

Monthly Forecast

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Overview

The US will hold the presidency of the Council in September. Using the opportunity of the high-level segment of the general debate at the General Assembly, the US is planning a summit-level meeting on the [threats to international peace and security posed by foreign terrorist fighters](#). US President Barack Obama will preside with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expected to brief and a resolution is likely as an outcome.

An open debate on [children and armed conflict](#) is also planned with briefings by Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict Leila Zerrougui, as well as possibly representatives of UNICEF and the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

Debates will be held on:

- [Haiti](#), with a briefing by Special Representative and head of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti Sandra Honoré; and
- [Afghanistan](#), with a briefing by Special Representative and head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan Ján Kubiš.

Council members are planning to hold an informal interactive dialogue with Thabo Mbeki, chair of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel, on [Sudan-South Sudan](#) issues.

A briefing is expected on the work of the [1737 Iran Sanctions Committee](#), by its chair, Ambassador Gary Quinlan (Australia).

Briefings, followed by consultations, are expected on:

- the situation in [Liberia](#), by Karin Landgren,

Special Representative and head of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL);

- developments in the [Middle East](#), by Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert Serry;
- the [humanitarian situation in Syria](#), by Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos;
- the situation in [Libya](#), by Bernardino León, the new Special Representative and head of the UN Support Mission in Libya; and
- the [1970 Libya Sanctions Committee](#), by its chair, Ambassador Eugène-Richard Gasana (Rwanda).

Briefings in consultations are likely on:

- [Syria's chemical weapons](#) by Sigrid Kaag, Special Coordinator of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-UN Joint Mission; and
- developments in the [Golan Heights](#) and the latest Secretary-General's report on the UN Disengagement Observer Force by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous.

A formal session will be needed to adopt a resolution renewing the mandate of [UNMIL](#).

Throughout the month members will be following closely events in [Central African Republic](#), [Iraq](#) and [Ukraine](#), as well as in [Gaza and Israel](#) and additional meetings may be scheduled. •

29 August 2014

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Iraq

On 4 August, under “any other business”, Council members were briefed by Deputy Special Representative György Busztin via video-teleconference on the deteriorating humanitarian and security situation in Iraq due to the offensive by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS). Council members issued a press statement the next day deploring ISIS attacks, condemning the persecution of minorities, recalling that such widespread and systematic attacks could constitute a crime against humanity and calling for accountability and an inclusive political process (SC/11509). On 7 August, Council members were briefed again by Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Tayé-Brook Zerihoun in emergency consultations on the ongoing ISIS offensive that had begun to threaten the peshmerga forces of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Nineveh province, where a large number of minorities live. Council members issued a press statement later that day, strongly reiterating its messages from 5 August (SC/11515). On 13 August, Council members issued another press statement welcoming the nomination of Prime Minister-designate Haider al-Abadi and urged the swift formation of the Iraqi government (SC/11519). Finally, on 15 August the Council adopted resolution 2170 listing six individuals affiliated with ISIS (operating in Iraq and Syria) and al-Nusra (operating in Syria) under the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida sanctions regime in an attempt to cut off funding to these groups (SC/11521).

Lebanon

On 4 August the Security Council issued a press statement which condemned the attacks by violent extremist groups against the Lebanese forces in the area of Arsal beginning on 2 August 2014; appealed to all Lebanese parties to preserve national unity in the face of attempts to undermine the country’s stability, consistent with their commitment in the Baabda Declaration; and stressed that effective implementation of resolution 1701 remains crucial to ensuring stability in Lebanon (SC/11507). On 14 August Council members met with UNIFIL troop-contributing countries (S/PV.7241). On 20 August, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet briefed Council members on the work of UNIFIL, the

situation in Arsal and the threats Lebanon is facing due to the war in neighbouring Syria and the need for Lebanon to fill the office of the president, which has been vacant since 25 May. On 26 August, the Council adopted resolution 2172, extending the mandate of UNIFIL for one year, until 31 August 2015.

Ukraine

On 5 August the Security Council held a public meeting on the situation in Ukraine with a briefing by John Ging, Director of the Coordination and Response at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (S/PV.7234). On 8 August, Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, briefed the Council (via video-teleconference) on the human rights situation and the latest UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission Report (S/PV.7239). On 18 August, Ukraine was discussed under “any other business”; Russia requested an update regarding the implementation of resolution 2166 on the downing of Malaysia Airline flight 17. On 22 August, following the entrance of the Russian humanitarian convoy to Ukraine, Council members held consultations at the request of Lithuania. Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Oscar Fernández-Taranco briefed at both the 18 and 22 August meetings. On 28 August, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman briefed the Security Council at an emergency, public meeting requested by Lithuania, following reports that Russian tanks and military vehicles have gone into southeastern Ukraine (S/PV.7253).

DPRK (North Korea)

On 5 August, Council members were briefed in consultations by the chair of the 1718 DPRK Committee, Ambassador Gary Quinlan (Australia) on the quarterly update on the North Korean sanctions. On 20 August, under “any other business”, Council members discussed the 18 August DPRK request for the Council to hold an urgent meeting on the US-Republic of Korea joint military exercises (S/2014/604). (The DPRK’s letter was a follow-up to the same request it made on 21 July [S/2014/512].) Council members were not in favour of holding such a meeting.

South Sudan

The Council held a briefing followed by

consultations on South Sudan on 6 August (S/PV.7235). Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet briefed on the recent UNMISS report (S/2014/537) and events that have transpired in the country since the report’s publication on 25 July. Ambassador Joseph Moum Malok, the Deputy Permanent Representative of South Sudan, addressed the Council after Mulet. Also on 6 August, the Council issued a press statement condemning attacks that led to the deaths of at least six humanitarian workers in Upper Nile state (SC/11512). The Council adopted a presidential statement on 8 August in which it expressed concern at the political, security and humanitarian situation in South Sudan and expressed “its readiness to consider, in consultation with relevant partners, including IGAD and the African Union, all appropriate measures, including targeted sanctions, against those who take action that undermines the peace, stability, and security of South Sudan” (S/PRST/2014/16). On 27 August, Council members issued a press statement condemning the downing of an UNMISS helicopter near Bentiu in Unity State (SC/11538).

Burundi

On 6 August, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative and head of BNUB, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga (S/PV.7236) on the latest BNUB report (S/2014/550). Onanga-Anyanga expressed his continuing concern about deep political divisions in the country, the lack of political dialogue on major national issues and restrictive laws on freedom of expression. He added that preparations were underway to withdraw BNUB by 31 December.

Israel/Palestine

On 6 August, Council members discussed a draft resolution on Gaza, put in blue by Jordan, under “any other business”. The draft was discussed several times over the course of the month but has not been put to a vote. Since the Jordanian draft went into blue, two other proposed drafts have been discussed—one drafted by France, the UK and Germany, and another drafted by the US. On 18 August Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert Serry briefed the Council, warning that “the slide towards a

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state of permanent conflict and hopelessness must be halted at once,” and that the restive situation in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, together with the Gaza crisis serve as a bleak warning of what the future may bring if the current negative trend towards a one-state reality is not reversed (S/PV.7243). The briefing was followed by consultations. On 20 August Council members discussed the Gaza conflict again under “any other business” following the 19 August collapse of an Egyptian-brokered ceasefire. Afterwards, elements to the press were read in which members of the Council expressed grave concern at the return to hostilities, called upon the parties to prevent the situation from escalating and to reach an immediate humanitarian ceasefire and offered full support to the Egyptian initiative.

DRC

On 7 August, in a debate (S/PV.7237) chaired by Mark Simmonds, the UK Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Council was briefed by Special Representative and the head of MONUSCO Martin Kobler on the latest MONUSCO report (S/2014/450). The outgoing Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region, Mary Robinson, and Angola’s Minister of Defence João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, in his capacity as representative of the Chair of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region, also addressed the Council. On 20 August, Ambassador Dina Kavar (Jordan), the chair of the 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee, briefed Council members in consultations on the activities of the Committee and the Group of Experts’ midterm report (S/2014/428). On 26 August, Council members issued a press statement reaffirming their support for the swift neutralisation of the *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* as a top priority in bringing stability to the DRC and the Great Lakes region (SC/11533).

Sudan (Darfur)

On 7 August, the Council held a briefing, followed by consultations, on Darfur (S/PV.7238). Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the Joint AU-UN Special Representative for Darfur and head of UNAMID, briefed the Council on the latest UNAMID report (S/2014/515).

Ambassador Rahamtalla Mohamed Osman Elnor (Sudan) addressed the Council after Chambas. On 27 August, the Council adopted resolution 2173 renewing the mandate of UNAMID for 10 months. The same day, Council members received a briefing in consultations on the work of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee from its chair, Ambassador Maria Cristina Perceval (Argentina).

Visiting Mission

Between 8-13 August, Council members undertook a visiting mission to Europe and Africa (S/2014/579). On 19 August, Australia, Chile, the US and the UK briefed the Council on the legs of the visiting mission that they co-led to Belgium, The Hague, South Sudan and Somalia, respectively (S/PV.7245).

Mali

On 18 August, Council members condemned a suicide attack in Ber which killed two Burkinabe MINUSMA peacekeepers and injured seven (SC/11523).

Protection of Civilians

On 19 August, the Council held a briefing on the protection of humanitarian workers in recognition of World Humanitarian Day (S/PV.7244). Briefers included UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross Peter Maurer, and Mashood Karokhail, the Director of The Liaison Office. The UK circulated a concept note in advance of the briefing (S/2014/571). At press time, the Council was negotiating a draft resolution as a follow-up to the briefing.

Conflict Prevention

On 21 August, the Council held an open debate on conflict prevention with Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay briefing (S/PV.7247). More than 50 member states participated in the open debate, which lasted more than five hours. The Council unanimously adopted resolution 2171, which requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Council on actions taken to “promote and strengthen conflict prevention tools within the United Nations system” by 31 August 2015. The UK circulated a concept note in advance of

the open debate (S/2014/572).

Guinea-Bissau

Council members were briefed in consultations on 26 August by Under-Secretary-General of Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman on the restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau (S/2014/603). In light of the successful electoral process and installation of the new government this was the final Secretary-General’s report pursuant to resolution 2048 (S/2014/600 and S/2014/601). The Council agreed that further relevant updates would be included in the semi-annual UNIOGBIS report.

Sahel

On 27 August, the Council adopted a presidential statement on the Sahel (S/PRST/2014/17). The adoption occurred more than two months after the Council’s 19 June briefing by Special Envoy to the Sahel Hiroute Guebre Sellassie (S/PV.7203). The statement encouraged greater cooperation among stakeholders to implement the UN’s Sahel strategy and with the Office of the Special Envoy. It further changed the reporting cycle on the implementation of the UN’s Sahel strategy, requesting the next report by 30 November 2015.

Kosovo

On 29 August, the Council held a quarterly debate on Kosovo with a briefing by Farid Zarif, the Special Representative and head of UNMIK, on the latest UNMIK report (S/2014/558).

Yemen

On 29 August, Council members were briefed in consultations by Special Adviser Jamal Benomar. Benomar’s briefing focused on the crisis gripping Yemen since 18 August when mass protests started in Sana’a and other cities following the call for demonstrations by Abdulmalek al-Houthi, leader of the Houthi (a Shi’a rebel group). He demanded the reinstatement of fuel subsidies and the dissolution of the government. The situation threatened to derail the ongoing political transition process. At press time, Council members were negotiating a draft presidential statement on the situation.

Counter-Terrorism

Expected Council Action

In September, the Council expects to hold a summit meeting on the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters. The US is President of the Council for the month, and US President Barack Obama will chair the meeting with the Secretary-General expected to brief on the effect of this issue on current conflicts and the efforts by the UN to address it. The adoption of a resolution is the likely outcome.

Background

The issue of foreign terrorist fighters has been discussed in the Security Council in light of the recent unprecedented flow of fighters and the growth of facilitation networks fuelling conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Syria, Yemen, the Horn of Africa and elsewhere. According to the concept note circulated by the US ahead of the meeting, foreign terrorist fighters “not only exacerbate existing conflicts, but also often return home possessing new skills and connections, increasing the threat of home-grown terrorist attacks”.

There are already Council resolutions that impose obligations on states to take certain actions to suppress terrorism, such as criminalising the financing of terrorism and the recruitment of members to terrorist groups (resolution 1373 adopted under Chapter VII on 28 September 2001) or calling upon member states to criminalise the incitement to commit terrorist acts (resolution 1624 of 14 September 2005), but it seems the US’s intention is to adapt and develop further this counter-terrorism framework to tackle the particular challenges of foreign terrorist fighters.

The issue of foreign terrorist fighters has been part of the discussions of the 1267 and then the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee for over a decade and has been featured in reports from its Monitoring and Analytical Support Team. Briefing the Council on 27 November 2013 as Committee chair, Ambassador Gary Quinlan (Australia), called attention to the operational contacts between terrorist entities in eastern Libya and Al-Qaida affiliates in the Maghreb, the Sahel, the Middle East and South Asia,

as well as the presence of training camps in Libya, to which many foreign fighters travel before heading elsewhere to fight. In a 28 May briefing, Quinlan highlighted how the ever-increasing trend towards recruitment of foreign fighters has given Al-Qaida and its affiliates a more global reach in a number of theatres of operation. The briefing recalled a January report by the Monitoring Team that stated how, in Syria large numbers of Al-Qaida affiliated foreign fighters and *Jabhat-al-Nusra* are creating associations based on a common language which “could see new pan-Arab and pan-European networks of extremists emerge” (S/2014/41).

A 14 April report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy said that “the flow of recruits from more than 50 Member States to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and to other Al-Qaida affiliates over the past two years has raised concerns about their intentions should they return to their home countries”. He also stressed that some terrorist groups might also see an opportunity to deploy these foreign fighters against more distant targets and how most states “lack the resources necessary to assess and monitor this threat” (A/68/841). In its review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the General Assembly adopted on 13 June a resolution expressing its concern “at the increasing flow of international recruits to terrorist organisations, including foreign terrorist fighters, and at the threat it poses for all Member States, including countries of origin, transit and destination” (A/RES/68/276). Four days later the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2161 which expressed concern at the flow of international recruits to Al-Qaida and the scale of this phenomenon and reiterated further “the obligation of Member States to prevent the movement of terrorist groups”.

On 15 August, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2170, which specifically condemned the terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and the Al Nusra Front (ANF) for the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters whose presence is exacerbating conflict and contributing to violent

radicalisation. It also expressed the Council’s readiness to list individuals involved in financing or facilitating the travel of foreign terrorist fighters. The resolution also called upon member states to suppress this flow, bring foreign terrorist fighters to justice and engage with those at risk of being recruited to discourage travel to Iraq and Syria.

The 19 August beheading of American journalist James Foley by ISIS was the latest piece of evidence showing that the issue of foreign fighters, while not new, has become acute, raising alarm among Council members. (In a public video released by ISIS, the executioner has a distinct British accent.)

Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is devising an effective global framework to address the growing challenges related to foreign terrorist fighters. A related issue is to come up with an accurate definition of foreign terrorist fighters and to avoid the deliberate misuse of the label “terrorist” to identify non-state actors challenging the authority of the government.

Another key issue is to identify and sanction those sponsoring terrorism, facilitating and financing the recruitment of foreign fighters.

A further related issue is how to combine a coercive approach against terrorism with measures aimed at promoting non-violent expression of political claims and reducing sympathy and support for violent extremism.

Making sure that counter-terrorism activities worldwide are undertaken with due respect of international human rights norms, is an ongoing issue.

Options

The Council could adopt a resolution:

- emphasising the need for states to have the tools and mobilise the resources to prevent their citizens from becoming foreign terrorist fighters;
- underscoring the critical needs both to counter violent extremism through engagement with civil society and building resilience among communities most at risk of recruitment and radicalisation;
- threatening all state and non-state actors that are providing funding, weapons

UN DOCUMENTS ON FOREIGN TERRORIST FIGHTERS Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2170 (15 August 2014) condemned the recruitment by ISIS and ANF of foreign terrorist fighters. S/RES/2161 (17 June 2014) renewed the measures targeting Al-Qaida associated individuals and entities. S/RES/2133 (27 January 2014) called on states not to pay ransom to terrorist kidnappers. S/RES/2129 (17 December 2013) renewed the mandate of CTED for four years. Security Council Letter S/2014/41 (22 January 2014) included the 15th report of the Monitoring Team. Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7242 (15 August 2014) was the meeting when resolution 2170 was adopted. S/PV.7184 (28 May 2014) was a semi-annual briefing of the chairs of the counter-terrorism-related committees. General-Assembly Documents A/RES/68/276 (13 June 2014) was a resolution reviewing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. A/68/841 (14 April 2014) was a report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Counter-Terrorism (con't)

or other kinds of support to terrorist groups—including through the payment of ransoms—with the imposition of sanctions; and

- requesting the Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the Monitoring Team of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee to assess national and multilateral efforts to counter

this threat and provide recommendations to strengthen them.

Council and Wider Dynamics

At the time when Council dynamics have rendered the Council unable to overcome divisions on a number of pressing situations (e.g., Israel/Palestine, Syria and Ukraine), counter-terrorism appears to be one of the

issues generating unanimous support among Council members. Although highly visible, recent Council outcomes on counter-terrorism (such as resolution 2133 on kidnap-for-ransom or resolution 2170) have not established new legal obligations on member states as was the case, for example, with resolution 1373.

Afghanistan

Expected Council Action

In September, the Council is scheduled to hold its quarterly debate on the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNAMA Ján Kubiš is expected to brief. At press time, no Council outcome was anticipated.

UNAMA's mandate expires on 17 March 2015.

Key Recent Developments

Afghanistan continues to face significant political and security challenges. At press time, the country remained engulfed in a political crisis, with the winner of the 14 June presidential run-off election yet to be decided. Meanwhile, over the past couple of months, a resurgent Taliban has stepped up its attacks in southern and eastern Afghanistan.

On 5 April, Afghanistan held presidential and provincial elections. Among the eight presidential candidates, Abdullah Abdullah, a former foreign minister, and Ashraf Ghani, a former finance minister, received 45 percent and 31.5 percent of the vote, respectively. The Independent Election Commission (IEC) certified the first-round results on 15 May, despite Abdullah's accusations of fraud. On 15 May, the Council issued a press statement welcoming the certification of the first round results by the IEC while underscoring the continued need to detect and prevent fraud (SC/11399). As neither candidate got 50 percent of the vote, a runoff election between Abdullah and Ghani was held on 14 June.

Preliminary results from the runoff showed Ghani leading; however, on 18 June, Abdullah again complained of fraud, alleging that rampant ballot-stuffing had occurred in pro-Ghani districts. Abdullah announced that he would withdraw from the electoral process and demanded the vote-counting be stopped to allow the IEC to investigate his claims of fraud. He also alleged that one of the members of the IEC, Zia ul-Haq Amarkhel, was complicit in the malfeasance. Amarkhel subsequently resigned on 23 June, denying the accusations and stating that he was resigning "in the national interest" while calling on Abdullah to "end his boycott".

In an 18 June press statement, UNAMA stated the electoral process "should continue as laid out in the laws passed by the National Assembly" (i.e., allegations of fraud should be investigated only once the vote count is finalised). On 25 June, the Council adopted a presidential statement in which it called on all stakeholders "to engage with the electoral institutions and processes with patience and respect, refrain from any acts that incite imminent violence...and to channel complaints through the established institutional mechanisms in line with Afghanistan's electoral laws and constitution" (S/PRST/2014/11).

With the crisis unresolved, by 8 July some Abdullah's supporters started threatening to form their own government. US Secretary of State John Kerry travelled to Afghanistan, and on 12 July, brokered a deal between Abdullah and Ghani. The deal called for an audit of all votes cast in the election. The

winner will serve as president, and the runner-up, or a person he selects, will assume a new position, chief executive of the government. Within two years, a loya jirga, or meeting of tribal leaders, will be convened to determine whether the chief executive will be converted into a prime minister.

In the ensuing weeks, tensions again flared between the parties due to a lack of substantive progress in the audit and disagreements on what constitutes an invalid vote. Kerry returned to Kabul on 7 August and convinced the parties to recommit to their agreement of 12 July. The IEC announced that as of 23 August approximately 67 percent of all the ballot boxes had been reviewed. (At press time, it remained unclear when the audit would be concluded, and thus, who would be the next president.)

While the auditing continued, the political climate in Afghanistan remained tense. On 18 August, *The New York Times* ran a story by Matthew Rosenberg headlined "Amid Election Impasse: Calls in Afghanistan for an Interim Government," which claimed that high-ranking government officials were threatening a temporary seizure of power in the hope that "the mere threat of forming an interim government would persuade the country's rival presidential candidates...to make compromises needed to end the crisis". After demanding that Rosenberg reveal his sources, the government first barred and later demanded that Rosenberg leave Afghanistan, which he did on 21 August without compromising his sources.

In recent months, extremists have ramped

UN DOCUMENTS ON AFGHANISTAN Security Council Resolution S/RES/2160 (17 June 2014) made minor adjustments to the Taliban sanctions regime. **Security Council Presidential Statements** S/PRST/2014/12 (25 June 2014) expressed concern with drug production in Afghanistan. S/PRST/2014/11 (25 June 2014) called on the parties to refrain from acts leading to violence in the electoral dispute. **Security Council Press Statements** SC/11476 (15 July 2014) condemned the terrorist attack in Paktika province. SC/11431 (6 June 2014) condemned the terrorist attack in Kabul and efforts to disrupt elections. SC/11399 (15 May 2014) welcomed the certification of the first-round results by the IEC, while underscoring the need to detect and prevent fraud. **Security Council Meeting Record** S/PV.7208 (25 June 2014) was the most recent Council debate on Afghanistan.

Afghanistan (con't)

up efforts to destabilise Afghanistan. On 6 June, at least 10 people died and several were injured in Kabul in a failed assassination attempt on Abdullah. Later that day, the Council issued a press statement condemning the attack (SC/11431).

In late June, the Taliban launched several attacks in northern Helmand province killing or injuring more than 100 security personnel and civilians.

On 15 July, a car-bomb exploded in a market in Paktika province, reportedly killing at least 89 people. The Council issued a press statement condemning the attack later that day (SC/11476).

Hashmat Khalil Karzai, a Ghani campaign manager and relative of President Hamid Karzai, was assassinated on 29 July.

The violence continued in August. On 5 August, in Camp Qargha, US Major General Harold J. Greene was killed and 15 others injured in a shooting. On 10 August, a car-bomb hit an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) convoy in Kabul, killing four civilians and injuring an additional 35.

It was reported on 19 August that up to 700 Taliban extremists were engaged in combat with security forces in Logar province, just south of Kabul province.

The trend of violence against aid workers in Afghanistan has also continued. Two aid workers from Finland were killed on 24 July in Herat, and on 14 August, five ICRC workers were kidnapped in the western Herat. The ICRC workers were released unharmed on 20 August.

On 25 June, the Council held its most recent debate on Afghanistan, with Kubiš and Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, briefing (S/PV.7208). Kubiš argued that Abdullah and Ghani needed to demonstrate statesmanship to resolve the electoral impasse in a constructive way. Fedotov warned that “if...economic development declines and international aid is reduced along, with business confidence, the reliance on the illicit economy will further increase”. Along with the presidential statement on the electoral impasse, the Council also adopted a presidential statement at the debate expressing concern about drug production in Afghanistan (S/PRST/2014/12).

On 17 June, the Council adopted

resolution 2160, which made minor adjustments to the 1988 Taliban sanctions regime. Among other things, the resolution decided that states should take appropriate measures to prevent the Taliban from accessing improvised explosive devices and encouraged states to make photographs and other relevant biometric data on listed individuals available to the 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee and to INTERPOL.

Human Rights-Related Developments

The UNAMA Human Rights Unit mid-year report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict in Afghanistan, released in July 2014, documented 4,853 civilian casualties for the first half of 2014, up 24 percent over the same period in 2013, with a significant rise in women and children casualties. UNAMA attributed 74 percent of all civilian casualties to anti-government elements, while 12 percent were caused by ground fire between Afghan security forces and insurgents, 8 percent by Afghan security forces, 1 percent by international security forces and the remaining casualties resulting primarily from the “explosive remnants of war”. According to the report, civilian casualties caused by improvised explosive devices increased to unprecedented levels, but deaths and injuries caused by ground engagements jumped dramatically, as the frequency and intensity of these incidents increased in 2014, particularly in areas with concentrated civilian populations.

On 19 June, the Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted the outcomes of the Universal Periodic Review of Afghanistan with 224 recommendations, of which 189 were accepted. Afghanistan addressed concerns by some delegations about the implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, saying torture was prohibited under national law and adding that the special rapporteur on torture was scheduled to visit the country in November.

During its 27th session in September, the HRC will consider the report of the Secretary-General on the question of the death penalty, which includes reference to Afghanistan for allowing capital punishment for acts that according to international human rights jurisprudence do not meet the threshold of “most serious crimes”, including adultery, sodomy, apostasy and blasphemy (A/HRC/27/23). Afghanistan is also named as one of four states where armed groups implement Sharia punishment, including death, for offences to religion.

Key Issues

One key issue is what role the Council, and UNAMA, can play in facilitating a peaceful

political transition in Afghanistan, given the recent turmoil in the electoral process.

As ISAF continues its drawdown and the insurgents step up their attacks, another key issue is the ability of Afghan security forces to maintain security in the country.

Other key ongoing issues include the need to promote human rights and to fight drug production and trafficking in Afghanistan.

Options

The Council could consider adopting a resolution:

- listing under the 1988 sanctions regime additional Taliban leaders with responsibility for military operations;
- reiterating the need for the parties to resolve the electoral crisis peacefully; and
- encouraging efforts by UNAMA and other international actors to mediate the current electoral dispute.

Another option, if the electoral dispute drags on, would be for the Council to hold an informal interactive dialogue with Abdullah and Ghani to get their perspectives on the dispute and signal clearly to them the need to engage constructively with electoral institutions and to honour their 12 July agreement.

Council Dynamics

The main concerns for Council members are the electoral crisis and the insecurity caused by Taliban violence, including the toll that this violence is taking on civilians. Some members have noted that UNAMA’s role in providing mediation and good offices may be particularly useful at this particular juncture, given the current political impasse. There is also an understanding that the electoral dispute is linked to the security situation. Karzai has refused to sign a bilateral security agreement (BSA) with the US for post-2014 US military engagement, and while both Abdullah and Ghani have said they would sign the agreement if elected, this cannot be done until one of them is in office. (The signing of the BSA would also pave the way for NATO to conclude its own security arrangement with Afghanistan.)

Australia is the penholder on Afghanistan.

Iran

Expected Council Action

In September, the chair of the 1737 Iran Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Gary Quinlan (Australia), is due to present his quarterly briefing on the Committee's work to the Council.

Key Recent Developments

On 2 July, the sixth round of talks since February between Iran and the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the UK and the US) commenced in Vienna in an attempt to conclude a comprehensive agreement on Iran's nuclear programme before a 20 July deadline. On 18 July, the parties announced that they had agreed to extend the talks by four months until 24 November. The Joint Plan of Action (JPA), which was agreed to on 24 November 2013 and took effect on 20 January, allowed for the possibility of up to a six-month extension.

According to a statement released on 18 July by US Secretary of State John Kerry, the credible prospect of reaching an agreement warranted extending negotiations, although "real gaps" remain. Under the terms of the extension, Iran will convert all of its 20 percent-enriched uranium into fuel. (The conditions of the original agreement called for only half to be converted and for the other half to be diluted.) Once in fuel form, according to the statement, it will be more difficult for Iran to use this material for a weapon in a "breakout scenario". Iran, in return, gained access to an additional \$2.8 billion dollars of its frozen assets.

Among outstanding differences, one of the potentially most difficult to reconcile is the nuclear enrichment capacity that Iran will retain. The US reportedly wants to restrict Iran to 10,000 centrifuges or fewer for its nuclear programme, while Iran says that it requires much more than that total to meet its long-term energy needs. In a 7 July speech, supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said that Iran's "absolute need" is for 190,000 "separative work units", which would represent an increase of 10 to 20 times its existing enrichment capacity.

The Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Yukiya Amano, visited Iran on 17 August, meeting with

President Hassan Rouhani, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Ali Akbar Salehi, Vice President and chairman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran. It was Amano's first visit to Tehran since the signing of the Joint Statement on a Framework for Cooperation between Iran and the IAEA on 11 November 2013. They discussed how to strengthen cooperation and dialogue under the framework, including establishing new practical measures. On 20 August, Amano sent the Council a letter attaching a recently published IAEA report that reveals that Iran has fulfilled its commitment in the JPA regarding its entire stockpile of 20 percent enriched uranium by either diluting it below 5 percent or converting it to a form not suitable for further enrichment (GOV/INF/2014/19). The findings, first reported on by the press on 20 July, further confirm that Iran is also observing all its other commitments in the JPA.

The 1737 Iran Sanctions Committee has not met since the chair's 25 June briefing (S/PV.7211). Its activities since the briefing have included sending a letter to Iran on 10 July about the *Klos C* incident. (The *Klos C* is a Panama-flagged ship that departed Iran and was interdicted by Israel in the Red Sea on 5 March 2014 with a shipment of rockets in violation of sanctions.) The letter included the Panel of Experts (PoE) incident report on the case and requested Iran's comments. Work has also begun to update bio-identifiers such as passport numbers and dates of birth of listed individuals, as recommended by the PoE in its latest report (S/2014/394). During the Committee's discussions of the report in June before the last briefing, Russia expressed its opposition to the last four of the seven PoE recommendations, and China similarly expressed its opposition to recommendations four, five and six. (These were recommendations about actions that states should take related to dual-use goods, "typologies of proliferation financing", shipping/freight and front companies.)

The Council renewed the mandate of the PoE on 9 June for one year (S/RES/2159).

The next round of high-level discussions will be held in September in New York on the margins of the General Assembly.

Human Rights-Related Developments

In a press release on 26 June, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, expressed concern about the large number of executions in Iran in 2014, in particular those of juvenile offenders, which is prohibited under international law. According to information gathered by the UN Human Rights Office, some 160 people are reportedly on death row for crimes they committed while under the age of 18. Pillay also condemned the execution of political prisoners and urged Iran to immediately impose a moratorium on all executions, with a view to abolishing the death penalty.

On 8 August, seven Human Rights Council (HRC) special rapporteurs expressed grave concern over the recent escalation in the arrest and sentencing of individuals exercising their rights to freedom of expression and opinion, peaceful assembly and association. Since 22 May, 36 individuals, including journalists, bloggers, filmmakers and authors, have been arrested, summoned or sentenced.

During its 27th session in September, the HRC will consider the report of the Secretary-General on the question of the death penalty (A/HRC/27/23). The report includes a reference to Iran, reiterating concerns in previous reports about its continued heavy reliance on the death penalty to combat crimes that according to international human rights jurisprudence do not meet the threshold of "most serious crimes", including consensual same-sex sexual activity, apostasy and blasphemy. The report also notes that executions relating to acts of terrorism or crimes of a political nature were carried out.

Key Issues

Negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 are the key issue for Council members, as the Committee's work has been almost completely put on hold in light of the talks.

Another issue is Iran's dialogue with the IAEA, which also includes discussion of outstanding questions about the past possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear programme.

At the Committee level, issues include continuing follow-up to the PoE's recommendations and to the *Klos C* incident report.

Options

Given member states' high interest in the JPA process and some confusion over the status of Council sanctions during the talks, the Committee could hold an open briefing to explain the impact of a possible deal on Security Council sanctions and the work that the

UN DOCUMENTS ON IRAN Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2159 (9 June 2014) extended the mandate of the PoE until 9 June 2015. S/RES/1737 (23 December 2006) imposed the first round of sanctions against Iran and established the Sanctions Committee. **Security Council Meeting Record** S/PV.7211 (25 June 2014) was the most recent 90-day briefing. **Sanctions Committee Document** S/2014/394 (15 June 2014) was the 2014 final report of the PoE. **IAEA DOCUMENT** INF/CIRC/855 (27 November 2013) was the communication received from the EU High Representative with the text of the 24 November JPA.

Iran (con't)

Committee will need to carry out to review or lift measures.

A further option for the Committee is issuing an Implementation Assistance Notice (IAN) on the Klos C case that highlights for member states the techniques employed by Iran in shipping the banned rockets.

Council and Wider Dynamics

The Committee's work has been very limited due to the continuing P5+1 negotiations with Iran. Since the start of the JPA, China and Russia, which have blocked Committee action in the past, have insisted that the Committee avoid any activities that could

undermine the talks. The P3, usually the toughest in the Council on Iran, have also been cautious about Committee actions—such as proposing new designations—that could hurt the negotiations. However, smaller steps that have been proposed that the P3 would support—such as issuing an IAN on the Klos C case—are considered likely to be blocked by China or Russia, which perceive them as also too provocative in light of the negotiations. At the same time, the Committee has not received any new incident reports, which is in line with a trend identified in the PoE report that since mid-2013 there have been fewer reported violations.

The timing of the chair's briefing in September could be sensitive as it may overlap with the high level P5+1 talks with Iran.

Elected Council members have expressed frustration that they have had very little information on the P5+1 process. Most Council members highlighted at the last chair briefing that Council sanctions on Iran still remain in force during negotiations. It seems they emphasised this point in response to the PoE's latest report, which notes that some states have been confused by the status of UN sanctions.

The US is the penholder on Iran.

Syria

Expected Council Action

Early in the month, Sigrid Kaag, Special Coordinator of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)-UN Joint Mission, will brief Council members on the implementation of resolution 2118 regarding the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons. The OPCW-UN Joint Mission will come to a close on 30 September.

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos will brief the Council on humanitarian access pursuant to resolutions 2139 and 2165 in late September.

US President Barack Obama will preside over a summit-level Council meeting on the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters. While this issue is not specific to Syria, activities by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in Iraq and Syria are expected to be a prominent feature of the meeting. (For more details, please see the brief on Counter-Terrorism in this *Monthly Forecast*.)

Finally, 1 September is the first day of Staffan de Mistura's term as Special Envoy for Syria. No meeting on the Syria political track was planned at press time.

Key Recent Developments

Kaag last briefed on 5 August, reporting that on 24 July, the OPCW had agreed to

a destruction plan for the 12 production facilities in Syria—the facilities were to have been destroyed by 15 March. On 18 August, the US announced that the destruction of declared priority chemicals on its ship, the *Cape Ray*, had been completed. On 25 August, the Secretary-General said that successor arrangements to the OPCW-UN Joint Mission were being established to carry out the remaining verification and inspection activities under resolution 2118 and that reporting to the Security Council would continue.

Meanwhile, the civil war in Syria continues unabated on its devastating course, with a death toll now conservatively estimated at over 191,000. There are 2.99 million refugees and 6.4 million internally displaced persons. Almost half of the population, 10.8 million, require humanitarian assistance, and of those 4.7 million are in hard-to-reach areas and 241,000 in besieged areas.

Amos visited Tehran on 17 August to discuss the humanitarian crises in Syria with government officials saying that Iran had a very important role to help the UN and its partners gain access in Syria.

On 28 August, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Kyung-wha Kang briefed the Council on humanitarian

access. She reported that since the adoption of resolution 2165, there had been five cross-border aid deliveries, some improvement in access to Aleppo, Dar'a and rural Damascus and that medical supplies had reached a number of opposition held areas. However, access continued to decline in government and ISIS controlled areas and that key elements of resolution 2139 remained unimplemented, such as medical neutrality, ceasing aerial bombardments and easing administrative hurdles.

Clashes between the Syrian government and ISIS have significantly increased after ISIS expanded into north-western Iraq in early June. The ISIS assault that began in July around its self-proclaimed capital, Raqqa, culminated in their capture of the Tabqa air base on 24 August, depriving Syria of control of its last military bastion in Raqqa province.

US airstrikes against ISIS targets in Iraq began on 8 August. While no such airstrikes have occurred in Syria, on 25 August the US did authorise surveillance flights over Syria, focused on the border with Iraq. Some analysts see this as a step towards US military action against ISIS targets in Syria. Syria has said that any airstrike not coordinated with Damascus would be considered aggression.

On 15 August, the Council unanimously

UN DOCUMENTS ON SYRIA [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2170](#) (15 August 2014) condemned the recruitment by ISIS and al-Nusra of foreign terrorist fighters and listed six individuals affiliated with those groups under the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida sanctions regime. [S/RES/2165](#) (14 July 2014) and [S/RES/2139](#) (22 February 2014) were on humanitarian access. [S/RES/2118](#) (27 September 2013) was on chemical weapons. [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2014/14](#) (28 July 2014) was on illicit oil trade as a source of revenue for terrorism in Iraq and Syria. [Security Council Press Statement SC/11531](#) (22 August 2013) condemned the beheading of journalist James Foley by ISIS. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7252](#) (28 August 2014) was a briefing on humanitarian access in Syria. [Secretary-General's Reports S/2014/622](#) (25 August 2014) was on chemical weapons. [S/2014/611](#) (21 August 2014) was on humanitarian access. [Human Rights Council Document A/HRC/27/60](#) (13 August 2014) was the eighth report of the Commission of Inquiry on Syria.

Syria (con't)

adopted resolution 2170, which condemned ISIS and al-Nusra Front for the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters. It also listed six individuals affiliated with these groups under the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida sanctions regime and expressed the Council's readiness to list others involved in financing or facilitating the travel of foreign terrorist fighters.

On 22 August, Council members issued a press statement condemning the 19 August beheading of US journalist James Foley by ISIS.

Human Rights-Related Developments

A paper published by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on 12 August, sheds light on the "indescribable suffering" of inmates at Aleppo Central Prison. Serious human rights violations and abuses by government officials, including prison guards, as well as by armed opposition groups during their year-long siege of the facility that ended in May, were documented, including extrajudicial killings, torture, enforced disappearance and starvation—constituting violations of international humanitarian law that may amount to war crimes.

On 4 July, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considered the second periodic report of Syria (CEDAW/SYR/2). The Committee's principal areas of concern included the exacerbation of violence against women since the outbreak of the conflict in 2011, consistent reports indicating that women activists have been subjected to arbitrary detention, physical abuse and sexual violence by government forces and affiliated militias and the high incidence of sexual violence, trafficking, child and forced marriages, torture, arbitrary detentions and kidnappings against women and girls by all parties to the conflict.

During its 27th session in September, the Human Rights Council will consider the latest report of its Commission of Inquiry on Syria (A/HRC/27/60) that accused government forces and ISIS of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Key Issues

The key issue for the Council is to refocus its attention in the fourth year of the conflict back to the original and overarching issue—finding ways to support a cessation of violence and resuscitate efforts for a political solution.

Another immediate issue is how to address, and not exclusively through the lens of counter-terrorism, the mutually destabilizing impact of the crises in Iraq and Syria and the realignment of priorities and allegiances

by the parties on the ground as a result of the gains accumulated by ISIS.

An ongoing issue for the Council will be what further steps it might take if meaningful implementation of resolutions 2139 and 2165 on humanitarian access, particularly by the Syrian government, continues to lag.

Options

With the accountability track blocked after the 22 May veto by China and Russia of the ICC referral, the chemical weapons track winding down and the humanitarian track shifting to monitoring mode, September seems to offer, during the high-level week of the General Assembly, an opportunity to galvanize Council energy toward progress on the political track.

Council members could invite de Mistura to meet and discuss ways to revive the political process. Although largely superseded by political realities on the ground, the 30 June 2012 Geneva Communiqué remains the guiding document for a political solution. Council members could discuss with de Mistura how his approach will differ from those of his predecessors, Kofi Annan and Lakhdar Brahimi. They could also discuss whether his UN mandate (no longer a joint post with the Arab League) will provide any latitude to move talks forward and how he plans to implement the Secretary-General's call to fully involve countries in the region, a veiled reference to Iran.

Council Dynamics

There has been no serious discussion among Council members about acting on the threat in resolutions 2139 and 2165 to impose measures for non-compliance. In fact, the massive effort that went into agreeing on resolution 2165 on cross-border access has shifted down into monitoring mode. Similarly on the chemical weapons track, Council members are likely to concentrate on monitoring the remaining activities of the OPCW-UN joint mission, such as verification work, the destruction of production facilities and clarifying discrepancies of the chemical weapons stockpile declared by Syria.

Overall, crises in Gaza, Iraq and Libya have drawn attention away from Syria in recent months. Council members seem

generally despondent over how to have any meaningful role in ceasing the civil war in Syria. Recent activity by the Council has been limited to counter-terrorism efforts, and the emergence of ISIS as a wider regional threat is likely to exacerbate that trend.

Council members have only recently approached the cross-pollination of ISIS in the crises in Iraq and Syria with the adoption of a 28 July presidential statement prohibiting illicit oil trade as a source of revenue for terrorists and the 15 August adoption of resolution 2170 on ISIS and the al-Nusra Front. While Russia has from the beginning of the conflict taken the position that terrorism was the greatest threat to international peace and security, the P3 in particular had held firmly to the view that the real threat was the Bashar al-Assad regime. In recent months, with the proliferation of ISIS fighters from Syria into Iraq and its expanding control of territory, strategic infrastructure, military hardware and natural resources, it appears that the P3's calculations have shifted toward viewing ISIS as another primary threat on par with the Assad regime, bringing them closer to the Russian position on terrorism in Syria. As a result, it seems that the counter-terrorism aspect of the conflict, because it is easier to garner consensus in the Council, has overwhelmingly overshadowed any serious thinking about how to revive the stalled political track.

The Secretary-General has reminded the Council that the conflict cannot be reduced to the problem of terrorism and foreign fighters and that all concerned should not lose sight that the best way to stop terror is a political solution. On the political track, Council members will be interested in De Mistura's preliminary plans for reviving the political process, but few have expectations that any bold plans that could positively impact the situation in Syria will be forthcoming in the near term.

France is the penholder on Syria overall, while Australia, Jordan and Luxembourg are the penholders on the humanitarian track. In practice, however, most texts need to be agreed between Russia and the US prior to agreement by the broader Council.

UNDOF (Golan Heights)

Expected Council Action

In September, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous will brief Council members in consultations on the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) report, due 12 September. No outcome is anticipated.

UNDOF was established in 1974 to monitor the ceasefire between Israel and Syria. Its mandate expires on 31 December.

Key Recent Developments

Clashes between government forces and armed opposition groups are ongoing as the civil war in Syria continues to adversely affect UNDOF's area of operations and increases the possibility of heightened tensions between Israel and Syria. In response, the mission continues to focus on risk mitigation and enhanced self-defence capabilities. UNDOF's extremely challenging operational environment hampers its ability to operate as in the past. Many observation posts and UN positions have been vacated due to the security situation, and most observation tasks are now carried out from static positions instead of mobile patrols. Meanwhile, inspections of military equipment on the Alpha side (the Israeli-occupied Golan) have mostly continued on a normal basis with some increased restrictions; such inspections on the Bravo side (Syria) remain suspended.

On 17 June, Council members met to consider the 10 June UNDOF report, which detailed continued violations of the ceasefire line. The presence of government forces carrying out operations against armed opposition groups in the UNDOF area of separation continued to interfere significantly with the safety of UNDOF personnel and the mission's freedom of movement (neither Israel nor Syria should have military forces in the area of separation under the terms of the 1974 disengagement agreement). This report indicated that UNDOF had begun to observe that the more violent aspects of the conflict were now evident in its area of operations, including the use of airstrikes by the government, the use of heavy weapons and captured military equipment by armed opposition groups and the appearance of "black flags"—a symbol associated with the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham.

The September report is likely to highlight the ongoing nature of the issues raised in the June report as well as describe several major incidents that have occurred since.

On 2 June, a rocket landed over the Alpha line near an Israeli military position, and Israeli forces retaliated with artillery fire aimed toward the source of the rocket launch in Syria.

On 23 June, Israel targeted nine Syrian army positions with tank fire and air strikes after mortar fire from the Syrian side the previous day killed an Israeli civilian. Israel's assessment is that most of these incidents are due to errant fire resulting from fighting in Syria. Israel said that armed opposition groups were probably responsible but that its forces fired on Syrian military positions to stress that Syria was responsible for security on its side of the ceasefire line.

On 5 July a UN patrol was hit by a tank round, injuring two peacekeepers and on 7 July another UN patrol was fired upon. Like Israel, the UN considers most of these incidents to be the result of errant cross-fire rather than direct targeting. However, some armed opposition groups tail UN convoys to ease their own travel since government forces know they are not to fire at the UN. This practice, while infrequent, increases the chance that UN personnel will get caught in the cross-fire.

There have also been clashes between the government and armed opposition forces on a strategic plateau near UNDOF observation point 56 (OP56). On 15 July, the government deployed its forces and heavy weaponry extremely close to OP56 and remained there at press time. In response, armed opposition groups have threatened to attack OP56 if the government does not vacate the position. These developments have exposed UNDOF to the very real possibility of suffering collateral damage during clashes. DPKO sent two notes to the Security Council on 18 and 25 July to keep members informed of events on the ground.

On 27 August, armed opposition forces overran government forces at the Quneitra crossing on the Syrian side of the armistice line. Stray mortars from the fighting landed in or near UNDOF positions as well as on the Israeli side of the crossing, injuring

one soldier and one civilian. Israel returned fire at two Syrian military positions. Forty-three peacekeepers were detained by armed opposition forces the next morning and Council members issued a press statement in response. There were similar incidents in March and May of 2013 and while peacekeepers were released safely, it did lead to a crisis of confidence and Austria withdrew its troops. Recently, on 23 August, the Philippine government announced it would withdraw its 331 peacekeepers from UNDOF when their tour ends in October due to the security situation.

When the Council last renewed UNDOF on 25 June 2014, it drew attention to the deteriorating situation on the ground as a result of spillover from the Syrian conflict and condemned the use of heavy weapons by government forces and armed opposition groups in the UNDOF area of separation. The Council called on all parties to the conflict to cease military activities throughout Syria, including in the UNDOF area of operations. It also condemned the increased use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in that area.

Additionally, the Council included new language in the resolution calling on all parties to cooperate with UNDOF operations, including the unimpeded delivery of equipment. (Since March, an Irish counter-IED team has been in place, but Syria has not given clearance for the team's equipment to enter the country.) Ladsous visited UNDOF on 22-23 June and reassured peacekeepers of the Council's unanimity in ensuring the mission had the resources to maximise the safety of UNDOF personnel. Ladsous also met with government officials and stressed the importance of getting the counter-IED equipment to UNDOF. Following Ladsous's visit, Syria cleared a majority of the equipment. However, the delivery of a few crucial components was still outstanding at press time.

Key Issues

The spillover of the Syrian crisis into UNDOF's area of operations and increased ceasefire violations will continue to be of primary concern to the Council. Military forces are prohibited from entering the

UNDOF (Golan Heights) (con't)

area of separation, yet Syria has done so in response to the rebel presence. The fact that armed opposition groups now possess heavy weapons in the area of operations will also be a key concern.

A continuing key issue will be the safety and security of UN personnel, given the proximity of UNDOF positions to the areas where there have been clashes between government forces and the armed opposition groups. The fact that Syria has still not allowed all counter-IED equipment into the country is a related issue.

Options

The most likely option is for the Council to receive the report and briefing and take no

additional action. Another option would be for the Council to adopt a statement reiterating the need for all parties to exercise restraint, express concern for the safety and security of UNDOF personnel, call for the elimination of obstacles to UNDOF's freedom of movement and urge Syria to expedite authorisation for any necessary self-defensive equipment for the mission to enter the country.

Council Dynamics

Council members are concerned about the increasing clashes, both in number and intensity, as well as the tension between Israel and Syria. The Council has always generally agreed that UNDOF contributes

to stability in the region in the absence of a peace agreement between Israel and Syria. However, its utility is particularly high now in order to avoid further negative security implications for the region. In this regard, most Council members are keen to maintain good relationships with troop-contributing countries to ensure UNDOF's ability to operate effectively.

Though the US holds the pen on the Golan Heights, resolutions renewing UNDOF have been jointly authored with Russia since June 2012, suggesting consensus on an issue that is increasingly affected by the highly divisive conflict in Syria.

Libya

Expected Council Action

In September, Council members are likely to be briefed on developments in Libya by Bernardino León, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), and then meet in consultations. The Council will also likely receive the periodic briefing by the chair of the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Eugène-Richard Gasana (Rwanda), and hold consultations on the Libya sanctions regime.

The mandates of UNSMIL and the Panel of Experts (PoE) assisting the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee expire on 13 March and 13 April 2015, respectively.

Key Recent Developments

Three years after the fall of Tripoli, the security situation has significantly deteriorated in the capital of Libya. On 23 August, after a five-week siege, Misrata-based militias and their Islamist allies took over the Tripoli International Airport, which had been held until then by Zintan-based militias that supported the 16 May failed coup by rogue

general Khalifa Haftar. At press time, Misrata-based militias had consolidated their hold on Tripoli and fighting had expanded to the outskirts of the capital.

UNSMIL personnel, currently based in Tunisia due to the security situation, have concentrated their efforts on brokering a ceasefire in Tripoli. In a 17 August statement, UNSMIL deeply regretted the lack of response "to the repeated international appeals and its own efforts for an immediate ceasefire". The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, quoting the Crisis Committee of the Tripoli City Council, said some 7,240 families (around 43,500 people) have been displaced by the fighting in Tripoli. On 17-18 and 23 August airstrikes reportedly carried out by Egypt and the United Arab Emirates hit locations controlled by Misrata-based militias.

The security situation in Benghazi, where Haftar's offensive started, remains critical. After overrunning a special-forces camp loyal to Haftar, Ansar al-Sharia—a terrorist group which is not listed under the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida sanctions regime—on 31 July

proclaimed the establishment of an emirate in Benghazi. In a 21 August statement, UNSMIL condemned the fighting in Tripoli and Benghazi, "especially the indiscriminate shelling of residential neighbourhoods and public facilities as well as the use of aircraft in military operations".

A newly formed House of Representatives—which took over from the General National Congress (GNC)—met for the first time on 2 August in Tobruk and elected Ageela Issa Gweider as its president. The constitutionality of House meetings—where Islamists hold significantly fewer seats than they did in the GNC—has been challenged by some. On 12 August, the House decided that the next President would be elected by a popular vote. On 25 August, the GNC, whose mandate has ended, appointed Omar al-Hassi as new prime minister in a move likely to exacerbate political tensions.

Regional actors have been alarmed by the crisis in Libya. During a 13-14 July conference hosted by Tunisia, neighbouring countries decided to form security and political committees to monitor developments in

UN DOCUMENTS ON LIBYA [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2146](#) (19 March 2014) imposed measures on vessels transporting crude oil that had been illicitly exported from Libya. [S/RES/2144](#) (14 March 2014) extended the mandates of UNSMIL and the PoE. [S/RES/1973](#) (17 March 2011) authorised all necessary measures – excluding an occupation force – to protect civilians in Libya. [S/RES/1970](#) (26 February 2011) referred the situation in Libya to the ICC, imposed an arms embargo and targeted sanctions (assets freeze and travel ban) and established a sanctions committee. [Secretary-General's Report S/2014/131](#) (26 February 2014) was the latest report of the Secretary-General on Libya. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7218](#) (17 July 2014) was a briefing by Mitri with the participation of Abdulaziz. [Security Council Press Statements SC/11489](#) (23 July 2014) welcomed the announcement of the final results of the parliamentary elections and urged the expeditious seating of the House of Representatives. [SC/11479](#) (17 July 2014) condemned the recent violence in Libya. [Sanctions Committee Document S/2014/106](#) (15 February 2014) was the final report of the PoE. **OTHER RELEVANT FACTS** [Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNSMIL Bernardino León](#) (Spain) [UNSMIL Size and Composition](#) 166 international civilians, 76 local civilians, 13 police officers and three UN volunteers. [UNSMIL Duration](#) 16 September 2011 to present.

Libya (con't)

Libya. On 17 July, Libyan Foreign Minister Mohamed Abdulaziz addressed the Security Council and called for the establishment, under Chapter VII, of a UN stabilisation and institution-building mission for Libya. On 12 August, Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni called for the establishment of joint forces agreements with Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia to protect the borders. (This came after increasing rumours that Algeria and Egypt might intervene in the country.) On 14 August, the House of Representatives called for the intervention of the international community in Libya to protect civilians and Abdulaziz reiterated his call for intervention at a follow-up meeting of neighbouring countries held on 25 August in Egypt. On 23 August, the House of Representatives and the interim government adopted a plan aimed at maintaining security and stability in Libya. Among other requests to the Security Council, the plan included suggestions to review UNSMIL's current mandate (S/2014/632).

At press time, UNSMIL staff remained in Tunisia and the UN Secretariat was undertaking a strategic review of the mission. The conclusions of this review are expected to provide the Council with options in the near future. On 14 August, the EU Special Representative for Libya, León, was appointed new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNSMIL. He is expected to take over on 1 September. On 27 August the Council received the last briefing by outgoing head of UNSMIL, Tarek Mitri.

Gasana is likely to brief the Council on how the situation is affecting the work of the committee, such as the insufficient mechanisms to avoid possible violations of the arms embargo and the lack of centralised oversight of military procurement. Resolution 2174 adopted on 27 August imposed sanctions on individuals and entities obstructing or undermining the successful completion of the political transition and tightened the arms embargo.

Human Rights-Related Developments

In a statement released on 8 August, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) expressed concern over the situation in Libya, particularly about reports of frequent indiscriminate shelling of heavily populated areas in Benghazi and Tripoli by rival sides, killing or injuring civilians, including children. OHCHR also raised concern about armed groups on both sides taking prisoners, with initial reports of torture being investigated, as well as continuing attacks against media professionals.

Key Issues

The main issue in Libya is how to achieve a ceasefire between warring parties in Tripoli and Benghazi. Continuous violations of international humanitarian law by the warring parties is a related issue.

An overarching set of key issues includes how to avoid the challenges to legitimate institutions, encourage a national political dialogue, the inclusiveness of the House of Representatives and the formation of a legitimate government following the 25 June parliamentary elections.

The threat that terrorist groups with regional reach could consolidate in Libya is also a key issue.

A neglected issue is the role of regional and international actors that are contributing to the escalation of conflict in Libya. The provision of funds, weapons and other support to warring factions—in contravention of the 1970 sanctions regime—is a related issue. The potential partiality of the listings by the sanctions committee is a further related issue.

Options

The Council could adopt a resolution:

- urging all parties to agree on a ceasefire;
- refocusing UNSMIL's mandate in the light of the current situation, prioritising its work on national dialogue, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration as well as security sector reform;
- demanding that the militias and army factions in Libya disarm, refrain from using

violence and agree to work together for national reconciliation, justice, respect for human rights and the rule of law; and

- calling on all member states to respect the arms embargo and threatening all those violating it with secondary sanctions.

It could also list Ansar al-Sharia under the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions regime.

Council Dynamics

The sharp deterioration of the security and political situation in Libya continues to be a source of concern for Council members. Despite the increased level of attention, until late August Council members had limited their reaction to issuing several press statements. It seems the position of some Council members regarding the actions of the government and various groups and militias, in particular those of Haftar, has prevented the Council from tackling this situation actively. The failure to act more decisively is also affecting the already difficult situation in which UNSMIL is expected to implement its good-offices mandate: the myriad special envoys of international actors (including three permanent Council members) risks further increasing the confusion regarding negotiations for a ceasefire in Libya.

Following Abdulaziz's call for a UN stabilisation and institution-building mission, it remained unclear how and whether Council members are planning on responding to this. In a 20 August interview with *Le Monde*, French President François Hollande expressed his deep concern over the situation in Libya and said the 2011 military intervention was not sufficient because it was cut short and had insufficient follow-up. In an 8 August interview with *The New York Times*, US President Barack Obama acknowledged that the US and its European partners underestimated the need for a plan to rebuild societies with no civic traditions after the revolution succeeded in Libya.

The UK is the penholder on Libya.

Sudan and South Sudan

Expected Council Action

In September, the Council expects to hold an informal interactive dialogue on Sudan-South Sudan issues with Thabo Mbeki, chair of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel. (The informal interactive dialogues are off-the-record meetings presided by the Council President affording members' interaction with high-level officials involved in diplomacy regarding situation-specific issues on the Council's agenda. Meetings are held in a meeting room other than the Council Chamber or Consultations Room, and participation is limited to Council members.)

Key Recent Developments

Progress continues to remain elusive on implementation of several elements of the 27 September 2012 agreements between Sudan and South Sudan regarding oil-sharing, cross-border trade, border security, nationality issues and other matters. The Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM) along the Sudan-South Sudan border is barely operational. The centre-line of the Safe Demilitarised Border Zone (SDBZ), intended to be a buffer zone between the two countries, has not been determined, leaving the boundaries of the SDBZ undefined and delaying overall border demarcation. Temporary administrative units in the disputed Abyei region, straddling Sudan and South Sudan, have also still not been established, and security forces from both sides remain in or enter the region in breach of Security Council resolutions.

The national dialogue process in Sudan continues to experience setbacks. Concerns continue to be raised among opposition parties, as well as international actors, that government repression has created a climate that is not conducive for constructive dialogue.

On 7-8 August, members of the opposition National Umma Party (NUP) and the rebel alliance Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) met in Paris to discuss their concerns about the national dialogue. (Both the NUP and the SRF are not participating in the process because of their doubts about the government's intention to initiate meaningful reform.) On 8 August, they signed a statement known as the "Paris Declaration", calling for genuine political reform and an end to the various conflicts. The statement also

asserts that the conditions for national dialogue currently do not exist in Sudan, primarily a reference to the continued detention of political prisoners.

Maryam El-Sadig, a key NUP figure and the daughter of NUP party leader Saddiq al-Mahdi, was arrested in Khartoum on 11 August following her return from the meeting in Paris. Another major opposition figure, Sudanese Congress Party leader Ibrahim al-Sheik, who was arrested on 8 June after criticising the management of the Darfur conflict, also remains in jail.

Mashood Baderin, the UN Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Sudan, called for the release of El-Sadig, al-Sheik and other political prisoners in Sudan on 15 August. He emphasised that "it is imperative to ensure the guarantee of fundamental civil liberties and freedom of all political leaders to encourage confidence in the proposed national dialogue."

On 16 August, a committee consisting of pro-government and opposition parties that have agreed to participate in the national dialogue presented a roadmap for the process. According to the roadmap, there will be a national dialogue conference in which participants will strive to arrive at decisions by consensus. On issues where there is strong disagreement, a vote can be taken but a measure must achieve at least 90 percent support to be approved. The AU and the Arab League will be allowed to observe the conference, which President Omar al-Bashir is expected to chair.

In mid-August, the AU established a committee, chaired by Mbeki, to help support the national dialogue. Mbeki reportedly called on Sudan to release political prisoners in a 17 August meeting with Hassan al-Turabi, head of the Popular Congress Party, which is participating in the national dialogue.

The Council held consultations on Sudan-South Sudan issues and the situation in Abyei on 20 August, with Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Haile Menkerios, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Sudan and South Sudan, briefing. Mulet gave an overview of the Secretary-General's 23 July report on Abyei (S/2014/518), which stated that "the situation in Abyei during the period under review [14 May to 23 July] was

relatively calm, although the underlying conditions remained volatile and unpredictable". Menkerios reported that progress had not been made in implementing the 27 September 2012 agreements.

Key Issues

A key issue is whether Sudan and South Sudan can demonstrate the political will and energy to negotiate a resolution to the outstanding issues dividing them, while both countries are mired in their own domestic crises.

Also a key issue is whether the Council can formulate an effective response to the national dialogue process in Sudan, one that encourages progress but also signals concern about the shortcomings of the process.

Another important issue is how to encourage Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) to engage in serious negotiations. (At press time, Mbeki was trying to reconvene the parties for direct talks.)

Options

Hearing from Mbeki about his mediation role with respect to Sudan-South Sudan negotiations, Sudan-SPLM-N talks and the national dialogue process in Sudan will be much welcome and may prompt the Council to consider adopting a presidential statement that:

- encourages the national dialogue in Sudan but expresses concern about the curtailment of press freedom and the arrests of opposition figures;
- urges Sudan and the SPLM-N to re-engage in serious negotiations; and
- urges Sudan and South Sudan to take measures to diffuse the potential for conflict in Abyei, including by redeploying their security forces away from the region and reactivating the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, which is meant to enable joint political and administrative oversight in Abyei but has not convened in well over a year.

Council Dynamics

There is recognition among several Council members that it will be challenging for Sudan and South Sudan to resolve their outstanding issues, given that both countries are mired in

Sudan and South Sudan (con't)

their own civil wars. While Council members view the national dialogue process in Sudan as a step in the right direction, several question the government's commitment to the process,

especially given the arrest of key opposition figures. In general, some members tend to be highly critical of Sudan's human rights record, while others who are more favourably disposed

toward the regime continue to argue for debt relief and a removal of economic sanctions.

The US is the penholder on Sudan-South Sudan issues.

Central African Republic

Expected Council Action

On 15 September, the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) will take over peacekeeping responsibilities from the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA), in accordance with resolution 2149. The Council may have a high-level briefing under the US presidency to discuss the current situation in the Central African Republic (CAR).

The mandate of MINUSCA expires on 30 April 2015.

Key Recent Developments

The situation in the CAR remains dire. While MISCA forces and French and EU troops have tried to protect civilians, their success has been partial and mostly limited to the capital, Bangui. According to the Secretary-General's latest report of 1 August (S/2014/562), civilians are the targets of sectarian violence, and serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law continue with impunity. These violations include forced displacement of the civilian population, rape and other forms of sexual violence, the recruitment of children by armed groups, assassinations, summary executions and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. In addition, half of the population is still in need of humanitarian assistance and more than one million people have been displaced, with 400,000 seeking refuge in neighbouring countries. While most of the Muslim population has fled to the north, roughly 20,000 Muslims are still trapped in various enclaves, including in Bangui, where they are surrounded and regularly attacked by the Christian *anti-balaka* militia.

The report adds that MINUSCA

continues to work closely with MISCA in preparing its contingents for the transfer of authority, or "re-hatting", by filling in capability gaps and obtaining additional forces. In addition to MISCA contingents, the report notes the recruitment of three non-MISCA battalions and 120 police officers and the addition of three helicopters. However, specific information on overall strength and preparations is not given in the report. (Resolution 2149 requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of MINUSCA's mandate including troop and police levels, force and police generation and deployment of all constituent elements.)

On the political front, 169 representatives of the transitional government, armed groups and civil society held talks in Brazzaville from 21-23 July. A ceasefire involving the predominantly Muslim *Séléka* rebel group and the anti-balaka was signed, and demands for the CAR to be split in two along religious lines were dropped. Council members issued a press statement on 24 July welcoming the ceasefire as a first step in a wider political process that is meant to ensure durable peace, respect for human rights, protection of civilians and the rule of law (SC/11491).

As part of the Brazzaville agreement, interim President Catherine Samba-Panza on 5 August dismissed her government to make way for a national unity government. On 10 August, Samba-Panza named Mahamat Kamoun as the country's first Muslim prime minister, responsible for forming the new government. (Kamoun was chef de cabinet to former interim President Michel Djotodja.) Kamoun announced that his first priorities are the formation of an inclusive government, restoring security and state authority and reconciliation. According to

media reports, whereas the *anti-balaka* were pleased with this choice, a communiqué by *Séléka*'s second vice-president, General Mohamed Mousa Dhaffane, stated that the group will reconsider its participation in the government as it was not consulted on the appointment.

In the meantime, the agreed ceasefire has not brought an end to the sectarian violence or the activities of both armed groups. On 17 August, the *Séléka* reportedly killed 34 people about 350 kilometers north of Bangui. In addition, despite the ceasefire agreement, Nouredine Adam, the deputy leader of the *Séléka*, announced on 17 August the establishment of an independent state in north-eastern CAR.

According to *Médecins Sans Frontières*, on 20 August at least 30 people were injured in fighting between local militia and EU troops in Bangui after residents of the Muslim PK-5 neighbourhood accused the force of killing a man the day before.

The Council was briefed by the Special Representative and head of MINUSCA, Babacar Gaye (Senegal), and the chair of the Peacebuilding Commission's CAR configuration, Omar Hilale (Morocco), on 19 August. Hilale informed Council members that the configuration could only form its long-term framework once peace is achieved, but it could support the political process, reconciliation and reforms. Gaye welcomed the ceasefire agreement and concentrated mostly on the political process and said that the new government must be an inclusive one. He told Council members that MINUSCA troop capacity will be at 65 percent by 15 September but apparently did not provide specific information on preparations for deployment. After the consultations, Gaye told the media

UN DOCUMENTS ON THE CAR [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2149](#) (10 April 2014) established MINUSCA. [S/RES/2134](#) (28 January 2014) renewed the mandate of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in CAR and authorised the EU mission and targeted sanctions. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7246](#) (19 August 2014) was a briefing on the situation in the CAR. [Security Council Press Statement SC/11491](#) (24 July 2014) welcomed the ceasefire signed in Brazzaville on 23 July. [Security Council Letter S/2014/373](#) (26 June 2014) was from the Secretary-General to the Council President containing the reissued version of the Col interim report. **OTHER RELEVANT FACTS** [Special Representative and Head of MINUSCA](#) Babacar Gaye (Senegal) [MINUSCA Size and Composition](#) 10,000 military personnel, 1,820 police [MINUSCA Duration](#) 10 April 2014 to present [Chair of the Sanctions Committee](#) Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė (Lithuania)

Central African Republic (con't)

that by 15 September MINUSCA will have an initial deployment capacity of 7,600 troops, with 5,800 of those from MISCA (including a battalion from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, despite its military being listed on the Secretary-General's list for child recruitment and sexual abuse of children).

The Council has yet to be briefed on the interim report of the Commission of Inquiry (CoI) mandated by the Council in resolution 2127 to investigate reports of violations of international humanitarian law, international human rights law and abuses of human rights in the CAR. (The initial report was retracted and reissued. For more details, see our July 2014 *Monthly Forecast*.) It seems that there is not much appetite among Council members to discuss the interim report

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 11 July, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considered the combined first five periodic reports on the CAR's implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Committee experts acknowledged the complex situation and structural problems in the country, as well as such challenges as the lack of resources and capacity, particularly in the judicial and law enforcement sectors and inquired about measures to prevent gender-based violence and to end impunity for crimes against humanity and serious human rights abuses.

Key Issues

An overarching issue is to sustain a hands-on approach towards the CAR, including closely monitoring MINUSCA's deployment and possible ramifications from the situation on the ground and then following up with Council action accordingly.

A related issue is monitoring the maintenance of the ceasefire as a stepping stone toward stability.

Another related issue is the establishment of state institutions by the new government from the ground up, ensuring the success of the transitional political process, possible reconciliation and upholding accountability for human rights and international humanitarian law violations.

Options

Options for the Council include:

- issuing a statement welcoming the commencement of MINUSCA peacekeeping operations, supporting the transitional political process and reconciliation, calling for accountability for crimes and encouraging member states to contribute resources and troops to MINUSCA that would be up to UN human rights standards;
- discussing and taking up recommendations in the interim report of the CoI;

- undertaking a Council visiting mission to the CAR (which the Council has never visited despite its being on the Council agenda since 1997);
- listing further individuals for violations of the criteria set out under resolution 2134, either through the 2127 CAR Sanctions Committee or by the Council; or
- taking no action at this time.

Council and Wider Dynamics

With MINUSCA's commencement of operations imminent, Council members are now looking to monitor its performance in stabilising the security environment and, on the civilian side, the re-establishment of state authority. Council members are in agreement that much rides on the success of the ceasefire and an inclusive political process to restore the peace and as a safeguard against partition.

Concerns remain for many Council members about MINUSCA's logistical capabilities come 15 September. While Gaye provided information on 19 August about the number of troops and the political process, Council members felt he did not shed light on the level of readiness of the troops or the logistical preparations.

France is the penholder on the CAR.

Liberia

Expected Council Action

In September, the Council is expected to receive a briefing by Karin Landgren, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), regarding the Secretary-General's latest report on UNMIL (S/2014/598) and other recent developments. Ambassador Mårten Grunditz, chair of the Liberia configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), is also likely to brief. A meeting of UNMIL troop-contributing countries has also been scheduled. The Council is likely to adopt a resolution renewing UNMIL's mandate, which expires on 30 September.

Key Recent Developments

Liberia is facing a public health crisis due to an outbreak of Ebola virus disease. On 6 August, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf declared a 90-day state of emergency; on 8 August, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak in West Africa an international health emergency; and on 11 August, the National Electoral Commission announced an indefinite postponement of the campaign period for senatorial elections scheduled for 14 October. On 16 August, a crowd attacked a facility used to isolate suspected Ebola cases in West Point, a densely populated slum in Monrovia. As of press time, the fates of 17 escaped patients were

unknown, but they are presumed to pose a significant risk of further spreading Ebola. On 20 August, the government forcibly quarantined West Point, resulting in clashes between residents and security forces. Initially confirmed in Guinea on 22 March, as of 20 August there have been an estimated 1,082 cases and 624 deaths due to Ebola in Liberia and a total of 2,615 cases and 1,427 deaths in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria, according to WHO.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Dr. David Nabarro as UN Senior Coordinator on Ebola Virus Disease on 12 August. On 15 August, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet

UN DOCUMENTS ON LIBERIA Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2128 (10 December 2013) modified the Liberia sanctions regime. S/RES/2116 (18 September 2013) renewed the UNMIL mandate until 30 September 2014. Security Council Letter S/2014/504 (16 July 2014) requested an assessment mission on sanctions and a report to the Council prior to 1 October. Secretary-General's Report S/2014/598 (15 August 2014) was the most recent report of the Secretary-General on UNMIL.

Liberia (con't)

and Under-Secretary-General for Field Support Ameerah Haq briefed UNMIL troop- and police-contributing countries (TPCCs). Landgren also briefed from Monrovia via video-teleconference. The meeting was focused on preventive measures for UNMIL personnel (e.g., limiting movement and exposure) and contingency plans to ensure their health, none of whom have yet contracted Ebola. On 18 August, the PBC configurations for Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone held a joint informal meeting, also attended by Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support Judy Cheng-Hopkins, to discuss the implications of Ebola for regional peacebuilding. The Resident Coordinators for the three countries briefed the configuration members via video-teleconference. Due to the rapid escalation of the Ebola outbreak, on 28 August the Secretary-General transmitted a letter to the Council president recommending a three-month technical rollover for UNMIL (modifying the recommendation previously made in his report of 15 August).

In what the Secretary-General's report referred to as Liberia's "most serious security incident in almost three years" (S/2014/598, paragraph 15), more than 500 people gathered on 3 July in Nimba county to protest against the ArcelorMittal iron ore company, alleging that the company had failed to comply with its social commitments. The situation escalated into a clash between the protestors, some of whom were reportedly armed, and the national police backed by UNMIL. Significant damage was done to company property and 57 people were arrested. On 10 July, Johnson Sirleaf said that the demonstration a week earlier had been an "attack" on the economy and that those arrested would be prosecuted. Raising broader questions regarding the stability of the natural resources sector in Liberia, the incident in July had precedents, with three protests against agriculture (Golden Veroleum) and mining companies (ArcelorMittal and BHP Billiton) in March and April.

The Council last addressed Liberia on 16 June when Ambassador Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Husseini (Jordan), chair of the 1521 Liberia

Sanctions Committee, briefed members in consultations. On 16 July, the President of the Security Council sent a letter to the Secretary-General requesting a report to the Council by 1 October that would assess the progress of Liberia toward the termination of sanctions and provide recommendations for UN assistance to Liberia to monitor the border with Côte d'Ivoire and manage arms and ammunition (S/2014/504). The report was to be based on the findings of an assessment mission to be undertaken by the Department of Political Affairs in coordination with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNMIL. Due to the outbreak of the Ebola epidemic, at press time it was unclear when the assessment mission would be deployed.

Underlying Problems

The Ebola outbreak in Liberia raises difficult questions regarding three interconnected issues: the government's capacity to deliver services and maintain stability, the pace and scope of the international response to Ebola in West Africa, and the impact of a rapidly deteriorating public health situation on the operational capabilities of UNMIL. The government has mismanaged its response to the Ebola outbreak on numerous levels—e.g., inadequate public education and insecure health centres—but Liberia also lacks the necessary resources to adequately respond to a public health crisis of this magnitude. That suggests "the international effort to stem the outbreak is dangerously inadequate", as Médecins Sans Frontières recently noted. Finally, it remains unclear how profoundly the measures being taken to protect the health of UNMIL personnel, which apparently include restricting staff movement, will affect the ability of UNMIL to fulfil its mandate.

Key Issue

The principal issue facing the Council is the UNMIL renewal within the broader context of the Ebola outbreak.

Options

One option would be to renew UNMIL for

a period of one year, including a change in the force structure and a revision of the mandate as recommended in the report of the Secretary-General: a reduction of 988 military personnel by mid-2015, adding logistical support for electoral assistance and creating a good offices role for the Special Representative.

Another option would be to roll over the UNMIL mandate for a more limited timeframe, such as a three-month interim period, and thus refrain from making any substantive revisions to the mandate until there is more clarity regarding the scope of the Ebola outbreak and its full operational implications for UNMIL.

Council and Wider Dynamics

In the period prior to the Ebola outbreak, the Council had been taking steps toward drawing down UNMIL and phasing out the 1521 Liberia sanctions regime. Resolution 2116, adopted on 18 September 2013, authorised the second of three stages in troop reductions, with a decrease of 1,129 troops by September 2014. Resolution 2128, adopted 10 December, decided to review the sanctions regime in six months "with a view to modifying or lifting all or part of the measures", dependent upon progress toward meeting the criteria for their termination.

While the long-term trend toward scaling back UNMIL has been clear for some time, what impact the recent Ebola outbreak could have on these plans within the short to medium term remains ambiguous. If the situation deteriorates further, the government will undoubtedly continue to require the assistance of UNMIL to maintain stability in the country. On the other hand, there may also be strong pressure from the UNMIL TPCCs (Bangladesh, China, Ghana, India, Jordan, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines and Ukraine among others) to considerably accelerate the drawdown of the peacekeeping operation, if not evacuate it outright.

The US is the penholder on Liberia and Jordan is chair of the 1521 Liberia Sanctions Committee.

Haiti

Expected Council Action

In September the Council will hold a debate on Haiti to consider the Secretary-General's most recent report on the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of mission, Sandra Honoré, is expected to brief.

Ahead of the debate, the Council is planning a meeting with MINUSTAH's troop and police contributors.

Also in September, Council members are likely to start discussions on the renewal of MINUSTAH's mandate, which expires on 15 October.

Key Recent Developments

When the Council last discussed Haiti, on 24 March, there had been some encouraging progress in the preparations for the long overdue local and legislative elections. In particular, Council members as well as Honoré in her briefing welcomed the 14 March "El Rancho" accord between the main political players. The accord provided for the amendment of the 2013 electoral law to allow for combined elections to be held by 26 October for two-thirds of the senate, the entire chamber of deputies, municipal administrations and local councils. It also called for the conversion of the former Transitional College of the Permanent Electoral Council into a new Provisional Electoral Council with each branch of power changing up to one of its three nominees, as well as a partial cabinet reshuffle.

In the period since the accord was concluded, however, implementation of its key provisions has been hampered by continuing political bickering and it is now unlikely that elections will be held by 26 October. While the chamber of deputies adopted the necessary amendments to the electoral law on 1 April, the vote in the senate has been blocked by a group of six senators who oppose the accord on constitutional grounds. On 11 August, the electoral council informed President Michel Martelly that it would be technically impossible to organise the first round of elections by 26 October due to the absence of an amended electoral law providing the required legal framework. At press

time, there were reports that the application of article 12 of the "El Rancho" accord was being considered as a way out of the crisis. This article states that in the event that the two branches of parliament have not voted on the amended electoral law within 10 days of signature of the agreement, the law is automatically on hold and the electoral council is allowed to override the lack of approval and move forward with elections.

The Secretary-General visited Haiti on 14-15 July, meeting with the president, the prime minister, parliamentarians, judges, police and representatives of civil society, as well as families affected by cholera. A small group of demonstrators told him to go home while calling MINUSTAH an occupation force responsible for the cholera epidemic. In a press conference at the end of the visit, the Secretary-General expressed concern about the political gridlock and also conveyed his regrets to the victims of the cholera epidemic. (Meanwhile, the UN is continuing to claim it has immunity against lawsuits filed in US courts by the victims.)

In his report on MINUSTAH, which was circulated to Council members on 22 August, the Secretary-General strongly emphasised the importance of elections in Haiti to be held this year and called on political actors to rise above their differences to ensure the holding of transparent and inclusive elections "in the higher interest of their country" (S/2014/617).

The Secretary-General's report also contains recommendations for a further drawdown of MINUSTAH based on a strategic assessment mission which was deployed to Haiti in June as announced in his 7 March report to the Council. (This report presented five options for a post-2016 UN presence in Haiti ranging from the termination of the peacekeeping mandate and appointment of a UN Special Envoy for Haiti or establishment instead of a UN special political mission, to replacing MINUSTAH by a new, much smaller peacekeeping mission or maintaining MINUSTAH with a revised mandate.) The review concluded that it would be desirable to ensure the continuity of UN support until elections have taken place and a new government has been

installed and that MINUSTAH's shutdown would be premature.

At the same time, the Secretary-General argues that there is scope for a further consolidation of MINUSTAH in light of recent security gains. He therefore recommends a two-step drawdown of the mission, involving first the renewal of its mandate for one year with a reduction of the authorised military component from its current level of 5,021 troops to 2,370 by June 2015. (The police component would remain at its current level of 2,601 officers.) As a second step the force could then be further reduced following the 2015 presidential elections and the installation of a new government, depending on the situation at the time.

Human Rights-Related Developments

The Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti, Gustavo Gallón, visited Haiti from 15-22 July. In a press conference on 22 July in Port-au-Prince, Gallón highlighted main areas of concern, including high levels of social and economic inequality, the practice of prolonged pretrial detention, with 80 percent of prisoners awaiting trial, and weaknesses in the rule of law.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Chaloka Beyani, undertook a visit to Haiti from 28 June to 5 July, to assess the overall situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the country. During a press conference in Port-Au-Prince on 4 July, he emphasised that although the number of IDPs has decreased from 1.5 million to approximately 100,000, it was time to focus on a development approach for the achievement of durable solutions for the displaced. In this regard, Beyani welcomed the creation of sectorial platforms and inter-ministerial committees to coordinate development activities, but cautioned that these measures should extend to IDPs as well, particularly in key areas such as water, sanitation, health, education, employment and agriculture. He also recommended conducting a "needs based assessment" of all IDPs as well as verifying the location of those who live outside of camps.

Key Issues

The difficult political situation, including the continued impasse over matters relating to the elections, remains a key issue for the Council. The mandate of two thirds of the senators and all members of the chamber of deputies will expire in January 2015 and the inability to hold elections by then could

UN DOCUMENTS ON HAITI [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2119](#) (10 October 2013) renewed MINUSTAH's mandate until 15 October 2014. [Security Council Press Statement SC/10901](#) (28 January 2013) called for the holding of elections by the end of 2013. [Secretary-General's Reports S/2014/617](#) (22 August 2014) was the latest MINUSTAH report. [S/2014/162](#) (7 March 2014) was the report on MINUSTAH which outlined five options for a post-2016 UN presence. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7147](#) (24 March 2014) was the most recent debate on Haiti.

Haiti (con't)

therefore lead to the dissolution of parliament and Martelly ruling by decree.

Other key issues include ongoing efforts to strengthen the rule of law, enhance the capacity of the police, improve the humanitarian situation, combat cholera and promote economic development.

A separate key issue is the renewal of MINUSTAH's mandate and whether to authorise a reduction of its military strength along the lines recommended by the Secretary-General.

Options

One option for the Council would be to adopt a statement voicing concern about the continued delays in the preparations for elections, urging political actors to resolve their differences, expressing support for the Special Representative and calling for elections to be held this year. (In a 28 January 2013 press statement, Council members

called for the holding of elections by the end of that year.)

Another option in September is simply for Council members to listen to the Special Representative's briefing and express their national positions in the debate.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members are united in their concern about the political situation and the lack of progress in organising elections. There is a sense among key Council members, however, that the scope for Council action is limited and that the situation can best be dealt with bilaterally. There is also a belief that any outside pressure which is seen as favouring one side over another may only make the situation worse.

As for the renewal of MINUSTAH's mandate, at press time Council members were still studying the Secretary-General's recommendations in this regard, but views on

the way forward are likely to differ. Whereas members generally agree that conditions on the ground must be taken into account when considering a further drawdown, some are more cautious than others about reducing the military strength of the mission under the present circumstances, in particular in light of the continued uncertainty surrounding the elections, and may consider the Secretary-General's recommendation as going too far. Others, such as France and the UK, who have in the past expressed their preference for an accelerated drawdown, may be more likely to support the recommendations.

While the US is the penholder on Haiti, the Group of Friends of Haiti plays an influential role. (Current members are Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Guatemala, Peru, the US and Uruguay, which is the chair.)

Children and Armed Conflict

Expected Council Action

In September the Council will hold an open debate to discuss the latest report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (S/2014/339). Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict Leila Zerrougui, Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF Yoka Bradt and a representative from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations are expected to speak. Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Jean Asselborn of Luxembourg will be attending. In addition, actor Forest Whitaker, who has supported the "Children, Not Soldiers" campaign, is expected to participate. (The campaign aims to eliminate child recruitment by government security forces by 2016.) At press time no outcome was expected.

Key Recent Developments

The 13th Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict covers global trends, including the impact on children of the use of explosives, air strikes and terror tactics on

civilian populations. It also highlights the worsening situation in a number of countries, including the Central African Republic (CAR), South Sudan, Syria, and northern Nigeria, and provides updates on the implementation of relevant Council resolutions. Overall the report covers 23 situations and in its annexes lists 59 parties for grave violations against children, including 51 armed groups and eight armed forces in 15 country situations. Chad was de-listed from the annexes while Nigeria was introduced as a situation of concern due to systematic attacks on schools and the killing and maiming of children by Boko Haram.

On 7 March the Council held an open debate on children and armed conflict and adopted resolution 2143 (S/PV.7129). A key focus of this resolution was the need to respect and protect schools from attacks and use by armed forces or groups. It also stressed the importance of mainstreaming child protection issues when undertaking security sector reform, including through age-assessment mechanisms to prevent underage recruitment

and establishment of child-protection units in national security forces. The resolution also highlighted the role of child-protection advisers in mainstreaming child protection. In addition, it focused on the role of regional organisations in child protection and the need to incorporate child-protection provisions in peace agreements. Many of these themes are expected to be highlighted during the debate.

The Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict has had six formal meetings in 2014. It has adopted conclusions on the situation in the Philippines (19 February) and Mali (7 July); received briefings from the South Sudan Country Task Force (by video teleconference), the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Smail Chergui, and ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda. During these meetings, Zerrougui presented the reports on the situation of children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Syria and also briefed on her visits to South Sudan and Yemen as well as on the

UN DOCUMENTS ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2143](#) (7 March 2014) was the most recent resolution. [Secretary-General's Report S/2014/339](#) (15 May 2014) was on children and armed conflict, covering the period 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013. [Security Council Debate S/PV.7129](#) (7 March 2014) was the most recent debate on children and armed conflict

Children and Armed Conflict (con't)

conditions for children in Iraq. The Working Group is currently negotiating conclusions on the Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict in Syria and is about to start negotiations on the conclusions to Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict in the DRC.

There was some progress in getting parties to commit to action plans. Yemen signed an action plan to end the recruitment and use of children in the armed forces on 14 May, leaving Sudan as the last of the eight countries with government forces on the Secretary-General's annexes that have yet to sign an action plan to stop recruitment of children. Both Afghanistan and South Sudan reconfirmed their commitment to action plans to end the recruitment of children, with Afghanistan on 1 August endorsing a road map towards compliance.

Key Issues

The key issue for the Council is how best to address the issue of children and armed conflict in new and rapidly changing conflicts that involve children, such as Gaza and Iraq. The current process of listing parties followed by the production of Secretary-General's reports and consideration by the Working Group generally means it takes several years before recommendations are made.

A related issue is being able to quickly obtain credible information on the situation of children in a new conflict where there is no established monitoring and reporting mechanism.

The phenomenon of attacks on schools and hospitals gained greater visibility following the adoption of resolution 2143. An issue for the Council is how this aspect of the children and armed conflict agenda can be developed further and how parties can be

encouraged to sign action plans to stop using schools and hospitals for military purposes.

While country-specific decisions have increasingly included child-protection language, particularly when setting up or renewing UN mission mandates, a greater focus on implementation continues to be an issue.

Ongoing issues include persistent perpetrators, how to deal with non-state actors, sanctions and accountability.

Continuing issues for the Working Group include receiving relevant, current information that can be used as the basis for its conclusions, lengthy negotiations due to lack of consensus and little response to its recommendations.

Options

An outcome is not a likely option, as most members do not believe that there is much to be added at this point to resolution 2143, which was adopted less than five months ago.

The most likely option is for member states to use the opportunity to further consider the role of the Council in relation to the children and armed conflict agenda. The ongoing crises in which children are severely victimised, such as the CAR, Gaza, Iraq or South Sudan, are likely to be brought up in the debate. Topics that could be covered include:

- responding to situations where children's rights are clearly being violated, including regular briefings from the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict and press releases from the Working Group;
- addressing accountability and cooperation with justice mechanisms, such as the ICC;
- exploring how child protection should be taken into consideration during mediation;

- not neglecting non-state actors and armed groups, as well as violations other than recruitment, now that there is a focus on government forces and recruitment due to the "Children, Not Soldiers" initiative;
- assessing the impact of the first several months since the launch of the "Children, Not Soldiers" initiative;
- ways of improving the working methods of the Working Group so that conclusions can be adopted more speedily, including shorter, more focused conclusions and more precise schedules for the reports to be considered by the Working Group; and
- considering ways of enhancing cooperation and building stronger partnerships with regional organisations.

Council Dynamics

After several years of difficult dynamics on this issue, the current mix in the Council allowed for more cooperative negotiations on resolution 2143 and the two conclusions adopted to date in 2014. However, Working Group negotiations on conclusions on the situation of children in Syria have been more complicated, reflecting the larger Council dynamics on Syria.

While a significant number of Council members are supportive of or at least neutral to the issue of children and armed conflict, most are not looking to expand its scope in any significant way. In addition, many members, even those supportive of the issue, have a number of red lines that do not easily allow for strong recommendations from the Working Group. As in the recent past, new ideas are not readily accepted, making it difficult to even issue press statements or share information with bodies such as the ICC.

Luxembourg is the lead on children and armed conflict.

Notable Dates for September

REPORT DUE	REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION IN SEPTEMBER	REQUESTING DOCUMENT
15 May 2014	SG report on Children and Armed Conflict (S/2014/339)	S/RES/2068
15 August	SG report on UNMIL (Liberia) (S/2014/598)	S/RES/2116
25 August	OPCW report on the implementation of resolution 2118 (Syrian chemical weapons) (S/2014/622)	S/RES/2118
29 August	SG report on MINUSTAH (Haiti)	S/RES/2119
8 September	SG report on UNSMIL (Libya)	S/RES/2144
10 September	SG report on UNAMA (Afghanistan)	S/RES/2145
12 September	SG report on UNDOF (Golan Heights)	S/RES/2163
23 September	SG report on humanitarian access in Syria	S/RES/2139 S/RES/2165
MANDATES EXPIRE	RELEVANT DOCUMENT	
30 September	UNMIL (Liberia)	S/RES/2116

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