October, the Council extended the existing mandate of BINUH as defined in resolution 2476 (2019) for a period of one year, until 15 October 2021, without any modifications.<sup>273</sup> The resolution was adopted with 13 votes in favour and 2 abstentions.<sup>274</sup>

<sup>272</sup> For more information on the mandate of BINUH, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2019*.

<sup>273</sup> Resolution 2547 (2020), para. 1.

<sup>274</sup> China and the Russian Federation abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. The representatives of China and the Russian Federation noted, inter alia, that the draft did not reflect the serious situation in Haiti related to human rights, the protection of civilians and the need to implement good governance, combat corruption and conduct free, fair and credible presidential elections. While the Dominican Republic voted in favour of the resolution, its representative stated that his delegation had hoped for a more robust mandate, including at least the strengthening of human rights safeguards and accountability in Haiti (see S/PV.8768). For more information on the question concerning Haiti, see part I, sect. 13.

## Asia

### United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was established by the Council by resolution 1401 (2002) of 28 March 2002 with the core mandate to fulfil the tasks and responsibilities, including those related to human rights, the rule of law and gender issues, entrusted to the United Nations under the Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions, signed in Bonn on 5 December 2001, as well as to promote national reconciliation and rapprochement through its good offices and manage all United Nations humanitarian relief, recovery and reconstruction activities in Afghanistan.<sup>275</sup>

<sup>275</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNAMA, see previous supplements covering the period 2000–2019. For more information on the situation in Afghanistan, see part I, sect. 16.

In 2020, by resolution 2543 (2020) of 15 September, the Council extended the mandate of UNAMA for one year, until 17 September 2021.<sup>276</sup>

By resolution 2543 (2020), the Council reiterated the priorities of UNAMA to provide outreach and good offices to support the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, particularly in view of the intra-Afghan negotiations which started in Doha on 12 September 2020; support the organization of future timely, credible, transparent and inclusive Afghan elections; promote coherent support by the international community to the development and governance priorities of the Government of Afghanistan; support regional cooperation, with a view to promoting stability and peace; cooperate with and strengthen the capacity of Afghan institutions and civil society in the protection and promotion of human rights; support the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as ensure the protection of civilians, especially women, children, displaced persons and, in this instance, adding minorities;

<sup>276</sup> Resolution 2543 (2020), para. 5.



support the Government's efforts to fulfil its commitments to improve governance and the rule of law; and promote enhanced cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.<sup>277</sup>

In terms of modifications to other priorities, in accordance with resolution [2543 \(2020\)](#), UNAMA was to strengthen capacity to report on violations and abuses against children and to support efforts to strengthen the protection of children, including through engagement with all parties to the conflict to undertake specific commitments and measures to end and prevent violations and abuses against children and sustained dialogue with the Government on the swift and full implementation of the action plan and road map to end and prevent child recruitment.<sup>278</sup> In addition, the Mission's priority to coordinate and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance efforts was expanded to include working towards improving the accessibility of humanitarian assistance, as well as the return of internally displaced persons and refugee populations to their homes or local integration or resettlement.<sup>279</sup>

Beyond the outlined priorities, the Council reiterated its call upon UNAMA and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA to further increase efforts to achieve greater coherence, coordination and efficiency among relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and to continue to lead

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., paras. 6 (a)–(f), (h) and (j).

<sup>278</sup> Ibid., para. 6 (g).

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., para. 6 (i).

international civilian efforts aimed at reinforcing the role of Afghan institutions to perform their responsibilities, on that occasion also underscoring the importance of the Government's full cooperation in that regard.<sup>280</sup>

### United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia was authorized by the Council through an exchange of letters dated 7 and 15 May 2007 between the Secretary-General and the President of the Council,<sup>281</sup> at the initiative of the Governments of the region. With a view to strengthening the United Nations capacity for conflict prevention in Central Asia, the Centre was assigned a number of tasks, including liaising with the Governments of the region on issues relevant to preventive diplomacy; monitoring and analysing the situation on the ground; and maintaining contact with regional organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The Centre was established with an open-ended mandate. During the period under review, the Council made no changes to its mandate.<sup>282</sup>

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., para. 8.

<sup>281</sup> [S/2007/279](#) and [S/2007/280](#).

<sup>282</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, see previous supplements covering the period 2007–2019.

## Middle East

### United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

The Council established the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) on 14 August 2003 by resolution [1500 \(2003\)](#) to support the Secretary-General in the fulfilment of his mandate under resolution [1483 \(2003\)](#), in accordance with the structure and responsibilities set out in his report of 17 July 2003.<sup>283</sup> Those responsibilities included coordinating activities of the United Nations in post-conflict processes in Iraq and humanitarian and reconstruction assistance; promoting the return of refugees and displaced persons, economic reconstruction and the conditions for sustainable

<sup>283</sup> [S/2003/715](#).

development; and supporting efforts to restore and establish national and local institutions.<sup>284</sup>

In 2020, by resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#) of 29 May, the Council extended the mandate of UNAMI for one year, until 31 May 2021.<sup>285</sup>

By resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), taking into account the views of the Government of Iraq,<sup>286</sup> the Council reiterated the priority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI to provide advice, support and assistance to the Government and the people of Iraq on advancing

<sup>284</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of UNAMI, see previous supplements covering the period 2003–2019. For more information on the situation concerning Iraq, see part I, sect. 22.

<sup>285</sup> Resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), para. 1.

<sup>286</sup> See [S/2020/448](#), annex.

inclusive political dialogue and national and community-level reconciliation.<sup>287</sup> The Council also reiterated the remaining tasks of UNAMI with several additions. Commending the Government's efforts to plan and execute free and fair Iraqi-led, Iraqi-owned elections that were inclusive, credible and participatory, and welcoming the Government's request for further United Nations support in that regard, the Council requested UNAMI to advise, support and assist the Government and the Independent High Electoral Commission on elections and referendums, including through regular technical reviews and detailed reporting on electoral preparations and processes, as part of the of the Secretary-General's regular reporting cycle.<sup>288</sup> UNAMI was also requested to advise, support and assist the Government on facilitating regional dialogue and cooperation on issues of infrastructure and public health, in addition to border security, energy, trade, environment, water and refugees.<sup>289</sup>

By resolution 2522 (2020), the improvement of governance was added as one of the objectives of the Mission's mandate to promote accountability and the protection of human rights, and UNAMA was also requested to mainstream gender throughout the mandate and to assist the Government in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation, involvement and representation of women at all levels.<sup>290</sup> Finally, the Council expressed its intention to review the mandate and reporting cycle of UNAMI by 31 May 2021, or sooner, if requested by the Government of Iraq.<sup>291</sup>

### Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon

The establishment of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon was authorized by the Council by means of an exchange of letters dated 8 and 13 February 2007 between the Secretary-General and the President of the Council.<sup>292</sup> The Office was established with an open-ended mandate. The position of Special Coordinator was created to replace the position of Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Southern Lebanon, which had been created in 2000.<sup>293</sup> The Special Coordinator was tasked with coordinating the work of the United Nations in the country and

representing the Secretary-General on all political aspects of the Organization's work. The Special Coordinator was also responsible for ensuring that the activities of the United Nations country team in Lebanon were well coordinated with the Government of Lebanon, donors and international financial institutions. During the period under review, the Council made no changes to the mandate of the Office.<sup>294</sup>

### United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement

The Council established the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) by resolution 2452 (2019) of 16 January 2019 to support the implementation of the Agreement on the City of Hudaydah and the Ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa as set out in the Stockholm Agreement. UNMHA succeeded the work of an advance team which was established by resolution 2451 (2018) of 21 December 2018 and deployed to begin monitoring and to support and facilitate the immediate implementation of the Stockholm Agreement.<sup>295</sup> UNMHA was mandated to oversee the governorate-wide ceasefire, redeployment of forces and mine action operations; to monitor the compliance of the parties to the ceasefire and the mutual redeployment of forces; to work with the parties so that security was assured by local security forces; and to facilitate and coordinate United Nations support to assist the parties in fully implementing the Hudaydah Agreement.<sup>296</sup>

In 2020, by resolutions 2505 (2020) of 13 January and 2534 (2020) of 14 July, the Council extended the mandate of UNMHA for periods of six months and one year, respectively, the latter until 15 July 2021.<sup>297</sup>

By those resolutions, the Council reiterated the existing mandate of UNMHA without modifications. By resolution 2534 (2020), while reiterating its request to the Secretary-General to fully deploy UNMHA expeditiously, the Council also requested the Secretary-

<sup>287</sup> Resolution 2522 (2020), para. 2 (a). See also S/2020/1130, in which the Government of Iraq requested that the role of UNAMI be strengthened to provide more advice, support, technical assistance on elections and electoral observations.

<sup>288</sup> Resolution 2522 (2020), para. 2 (b) (i).

<sup>289</sup> Ibid., para. 2 (b) (iv).

<sup>290</sup> Ibid., paras. 2 (d) and (e).

<sup>291</sup> Ibid., para. 4.

<sup>292</sup> S/2007/85 and S/2007/86.

<sup>293</sup> See S/2000/718.

<sup>294</sup> For more information on the history of the mandate of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, see previous supplements covering the period 2004–2019. For more information on the situation in the Middle East, see part I, sect. 20; for more information on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, see part I, sect. 21.

<sup>295</sup> Resolution 2452 (2019), para. 1.

<sup>296</sup> For more information on the mandate of UNMHA, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2019*. For more information on the situation in the Middle East, see part I, sect. 20.

<sup>297</sup> Resolutions 2505 (2020) and 2534 (2020), para. 1.



General to take into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>298</sup> By resolutions [2505 \(2020\)](#) and [2534 \(2020\)](#), the Council also requested the

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<sup>298</sup> Resolution [2534 \(2020\)](#), para. 5.

Secretary-General to present a further review of UNMHA, at least one month before the Mission's mandate was due to expire.<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> Resolutions [2505 \(2020\)](#) and [2534 \(2020\)](#), para. 8. See also [S/2020/524](#).

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*The Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* and its supplements are published by the United Nations Secretariat as a guide to the proceedings of the Security Council from its first meeting in 1946 onwards. The *Repertoire* is designed to assist government officials, practitioners of international law, academics and all those interested in the work of the United Nations in following the evolving practice of the Council and gaining a better understanding of the framework within which it operates. The publication presents, as comprehensively as possible, new trends in the Council's application of the Charter of the United Nations and its own provisional rules of procedure. The *Repertoire* is the only such official record and is based solely on the deliberations of the Council, its decisions and other official documentation before the Council. The current Supplement, twenty-third in the series of Supplements to the *Repertoire*, covers the year 2020. This is the third Supplement to cover a one-year period, prepared with the aim of making the most recent information on the work of the Council available to the United Nations membership as soon as possible after the close of each year.

As detailed in this Supplement, 2020 was marked by two major events, namely, the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations and the declaration of the global outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) as a pandemic in March 2020. The pandemic caused unprecedented disruptions to the work and operations of the Council, affecting its application of the Charter and the provisional rules of procedure and challenging its ability to deliver on its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Despite the challenges, the Council devised new procedural and technical mechanisms to ensure the continuity of its work. Owing to health and safety and travel restrictions imposed during the pandemic, the Council did not dispatch any missions in 2020. Although many of the events prepared for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations were postponed, others were held virtually, by leveraging new technologies and thus enabling the continuation of the work of the Organization. In 2020, the Council established a new special political mission, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan and decided to terminate the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

