

# Monthly Forecast

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**1 May 2015**  
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## Overview

Lithuania, Council president in May, is planning two open debates: a ministerial-level open debate on the [protection of journalists](#), with the country's Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius presiding and with the UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson among the briefers; and an open debate on [small arms](#), with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein expected as briefers. Both debates are likely to have resolutions as outcomes.

Debates are planned on:

- [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), with a briefing by High Representative Valentin Inzko; and
  - [Kosovo](#), with a briefing by the Secretary-General's Special Representative and head of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, Farid Zarif.
- Briefings are expected on:
- [foreign terrorist fighters](#), at the level of interior or justice ministers, with briefings by Eliasson, Secretary General of INTERPOL Jürgen Stock, the chair of the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee, Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė (Lithuania), and the chair of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen (New Zealand);
  - the work of the UN Regional Office for [Central Africa](#) (UNOCA) and the implementation of the UN regional strategy to combat the [Lord's Resistance Army](#) by UNOCA's head, Abdoulaye Bathily; and
  - [ICC cases in Libya](#), by Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda.

Briefings, followed by consultations, are expected on:

- the situation in [Liberia](#) by Karin Landgren, the Secretary-General's Special Representative and head of the UN Mission in Liberia;
- the latest Secretary-General's report on the [UN Assistance Mission for Iraq](#), by the Secretary-General's Special Representative and the mission's head, Ján Kubiš;
- the situation in [South Sudan](#), by the

Secretary-General's Special Representative and the head of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Ellen Margrethe Løj;

- the work of the [2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee](#) by its chair, Ambassador Cristián Barros (Chile);
  - the [humanitarian situation in Syria](#) by the head of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Valerie Amos;
  - the situation in [Somalia](#), by the Secretary-General's Special Representative and head of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), Nicholas Kay (likely by video teleconference); and
  - the situation in the [Middle East](#), by Special Coordinator Nikolay Mladenov.
- Briefings in consultations are likely on:
- [Yemen](#), by representatives of the Department of Political Affairs and OCHA;
  - the Secretary-General's report on the UN Interim Security Force for [Abyei](#), most likely by Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Edmond Mulet;
  - the [chemical weapons track in Syria](#), by High Representative for Disarmament Angela Kane;
  - the work of the [1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee](#), by its chair, Ambassador Rafael Darío Ramírez Carreño (Venezuela); and
  - the work of the [1718 Democratic People's Republic of Korea Sanctions Committee](#), by its chair, Ambassador Román Oyarzun (Spain).
- Formal sessions will be needed to adopt resolutions to renew the mandates of [UNSOM](#) and [UNMISS](#).

A meeting with members of the [Political and Security Committee of the EU](#) is also planned for May.

Throughout the month members will be following closely developments in [Burundi](#), the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#), [Mali](#), [Ukraine](#), [Yemen](#), the [Boko Haram-affected areas of Africa](#) and the [migrant crisis in the Mediterranean](#), and additional meetings may be scheduled.

## Status Update since our April Forecast

### Mali

On 2 April, Council members were briefed under “any other business” by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous on the results of an inquiry launched by the Secretary-General into the killing of three civilians by MINUSMA forces during a demonstration against the mission in Gao on 27 January. The inquiry team concluded that Rwandan members of a former police unit had used unauthorised and excessive force on civilians, resulting in the death by gunfire of three protesters and the wounding of four others. On 9 April, Ladsous briefed the Council on the most recent MINUSMA report (S/2015/219) and on conversations in Algiers between the Algeria-led mediation team and the coalition of armed groups known as the Coordination. The Foreign Minister of Mali, Abdoulaye Diop, who also briefed, asked the Council to consider targeted sanctions against those who impede the Algiers peace process (S/PV.7425). On 10 April, Council members issued a press statement welcoming the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation initiated by representatives of the Malian government and one of the coalitions of armed groups (SC/11855).

### Myanmar

On 2 April, at the request of the UK, the Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on Myanmar, Vijay Nambiar, briefed Council members in consultations under “any other business”. (Nambiar’s last such briefing was on 17 April 2014, also at the request of the UK.) Nambiar acknowledged recent positive developments such as continuing progress in the reform process and the 31 March nationwide ceasefire between ethnic armed groups and the government, but also noted continuing challenges in Rakhine state, increasing violence in Kachin and Northern Shan states and concerns about the human rights situation. Some Council members also participated in a meeting of the Partnership Group on Myanmar on 24 April.

### Boko Haram

On 7 April, Council members issued a press statement condemning recent attacks by Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria and Chad (SC/11852). The statement also urged, ahead of a planned summit between the Economic Community of West African States and the

Economic Community of Central African States, for the two regional organisations to develop a common strategy and develop active cooperation and coordination to more effectively combat the Boko Haram threat.

### Haiti

In a 13 April press statement, Council members condemned an attack that same day against a MINUSTAH vehicle which killed a Chilean peacekeeper (SC/11858). The statement also noted that they looked forward to a full and comprehensive investigation of the incident.

### Central African Republic

On 14 April, the Council was briefed (S/PV.7427) by the Special Representative Babacar Gaye on the latest MINUSCA report (S/2015/227). On 28 April, the Council adopted resolution 2217, renewing MINUSCA’s mandate at current authorised troop levels until 30 April 2016.

### Women, Peace and Security

On 15 April, Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Bangura briefed the Security Council ahead of its annual open debate on the annual report on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2015/203). She reported that 2014 was marked by harrowing accounts of sexual violence in the context of violent extremism, with particular focus on Boko Haram and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (S/PV.7428). Jordan had circulated a concept note earlier in the month in preparation for the debate (S/2015/243).

### Western Sahara

On 16 April, the Council met with MINURSO troop-contributing countries. On 22 April, Council members were briefed in consultations by Special Representative Kim Bolduc on the most recent MINURSO report (S/2015/246) and by Special Envoy Christopher Ross. On 28 April, the Council adopted resolution 2218, extending the mandate of MINURSO until 30 April 2016.

### Burundi

On 16 April, Council members were briefed in consultations by Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Tayé-Brook Zerihoun on recent developments in Burundi. On 17 April, Council members issued a press statement,

stressing that the government and political opposition should refrain from any acts of violence and intimidation before, during and after the upcoming elections (SC/11864). Council members further noted their intention to follow closely and to respond to any actions in Burundi that threaten the peace, security or stability of Burundi. On 29 April, Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Said Djinnit was expected to brief Council members under “any other business” via video teleconference from Bujumbura on the situation.

### Israel/Palestine

On 21 April, Jordanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasser Judeh presided over the Council’s quarterly open debate on the Middle East (S/PV.7430). Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon briefed. Ban urged the incoming Israeli government to reaffirm commitment to the two-state solution and take credible steps to foster an environment conducive to meaningful negotiations, including a freeze of settlement activity. He also welcomed an agreement reached to allow the transfer of more than \$470 million in tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority and called for progress in Palestinian reconciliation and alleviation of the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Ban also expressed concern that clashes between Israeli security forces and Palestinians continued in the West Bank. In their interventions, speakers agreed on the urgency of resolving the conflict through a two-state solution and called for action on the part of the Council, including possibly through a resolution to move negotiated progress forward. Most speakers also called for an end to settlement activities in the West Bank and for alleviating the situation in Gaza. Many also stressed the need to ensure Israel’s security. On 28 April, under “any other business”, Council members discussed the 27 April letter from the Secretary-General that transmitted a summary of the findings of the UN Board of Inquiry into a number of incidents that occurred in Gaza and southern Israel between 8 July and 26 August 2014, affecting or involving UN personnel, premises and operations (S/2015/286).

### Côte d’Ivoire

On 22 April, Ambassador Cristián Barros (Chile), chair of the 1572 Côte d’Ivoire Sanctions Committee, briefed the Council

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## Status Update since our April Forecast (con't)

(S/PV.7431). He discussed the final report of the Group of Experts (S/2015/252) as well as the proceedings of a 1572 Sanctions Committee meeting on 10 April. A representative of Côte d'Ivoire, Ambassador Bafitigue Ouattara, also spoke during the briefing, which was followed by consultations among Council members. On 28 April, the Council adopted resolution 2219 renewing sanctions measures (partial arms embargo, travel ban and asset freeze) until 30 April 2016 and renewing the mandate of the Group of Experts until 30 May 2016.

### Counter-Terrorism

On 23 April, the Council convened a high-level open debate on “the role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace,” chaired by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdulla II of

Jordan (S/PV.7432). Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon briefed alongside Peter R. Neumann, Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence at King's College and Scott Atran, Director of Research in Anthropology at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris. Several speakers highlighted the importance of addressing socio-economic exclusion, amplifying local alternative narratives and providing youth with opportunities. Jordan had circulated a concept note earlier in the month in preparation for the debate (S/2015/231).

### Lebanon

On 28 April, Special Coordinator for Lebanon Terje Rød-Larsen briefed Council members in consultations on the latest report of the Secretary-General on the implementation

of resolution 1559 (S/2015/258). In his report, the Secretary-General expressed his disappointment at the lack of tangible progress towards the implementation of the remaining provisions of resolution 1559 and that Lebanon continues to face challenges to its stability and security, both internally and along its borders with Syria. He also reiterated that Hezbollah's maintenance of sizeable and sophisticated military capabilities outside the control of the government remains a matter of grave concern and condemned the continued violation of the sovereignty of Lebanon, including cross-border incidents in which civilians and members of the Lebanese Armed Forces have been killed or injured on the Lebanese side of the border because of the actions of warring parties in Syria.

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## South Sudan

### Expected Council Action

In May, the Council is expected to hold a briefing, followed by consultations, on the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and to renew the mandate of the mission, which expires on 30 May. Also in May, the chair of the 2206 Sanctions Committee on South Sudan, Ambassador Cristián Barros (Chile), is expected to provide his first briefing to the Council on the Committee's work.

### Key Recent Developments

A security and humanitarian catastrophe is ongoing in South Sudan. Heavy fighting has continued in South Sudan in recent months, especially in Upper Nile and Unity states, and some experts warn that the parties will try to maximise their military gains before the onset of the rainy season in June. Tens of thousands have reportedly died since the civil war began in December 2013, although there do not appear to be precise figures.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimated

on 10 April that approximately 1.5 million people have been internally displaced, while more than 519,000 refugees have fled to Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. Currently, approximately 117,000 of the internally displaced are sheltering in UN bases, too fearful to return home; this represents the highest number of people seeking protection at these bases since the start of the conflict. An estimated 2.5 million people in the country face severe food insecurity, and as Toby Lanzer, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan, warned on 2 April, this figure could rise if the conflict continues to restrict the ability of people “to move freely to access their land, plant crops, tend to their livestock and trade without fear of violence”.

The economy of South Sudan also continues to deteriorate, given the fall in global oil prices and the downturn in oil production in conflict-affected areas. This has raised concerns about South Sudan's ability to pay its soldiers and other government employees.

No progress has been made on the political front, and questions have been raised

about the future direction of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-led mediation process. On 1 February, with IGAD mediating, South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar signed a deal in Addis Ababa in which they agreed to finalise a peace agreement by 5 March and come to terms on the formation of a government of national unity.

The government and the opposition sides reconvened in Addis on 19 February, with negotiations continuing through the 5 March deadline. Key differences could not be bridged. The opposition requested that Machar serve as a first vice president in the transitional government and that he maintain his own forces during the envisioned two-and-a-half-year transitional period. The government did not agree to either request. It also argued that the opposition's call for a federal system of government should be addressed by the proposed transitional government of national unity, rather than in the negotiations.

On 18 March, Haile Menkerios, Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan and

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON SOUTH SUDAN** Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2206 (3 March 2015) established a sanctions regime on South Sudan. S/RES/2187 (25 November 2014) renewed the mandate of UNMISS for six months. Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2015/9 (24 March 2015) reiterated the Council's intent to impose sanctions, including an arms embargo or targeted measures against senior figures who have threatened South Sudan's peace, security and stability. Secretary-General's Report S/2015/118 (17 February 2015) was on UNMISS. Other A/HRC/28/49 (27 March 2015) was on the human rights situation in South Sudan from 15 August to 15 December 2014. A/HRC/28/53 (8 January 2015) provided a summary of a 24 September 2014 panel discussion on human rights in South Sudan.

## South Sudan (con't)

Special Representative to the AU, briefed Council members in consultations. He told them that hardliners on both sides of the South Sudan conflict were committed to a military solution.

The Council adopted a presidential statement on South Sudan on 24 March in which it expressed profound disappointment over the failure of Kiir, Machar and other parties to reach agreement on transitional arrangements for a government of national unity by the 5 March deadline. It further expressed concern at the suffering caused by the conflict, including through death and displacement, and highlighted the need to fight impunity.

Since the failure of the late February-early March round of negotiations in Addis, there have been efforts to create an “IGAD-plus” process— involving IGAD, the UN, the AU, several non-IGAD African member states (Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa), China and the Troika (Norway, the US and the UK)—to reinvigorate the mediation. According to a 25 March article in Peace and Security Council Report, this new approach “is expected to address the weaknesses of IGAD in terms of overcoming the divergent security and economic interests of its member states and applying unified pressure on the warring parties”. On 31 March, Michael Makuei, a spokesman for the government of South Sudan, stated that it does not want the Troika countries or the UN engaged in the mediation because “they are the very people and countries demanding sanctions against the people and the government of South Sudan.”

On 24 March, the South Sudanese parliament extended President Salva Kiir’s office term for three more years. The term of the president was originally set to expire on 9 July, and elections expected in June have been cancelled.

### Sanctions-Related Developments

On 3 March, in an unsuccessful effort to put pressure on the parties to finalise a peace agreement before 5 March, the Council adopted resolution 2206, in which it underscored its willingness to impose a travel ban and an assets freeze for an initial period of one year on individuals and entities designated by a Sanctions Committee that would be established. (The travel ban applies to individuals, while the assets freeze applies to individuals as well as entities such as government,

opposition or militia groups.) A Panel of Experts is in the process of being established to support the work of the Committee. While no listings were made in the resolution, the Council indicated that targeted measures would apply to those responsible for, complicit in or engaged directly or indirectly in actions or policies threatening the peace, security or stability of South Sudan.

In a presidential statement issued on 24 March, the Council reiterated its intent to impose any sanctions that might be appropriate, including an arms embargo or targeted measures against senior figures who have threatened South Sudan’s peace, security and stability, as well as to adjust the measures in resolution 2206 based on the actions.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović briefed the Security Council on 24 February on his visit to South Sudan from 1 to 6 February (S/PV.7392). During his briefing, Šimonović emphasised the importance of the Council remaining seized of the question of accountability for past and present violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. He stressed the importance of encouraging the South Sudanese government to release the findings of its own investigations and for the AU to release the report of the Commission of Inquiry, established to investigate human rights violations and abuses committed during the conflict. He said those reports may form the basis of an accountability process. In the meantime, he added, the Security Council may wish to encourage human rights-centred confidence-building measures between the parties, which could include cooperation in tracing missing persons; help in family reunification; and access to, and the release of, all conflict-related detainees by both sides.

During its 28th session in March, the Human Rights Council (HRC) considered the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, prepared in cooperation with UNMISS, on the situation of human rights in South Sudan from 15 August to 15 December 2014 (A/HRC/28/49). According to the report, the intensity of fighting decreased, but UNMISS continued to receive reports of human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law. These violations included the killing and wounding of civilians by all parties to the armed conflict, sexual violence in the context of the hostilities and cyclical intercommunal clashes, large-scale recruitment of children and military use and occupation of schools and hospitals.

The report concludes that accountability measures taken by national actors have been few and inadequate, with serious concerns as to whether such measures meet international standards. Recommendations to the Security Council include ensuring that the findings of the AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan are published and widely disseminated and that its

recommendations are implemented. The HRC also considered the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights summarising the panel discussion held on 24 September 2014 on the situation of human rights in South Sudan (A/HRC/28/53). The report contains specific recommendations for improving the human rights situation in South Sudan addressed to the parties to the conflict, as well as IGAD, UNMISS and the HRC.

### Key Issues

A key issue is whether IGAD-plus, with new actors added to the mediation process, would be able (or willing) to exert leverage on the parties to negotiate a settlement to the conflict.

Another important issue is whether the newly formed South Sudan Sanctions Committee will be able to achieve the consensus required to begin to impose targeted sanctions on spoilers in South Sudan.

Another key issue is the ongoing restrictions on access imposed by the government and the opposition on UNMISS and other actors in the midst of the deteriorating humanitarian situation.

Also a key issue is how to maintain security in the overcrowded protection of civilians sites.

A related issue is whether—and at what point—it is possible for UNMISS to safely escort internally displaced persons from the protection of civilians sites to their places of origin, given concerns about intercommunal violence in the midst of the ongoing conflict.

A further related issue is how effectively UNMISS is able to patrol outside the protection of civilians sites.

### Options

The most likely option is for the Council to adopt a resolution renewing UNMISS for an additional six months without significant changes to the mandate, given the absence of a peace agreement. In adopting the resolution, the Council may consider:

- highlighting the importance of patrolling along key roads and river routes, in an effort to facilitate the flow of food to markets to help mitigate the impact of food insecurity;
- underscoring the need for accountability for human rights violations and attacks on UN personnel and humanitarian workers;
- reiterating condemnation of the violations



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## South Sudan (con't)

of the Status of Forces Agreement and the obstacles to humanitarian access; and

- urging donors that have yet to fulfil their pledges made at the 9 February Nairobi conference on the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan to do so (as of 9 April, \$296 million, or 56 percent, of the \$529 million pledged had been contributed).

The Council could also consider requesting that the Secretary-General appoint a special envoy dedicated specifically to the South Sudan negotiation process. (Haile Menkerios has followed the South Sudan negotiations and reported to Council members on the Addis talks; however, he has a large portfolio focusing on Sudan-South Sudan relations, as well as serving as the UN's Special Representative to the AU.)

Another option would be for the Council

to request a briefing on options for accountability in South Sudan. (The UN Secretariat has produced an internal paper on such options, but the contents of this paper have yet to be shared with Council members.)

An option for the South Sudan Sanctions Committee is to begin listing high-profile spoilers in the government and the opposition.

### Council Dynamics

Most Council members appear seriously concerned with the ongoing fighting in South Sudan, the attendant humanitarian and human rights consequences and the lack of progress on the political front, but the Council is not united on how to approach the crisis in the country.

Most Council members believe that targeted sanctions are a viable tool against

spoilers in South Sudan. However, although the Council achieved consensus in adopting resolution 2206, Russia and Venezuela have both stated their discomfort with the potential use of targeted sanctions in this situation. As such, it is unclear if, and at what point, the South Sudan Sanctions Committee will be able to achieve the consensus required to apply the measures to any individual or entity.

The Council has also stated both in resolution 2206 and in the 24 March presidential statement that it could impose an arms embargo as a means to exert leverage on the parties. Nonetheless, some members have appeared reluctant to support such an approach since the onset of the crisis, and it is not clear whether their positions on this matter have shifted.

The US is the penholder on South Sudan.

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## Somalia

### Expected Council Action

In May, the Council is scheduled to receive a briefing from Nicholas Kay, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSAM), on the forthcoming Secretary-General's report. The Council is also expected to adopt a resolution renewing the mandate of UNSAM, which expires 28 May.

### Key Recent Developments

Al-Shabaab has continued its violent operations both outside and inside Somalia. On 2 April, four Al-Shabaab gunmen attacked a university in Garissa, Kenya, resulting in the deaths of 142 students, six members of the security forces and the four attackers. It was the deadliest terrorist attack in Kenya since the bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi on 7 August 1998. The slow response time of the special counter-terrorism police unit based in the capital, which apparently faced difficulties in accessing air transport, was widely criticised in domestic and international

media. On 6 April, the Kenya Defence Forces announced the bombing of two Al-Shabaab training camps in Somalia, although eyewitnesses claimed only livestock were killed. The following day, the Kenyan authorities froze the bank accounts of 86 individuals and entities suspected of financing Al-Shabaab. On 11 April, Deputy President William Ruto ordered the UN Refugee Agency to close the Dadaab refugee camp in northeast Kenya, home to more than 335,000 registered Somali refugees, within three months. Construction has also begun on a 700-kilometre wall on the border with Somalia.

Al-Shabaab has also increasingly resorted to terrorist attacks inside Somalia. On 20 February, at least 25 people including two members of parliament were killed when Al-Shabaab suicide bombers and gunmen attacked the Central Hotel in Mogadishu. On 12 March, five Al-Shabaab gunmen attacked a government compound in Baidoa that houses local UN offices and the headquarters of the Interim South West Administration,

resulting in at least eight deaths. On 27 March, a car bomb detonated at the Maka Al-Mukarama Hotel in Mogadishu, and an attack by Al-Shabaab gunmen killed more than ten people, including Somalia's ambassador to the UN in Geneva. On 14 April, a car bomb and attack by seven Al-Shabaab gunmen at a government building in Mogadishu housing the ministries of education and natural resources killed at least eight civilians, two soldiers and the seven attackers. On 20 April, Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for bombing a UN vehicle in Garowe, Puntland, which killed seven people, including four staff members of UNICEF. The following day, an Al-Shabaab car bomb detonated outside a restaurant near the Central Hotel in Mogadishu, killing at least ten people.

Though on a lesser scale than the joint AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)-Somali National Army (SNA) military offensives Operation Eagle and Operation Indian Ocean in 2014, counter-insurgency efforts have continued this year, including

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON SOMALIA** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2182](#) (24 October 2014) authorised naval interdiction of illicit charcoal and illicit arms, reauthorised AMISOM and renewed sanctions measures. [S/RES/2158](#) (29 May 2014) renewed UNSAM's mandate for a period of 12 months. [Security Council Letter S/2015/234](#) (31 March 2015) communicated the Secretary-General's intention to increase the UN guard unit supporting UNSAM from 410 to 530 personnel. [Secretary-General's Report S/2015/51](#) (23 January 2015) was a report of the Secretary-General on UNSAM. [Security Council Press Statements SC/11866](#) (20 April 2015) condemned the attack by Al-Shabaab on a UNICEF vehicle in Garowe, Somalia. [SC/11863](#) (15 April 2015) condemned the attack by Al-Shabaab on the Ministry of Higher Education in Mogadishu. [SC/11850](#) (3 April 2015) condemned the attack by Al-Shabaab on a university in Garissa, Kenya. [SC/11844](#) (28 March 2015) condemned the attack by Al-Shabaab on the Maka al-Mukarama Hotel in Mogadishu. [SC/11791](#) (20 February 2015) condemned the attack by Al-Shabaab on the Central Hotel in Mogadishu. [SC/11773](#) (10 February 2015) welcomed the approval of the cabinet list by the federal parliament of Somalia. [SC/11769](#) (5 February 2015) expressed concern regarding the political crisis in Somalia.

**ADDITIONAL USEFUL RESOURCE** [Hanging by a Thread: The ongoing threat to Somalia's remittance lifeline](#), Adeso, Global Center on Cooperative Security and Oxfam, 19 February 2015.

## Somalia (con't)

the targeting of Al-Shabaab with US drone strikes. On 31 January, a US airstrike reportedly killed Yusuf Dheeg (also known as Abdi Nur Mahdi), identified as Al-Shabaab's head of external operations. According to the US, a US drone strike on 12 March killed Al-Shabaab leader Adan Garar, who was suspected of involvement in the attack on the Westgate Mall in Kenya in 2013. On 22 March, a joint AMISOM/SNA military offensive captured the island of Kuday near Kismayo. According to an AMISOM statement, Kuday was an important logistics base and the last remaining Al-Shabaab stronghold in the region.

As stipulated in resolution 2182, a joint AU-UN assessment mission is underway in Somalia with three purposes: to assess the situation in Somalia in relation to benchmarks for deploying a UN peacekeeping operation, to review the impact of the temporary surge in AMISOM personnel authorised by resolution 2124 and to provide recommendations regarding future military strategy. The mission's report is due by 30 May. At Chatham House in London on 1 April, Ambassador Maman Sidikou, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission for Somalia and head of AMISOM, discussed AMISOM's expectations regarding the conclusions to be drawn in the forthcoming joint review report. AMISOM's priorities include the following: reconfiguring AMISOM with more specialists and enablers, providing enhanced support to the SNA and Somali Police Force, deploying more civilian personnel to support stabilisation, and more efficient delivery of financing and logistical support by the UN. Meanwhile, on 31 March, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon transmitted a letter notifying the Council of his intention to increase the UN guard unit protecting UNSOM from 410 troops to 530 troops.

Politically, there have been intermittent signs of progress toward Vision 2016 (the government's plan for regional state formation, constitutional revision and elections by October 2016). On 5 February, Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke announced a 66-member administration: a deputy prime minister, 25 cabinet ministers, 14 state ministers and 26 deputy ministers. The federal parliament approved the appointments on 9 February. The Council issued a press statement the following day, welcoming the approval of the cabinet list

(previous delays in forming an administration had been a source of political instability in Somalia). On 26 February, a sixth round of negotiations between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and secessionist Somaliland was due to start, but the talks were cancelled after Somaliland's representatives refused to meet, claiming some of the officials in the FGS delegation were originally from Somaliland (and thus from their perspective not appropriate to represent the FGS). On 12 April, Sharmarke and Puntland President Abdiweli Mohamed Ali "Gaas" signed a 7-point bilateral cooperation agreement, committing to ensure regional states would be formed as specified in the provisional constitution. Puntland also committed to contributing 3,000 troops to the SNA.

The humanitarian situation in Somalia continues to be very poor. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, there are 731,000 people in a situation of humanitarian emergency and crisis, 2.3 million people in food security stress, 1.1 million internally displaced people and 1 million Somali refugees within the region. Forcible evictions of internally displaced persons in urban areas, particularly Mogadishu, have increased considerably with more than 25,000 in January and February of this year, according to the UN Refugee Agency (compared to 32,500 in total during 2014). Thus far, only 9 percent of the humanitarian appeal of \$863 million for 2015 has been funded. Meanwhile, the flow of remittances to Somalia, estimated at \$1.3 billion annually, has been threatened by developments in countries such as the US, where Merchants Bank of California announced in February that it would close the accounts of Somali money transfer businesses. Following the Al-Shabaab attack in Garissa on 2 April, Kenyan authorities announced the immediate closure of 13 Somalia-linked money transfer firms. The UN Refugee Agency objected to calls by Kenya to either close the Dabaab refugee camp or to relocate it to Somalia, citing Kenya's obligations under international law and the extreme humanitarian consequences of a forced repatriation of refugees.

### Sanctions-Related Developments

On 8 April, the 751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Sanctions Committee was briefed via video teleconference from Nairobi by the Monitoring Group

on Somalia and Eritrea regarding its mid-term report. The Monitoring Group highlighted public financial mismanagement as an issue of particular concern, noted the FGS's slow pace of progress with regard to arms and ammunition management and indicated the risks posed to other countries within the region by Al-Shabaab's terrorist tactics. The committee also discussed a joint proposal by the FGS and Monitoring Group regarding an exemption to the arms embargo for commercial vessels in Somali ports that had been requested in resolution 2182. As of press time, it seems the review of measures authorising maritime interdiction of illicit arms imports and illegal charcoal exports, due 24 April (six months from adoption) as specified in resolution 2182, had not yet been conducted.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

In statements made on 31 March, the independent expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, Bahame Tom Mukirya Nyanduga, and the spokesperson for the High Commissioner for Human Rights condemned the terrorist attack on the Maka al Mukarama Hotel in Mogadishu on 27 March. The attack resulted in the death of at least 18 people, including Ambassador Yusuf Mohamed Ismail "Bari Bari," who was the Permanent Representative of Somalia to the UN in Geneva and played a crucial role in advancing human rights in Somalia, according to the statements.

### Key Issues

In May, the principal issue will be assessing UNSOM's implementation of its mandate within the context of a difficult political and security situation in Somalia. A related issue is the division of labour between the mandates of UNSOM and AMISOM, which is likely to be addressed within the joint AU-UN report due 30 May.

### Options

One option would be for the Council to renew UNSOM's mandate without significant modification for a period of one year, as it did with resolution 2158 in May 2014.

Another option would be for the Council to renew UNSOM's mandate for a period of six months, which would bring it into line with AMISOM's authorisation expiring on 30 November. This would enable the Council to take a more integrated approach to reviewing and modifying the respective mandates of UNSOM and AMISOM.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members have largely cooperated regarding Somalia. Other than the vote on

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## Somalia (con't)

resolution 2182 authorising maritime interdiction of illicit arms imports and illegal charcoal exports, when Jordan and Russia abstained (the former objected to language regarding the scope of maritime interdiction, the latter was critical of the conduct of negotiations by the penholder), policymaking has been more collaborative than contested among Council members.

Resolution 2124, which increased AMISOM's authorised troop strength from 17,731 to 22,126, was a step toward improving AU-UN relations regarding Somalia. However, if Sidikou's remarks at Chatham House are indicative of things to come, earlier sources of tension between the AU and UN may resurface, such as the division of labour between AMISOM and UNSOM,

and UN financing and logistical support for AMISOM. The forthcoming joint AU-UN report is likely to address these issues and may offer some clarification regarding the positions of the AU and UN.

The UK is the penholder on Somalia, and Venezuela is the chair of the 751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Sanctions Committee.

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## Yemen

### Expected Council Action

In May, the Council will likely receive a briefing on the humanitarian and political situation in Yemen. Briefers will include a representative of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The recently appointed Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, may also brief.

The sanctions regime established by resolution 2140 expires on 26 February 2016.

### Key Recent Developments

In late March, Yemen descended into full-scale war. The Council's attempts over the preceding months to avert such a scenario and salvage Yemen's political transition had failed.

On 21 February, President Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi fled from Sana'a to Aden after escaping from house arrest that the Houthis, a Zaidi Shi'a rebel group, had imposed on him, and declared Aden Yemen's temporary capital. Hadi and Gulf states have subsequently called for holding negotiations among Yemeni parties in Riyadh under the auspices of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

The situation escalated on 19 March when a police commando unit based in Aden and loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, who has been allied with the Houthis over the past year, attacked the Aden airport. Yemeni air force jets also deployed from Sana'a to

Aden and bombed Hadi's presidential compound. Hadi was unharmed and the attack was repelled. The next day, suicide bombings at two Zaidi mosques in Sana'a reportedly killed 137 people. The Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) claimed responsibility, the first time the terrorist group said it had carried out an attack in Yemen.

The next day, the Houthis announced the mobilisation of the armed forces in preparation for a campaign in Yemen's south. With their forces advancing south, on 24 March Hadi requested the GCC's support to protect Yemen from Houthi aggression, including through military intervention.

In response to Hadi's request, on 26 March, a Saudi Arabia-led coalition of nine Arab countries (Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates) commenced Operation Decisive Storm. Daily airstrikes have since targeted Houthi forces and Yemeni military units loyal to Saleh. In addition, Saudi Arabia announced the deployment of 150,000 ground forces along its border with Yemen, and the Saudi navy imposed a blockade.

On the ground, military units and "popular committees" loyal to Hadi, southern separatists, Sunni tribes and Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) battled the Houthis and armed forces loyal to Saleh across various fronts, with intense urban combat in

Aden. Hadi fled to Riyadh. Amidst the chaos, AQAP seized Mokalla, a major port city and the capital of Hadhramaut Province.

The fighting has taken a heavy toll on the civilian population and the already fragile humanitarian situation. A 30 March airstrike killed at least 29 people at the Al-Mazraq camp for internally displaced persons, and an explosion at a dairy factory in Hodeida on 1 April reportedly killed 35 people. According to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General from 19 March to 27 April, at least 1244 people had been killed and 5,044 wounded. Some 300,000 people have been displaced. Difficulties delivering humanitarian assistance prompted several relief organisations to call for "humanitarian pauses". On 17 April, OCHA appealed for \$273.7 million, which Saudi Arabia offered to fund in full.

On 21 April, Saudi Arabia announced the end of Operation Decisive Storm. In its wake, Saudi Arabia commenced Operation Restoring Hope. The mission's stated objectives are a quick resumption of the political process, protecting civilians, combatting terrorism, facilitating evacuations and intensifying humanitarian assistance. The new mission, however, still seeks to prevent Houthi militias from undertaking any operations and has continued to take a heavy toll on civilians and Yemen's infrastructure.

The Council took some steps amidst these developments. In resolution 2201, adopted

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON YEMEN** **Security Council Resolutions** S/RES/2216 (14 April 2015) established an arms embargo on the Houthis and forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh. S/RES/2204 (24 February 2015) renewed financial and travel ban sanctions measures until 26 February 2016 and the mandate of the Yemen Panel of Experts until 25 March 2016. S/RES/2201 (15 February 2015) strongly deplored the Houthis' dissolving of parliament on 6 February, demanded that they withdraw from government institutions and urged the acceleration of negotiations. **Security Council Presidential Statement** S/PRST/2015/8 (22 March 2015) condemned Houthi unilateral actions and reaffirmed the Council's readiness to take further measures. **Security Council Press Statements** SC/11827 (20 March 2015) condemned the 20 March bomb attacks at the mosques in Sana'a and in Saada. SC/11826 (20 March 2015) condemned the airstrikes against the Presidential Palace and attacks at Aden International Airport on 19 March. SC/11798 (25 February 2015) welcomed the news that President Hadi was no longer under house arrest and urged the acceleration of negotiations in a location determined by the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Yemen. **Security Council Letters** S/2015/263 (17 April 2015) was from Iran outlining a four-point peace plan for Yemen. S/2015/217 (26 March 2015) was from GCC members on their decision to respond to Hadi's request to protect Yemen from Houthi aggression. **Sanctions Committee Documents** S/2015/237 (2 April 2015) was a letter from the Secretary-General appointing the Yemen Panel of Experts. S/2015/125 (20 February 2015) was the final report of the Panel of Experts.



## Yemen (con't)

on 15 February, it demanded the Houthis withdraw from government institutions and the capital, Sana'a and urged all parties to accelerate negotiations over forming a new government. (Hadi, along with his cabinet had resigned on 22 January; he rescinded this resignation on 21 February.)

At an emergency meeting on 22 March, the Council adopted a presidential statement reiterating its demands from resolution 2201. Then, after a lengthy negotiation process, the Council adopted resolution 2216 on 14 April. The resolution established a targeted arms embargo on the Houthis and forces loyal to Saleh. It also imposed financial and travel ban sanctions against Houthi leader Abdulmalek al-Houthi and Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, the son of the former president. New demands were directed at the Houthis, including that they immediately end the use of violence.

On 15 April, the UN announced that the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Yemen, Jamal Benomar, whose role had been marginalised since the military intervention, intended to step down. On 25 April, the Secretary-General appointed Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed of Mauritania as his Special Envoy for Yemen.

### Sanctions-Related Developments

On 24 February, the Council adopted resolution 2204, which renewed targeted financial and travel ban sanctions until 26 February 2016 and extended the mandate of the Yemen Panel of Experts until 25 March 2016. On 2 April, the Secretary-General informed the Council that he had appointed all new members to the Panel. There had been criticism of the Panel's work for some time, including its failure to provide more actionable recommendations to the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee in its mid-term and final reports. Resolution 2204 alluded to the Secretariat's intention to replace its members, as it requested the Secretary-General "to re-establish" the Panel.

Resolution 2216 expanded the sanctions regime through the creation of the targeted arms embargo, and expanded the designation criteria to include violations of the embargo or obstructing delivery of humanitarian assistance and access. At press time, the Secretariat was recruiting a fifth panel member as an arms expert.

The designations by the Council in an annex to resolution 2216 of al-Houthi and former president Saleh's son were only the fourth and fifth individuals subjected to the assets freeze and travel ban measures. The Council has followed an escalatory strategy regarding sanctions, first expressing its readiness to consider applying measures under Article 41 of the UN Charter in resolution 2051 of June 2012, which it reiterated

in a 15 February 2013 presidential statement. A sanctions regime, however, was not set up until February 2014 and without designations, as it was still believed that the threat of sanctions could deter spoilers of Yemen's transition. It was not until 7 November 2014 that the Committee made its first designations (two Houthi military commanders and Saleh). By then this was seen as having occurred too late. It seems that the measures have not had much impact. The Panel's 20 February final report stated that no financial assets belonging to the Houthi commanders had been identified and indicated that Saleh was evading the financial sanctions.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein released a statement on 14 April, calling on all sides to the conflict in Yemen to ensure that attacks resulting in civilian casualties are promptly investigated and that international human rights and international humanitarian law are scrupulously respected. Zeid warned that the intentional targeting of civilians not taking direct part in hostilities would amount to a war crime and cited reports of the killing of civilians by snipers located on rooftops in Dhale. He stressed that parties to the conflict must take all feasible measures to avoid locating military objectives in populated residential areas and must exercise maximum care to ensure that civilians and civilian objects are protected against dangers arising from military operations. The statement said eight hospitals, 17 schools, three main national airports, a power station, bridges, factories, farmlands and five mosques have been hit during the fighting.

### Key Issues

Preventing the situation from becoming a protracted conflict and avoiding its regionalisation is an immediate critical issue.

A quickly emerging issue is the threat posed by the expansion of AQAP and ISIS amidst the current chaos.

A key issue for the Council will be reinitiating a political process and determining its role in creating or facilitating conditions to encourage all Yemeni parties to return to negotiations

Stopping the violence perpetrated against civilians is an immediate issue. Related to this is addressing the humanitarian impact of the conflict.

### Options

The Council is likely to closely monitor the situation while being prepared to quickly react to developments.

It could also adopt a resolution that:

- expresses strong support for the work of

the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen;

- demands that all parties immediately implement a ceasefire or a sequenced ceasefire; and
- urges all Yemeni parties to return to negotiations under UN auspices in a neutral location.

The Council could contemplate providing enhanced support for the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, for example by offering to consider an early Council visit to the region as part of efforts to obtain a cessation of hostilities and resume negotiations.

Designations of more individuals or entities found to be in non-compliance with Council resolutions by the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee is another option.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

Within the Council, Jordan champions the position of GCC members in seeking a strong response from the Council against the Houthis. The P3 have supported this position during negotiations. Russia, on the other hand, is more cautious about singling out the Houthis, believing this may undermine their willingness to participate in negotiations. As a result, it abstained on resolution 2216. In particular, Russia was unhappy that the resolution did not include a call for an immediate ceasefire by all parties. The idea of calling for a ceasefire, however, has been a red-line for Jordan, the P3 and GCC, believing that it would undermine Hadi's request for the intervention. Russia also championed the establishment of humanitarian pauses, which gained several members' support, and language supportive of this idea was ultimately incorporated into resolution 2216.

During the unfolding crisis, GCC members have exercised a considerable amount of influence in the Council. Despite the UK's being the penholder on Yemen, resolution 2201 and the Council's 22 March presidential statement were both initially drafted by GCC members. They then participated in negotiations with the P5 and Jordan before the UK circulated the texts to the broader membership on behalf of the UK and Jordan. With resolution 2216, Jordan was the sole lead in the Council on the draft. The dynamic thus represented a situation where countries that were now parties to the conflict—Jordan and GCC members—were drafting



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## Yemen (con't)

the texts being considered by the Council. This process also led to the exclusion of the other elected members until fairly late in the negotiations.

Despite supporting Jordan and GCC countries during negotiations on resolution 2216, the P3 seem to have reservations about the utility of the coalition's military

campaign and favour the restoration of a UN-led process.

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## Iraq

### Expected Council Action

In mid-May, newly appointed Special Representative Ján Kubiš will brief the Council on the Secretary-General's reports on the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and on Iraq's compliance with resolution 1284 regarding the repatriation or return of Kuwaiti missing persons or property. UNAMI's mandate expires on 31 July.

### Key Recent Developments

On 17 February, former Special Representative Nickolay Mladenov used his final briefing to the Council as head of UNAMI to deliver several messages to the Iraqi government. He said it was important to reign in fighters acting outside the constitution (a reference to Shi'a militias carrying out revenge attacks on Sunnis), rebuild the security forces on a truly national basis and revise the laws related to de-Baathification. Another priority, he added, was to finalise the national guard legislation to empower provinces to be responsible for their own security and bring arms under the control of the government.

On 3 February, the Iraqi parliament approved the draft law to create a national guard, which is envisioned as a way for the government to arm Sunni fighters to cooperate with the government against the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS). However, the exclusion of former Baath party members from public service remains a stumbling block to the finalisation of the law. Meanwhile, on 23 February, the parliament allocated significant funds to support the "popular mobilisation forces"—Shi'a militias that have united under the government of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi to confront ISIS. The formation of a national guard remains prospective while the popular mobilisation forces are already active, including in the

Sunni heartlands of Iraq.

Since the surprise takeover of Mosul by ISIS in June 2014, what was already a dire situation has continued to deteriorate into an even more widespread humanitarian and protection crisis, leaving 2.6 million people internally displaced. In mid-April, 90,000 people fled from Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province, amidst an ISIS encroachment that was being fought off by Iraqi security forces and US-led airstrikes. By late March, ISIS had been pushed out of Tikrit after a month-long campaign by Iraqi forces and Shi'a militias. The US-led anti-ISIS coalition provided air support only at the end of the operation.

Cooperation between Iraq and the US-led coalition has allowed the government to gain ground against ISIS. However, in both Tikrit and Ramadi there were tensions between Baghdad and Washington over the role of the Shi'a popular mobilisation forces. In both cases, the militias had to withdraw before the US-led coalition would provide air support. These militias had portrayed their Tikrit offensive as retribution for the Camp Speicher massacre of Iraqi air force cadets committed by ISIS last June. The militias had also made ominous statements about how they would treat "Sunni collaborators". The US fears Iraq's use of Shi'a militias in Sunni areas stokes sectarian tension, deepens the distrust of the Shi'a-led government among Sunni leaders in the western provinces and entrenches support for ISIS. (Sunnis in ISIS-controlled areas are often attacked for cooperating with the government. Meanwhile, they are also targeted by Shi'a militias working in tandem with Iraqi forces.)

Almost immediately after the government took control of Tikrit, reports emerged that Shi'a militias were looting and burning homes and shops. Abadi said several people

were arrested for this and were awaiting trial. The Secretary-General, who visited Baghdad on 30 March, expressed concern about allegations of summary killings, abductions and destruction of property committed by militias fighting alongside Iraqi forces. He said such groups must be brought under government control.

Officials from the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) have also expressed concern about the government's use of Shi'a militias. Part of this criticism stems from Kurdish frustrations that, while Baghdad is paying members of the Shi'a popular mobilisation forces, the capital had withheld budget funds due the KRG and the peshmerga, the Kurdish force that is also fighting ISIS. Tensions flared in February when popular mobilisation forces approached the long-disputed, oil-rich and peshmerga-held city of Kirkuk, ostensibly to counter ISIS. KRG officials prohibited the Shi'a militias from entering the city. The ruffled relationship was smoothed out after Abadi's first visit to the Kurdish provincial capital in early April to announce that Baghdad had transferred to the KRG its share of revenue and to discuss cooperation between Baghdad and Erbil to retake Mosul from ISIS.

In his first state visit to Washington in mid-April, Abadi sought US support for the anti-ISIS offensive in Anbar, which is to be followed by another offensive to dislodge the group from Mosul this summer. Part of that discussion included how Baghdad could keep US air support and intelligence efforts separate from activities by Tehran-backed Shi'a militias. The delivery of advanced weapons systems and military training was also agreed. For his part, US President Barack Obama said that Iran had an important relationship with Iraq but that all fighters needed to be under government control.

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON IRAQ** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2199](#) (12 February 2015) was on ISIS funding via illicit trade. [S/RES/2169](#) (30 July 2014) extended UNAMI until 31 July 2015. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7419](#) (27 March 2015) was an open debate on persecuted ethnic or religious minorities in the Middle East. [S/PV.7383](#) (17 February 2015) was the last briefing by Mladenov. [S/PV.7314](#) (18 November 2014) was the briefing by the High Commissioner for Human Rights. [Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/208](#) (24 March 2015) was the "oil-for-food" escrow account. [S/2015/82](#) (2 February 2015) was the UNAMI report. [S/2015/70](#) (30 January 2015) was the Iraq/Kuwait report.

## Iraq (con't)

While Baghdad is reliant upon US airpower, control on the ground has been sustained by Shi'a militias and the Kurdish peshmerga. For example, in the government's Tikrit offensive, it is estimated two-thirds of the 30,000-strong force were militia members. It has been difficult to secure a competent military and the cooperation of Sunni tribal fighters, which are needed to break the stalemate and tip the balance toward the government. In principle, Baghdad's promises to support Sunni fighters against ISIS by arming them and absorbing them into a prospective national guard may offer a way forward. However, in practice, delivering on this promise is controversial in Baghdad and remains elusive since it is only envisioned as a possibility after Iraqi forces clear ISIS from the Sunni-dominated western provinces. Similarly, restructuring a notoriously corrupt military into a force trusted by all sects in Iraq and capable of retaking Mosul by the summer of 2015 seems equally challenging.

In other developments, Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Bangura visited Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey in March to gain a better understanding of the needs of displaced populations who are affected by sexual violence.

Finally, in a 24 March "oil-for-food" report, the Secretary-General said that Iraq had yet to waive future claims against the UN when the indemnification period ends on 31 December 2016. (Resolution 1958 of 2010 terminated the oil-for-food programme and established an escrow account to provide indemnification to the UN for six years, at which point remaining funds would be transferred to Iraq.) He further reported that he would revert to the Security Council in the absence of a successfully concluded indemnity agreement with Iraq to protect the UN from liability resulting from the oil-for-food programme.

### Sanctions-Related Developments

On 12 February, the Council adopted resolution 2199, which addressed the funding of ISIS via illegal oil exports, trafficking in cultural heritage, ransom payments and external donations. Jordan and France subsequently arranged an Arria-formula meeting on 27 April where UNESCO and INTERPOL briefed UN member states on how they could implement the cultural heritage provisions of resolution 2199.

A recent report of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida

Sanctions Committee's Monitoring Team establishes that 25,000 foreign fighters from 100 countries are linked to Al-Qaida and ISIS, with an overwhelming majority of those fighters in Iraq and Syria. The report also raises the spectre that the unintended consequence of defeating ISIS in Iraq and Syria could be the global dispersal of these violent fighters as they return home or move on to other networks.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

In March, the Human Rights Council considered the report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on Iraq in the context of abuses committed by ISIS and associated groups from June 2014 to February 2015 (A/HRC/28/18). The report, compiled by an investigative team sent to the region by the High Commissioner late last year, found that widespread abuses committed by ISIS include killings, torture, rape and sexual slavery, forced religious conversions and the conscription of children, amounting to violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, with some constituting crimes against humanity and war crimes. The information strongly suggests that ISIS may have perpetrated genocide against the Yezidi population.

The report also found that members of the Iraqi security forces and associated militia groups may have committed war crimes by perpetrating murder, cruel treatment and torture, taking hostages, directing attacks against the civilian population, pillaging, ordering the displacement of the civilian population or destroying or seizing the property of an adversary. There were allegations that militia members and Iraqi security forces executed at least 70 Sunni civilians in different locations in Diyala governorate on 26 January. The government has announced investigations into these incidents, but the findings have yet to be made public. The report concluded more information is needed on the link between the militias and the government, but at the very least the government has failed to protect persons under its jurisdiction. The report called on the Human Rights Council to urge the Security Council to address information that points to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes and to consider referring the situation in Iraq to the ICC.

Similar findings were delivered directly to the Security Council by the High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein on 18 November 2014. On 27 March, the Security Council heard again from the High Commissioner on the plight of the Yezidis at a ministerial-level open debate on persecuted ethnic and religious minorities in the Middle East. At that meeting, the High Commissioner conveyed the report's recommendation that Iraq should be referred to the ICC. (On 8 April, the ICC Prosecutor said her office could only investigate if the Security Council referred the situation since Iraq is not a party to the Rome Statute.)

Also on 27 March, the Human Rights Council adopted, by consensus, an Iraqi-drafted

resolution that condemned violations by ISIS (A/HRC/28/L.29). The resolution does not specifically mention the alleged violations by Iraqi forces and associated militias or the recommendation for the Human Rights Council to urge the Security Council to address information that points to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

### Key Issues

The key issue for the Council is supporting a genuinely inclusive government. In this regard, an issue is determining how the Council and UNAMI can encourage the government—in particular the dominant Shi'a Dawa party of Abadi along with Kurdish and Sunni parliamentarians—to cooperate on security and humanitarian issues to build Sunni confidence in the central government and fortify Iraq's response to ISIS.

Another issue is how to address the mutually destabilising impact of the Syrian civil war and the Iraq crisis beyond the US-led anti-ISIS operations in both countries.

### Options

Options seem limited since the security response to ISIS is happening outside the Council's purview. However, in addition to Kubiš, the Council could invite Special Representative Bangura to brief on her recent visit to the region which included Iraq—in particular on how UNAMI could assist the government to enhance its response to survivors of sexual violence.

Another option is to adopt a statement calling for the government to work towards enhanced security and humanitarian coordination with the KRG and Sunni leaders and for UNAMI to support the government in that effort. In such a statement, the Council could also condemn human rights violations by ISIS and associated armed groups (an indirect reference to former Baathists and Sunni tribal leaders) as well as by Iraqi security forces and associated armed groups (an indirect reference to Shi'a militias).

Options for the Council to address the pressing issue of accountability would be to refer the situation to the ICC or express support for the High Commissioner's call for the Iraqi government to accede to the Rome Statute, and, as an immediate step, to accept the exercise of the ICC's jurisdiction with respect to the current situation.

## Iraq (con't)

### Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members uniformly support UNAMI's mandate, which they believe is broad enough and flexible enough to allow Kubiš to fulfil the mission's good offices role.

Despite a flurry of activity in the latter half of 2014 in response to the spread of ISIS, Council members have quickly reverted to a "wait-and-see" mode on Iraq. Except through the lens of counter-terrorism, Council members have been unable to approach the connected crises in Iraq and Syria holistically. It is likely that they will continue to treat the

two situations as discrete issues. Condemning the Tehran-backed regime in Damascus is difficult to reconcile with supporting the Tehran- and US-backed government in Baghdad.

Similarly, the Council has been less directly engaged in grappling with the underlying political divisions among Iraq's Shi'a, Sunni and Kurdish populations except for bland calls for an inclusive government. For example, Council members have yet to directly condemn violations by Iraqi security forces or militias. This trend will likely continue given the degree to which the US seeks Iraq's

agreement prior to Council outcomes on Iraq. (The recent drafting of the Human Rights Council's Iraq resolution by Iraq itself suggests that this approach reaches beyond the Security Council.)

Council members France, Jordan, Lithuania, New Zealand, Spain, the UK and the US are part of the anti-ISIS coalition—though not all directly participate in air strikes.

The US is the penholder on Iraq issues in general, and the UK is the penholder on Iraq-Kuwait issues.

## UNOCA/LRA

### Expected Council Action

In May, the Security Council will be briefed by Abdoulaye Bathily, Special Representative and head of the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), on the Secretary-General's report on UNOCA and the implementation of the UN regional strategy to combat the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Either a presidential or a press statement is a possible outcome.

The mandate of UNOCA expires on 31 August (the mandate is to be renewed by an exchange of letters between the Secretary-General and the Council president).

### Key Recent Developments

There have been a couple of notable achievements in the ongoing campaign to pursue the LRA's leadership in recent months. In early January, an LRA top commander, Dominic Ongwen, indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in July 2005, was taken into US custody in the Central African Republic (CAR) (the US has a military advisory force assisting the AU-Regional Task Force, the AU-RTF, in the region). Ongwen was abducted by the LRA from northern Uganda at the age of ten and eventually rose within its ranks. On 20 January, Ongwen was transferred to stand trial before the ICC, where he will face charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his alleged part in attacks against civilians in Uganda in 2004.

The Council issued a press statement on 20 January welcoming his transfer to The Hague.

The remains of another LRA commander indicted by the ICC in July 2005, Okot Odhiambo, were exhumed and identified by the Ugandan military in April. With the appearance of Ongwen before the Court, only Joseph Kony remains at large of the original five LRA commanders indicted by the Court.

Despite these recent positive developments with respect to the weakening of LRA leadership, the group has continued to attack civilians, and, according to a UN Refugee Agency spokesperson, Karin de Gruijl, since the arrest of Ongwen, has intensified attacks on villages in the border area of the CAR and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). De Gruijl called for the immediate release of three Congolese refugee boys who were kidnapped by the LRA on 21 March from the DRC side of the border, where they had been tending their fields. On 23 March, the LRA released two women and 11 men who had been abducted with the three boys. De Gruijl said that some of them were wounded, and one of the women was raped in captivity.

The Council last discussed UNOCA and the LRA on 10 December 2014, when Bathily briefed the Council on the Secretary-General's report of 13 November 2014.

At the end of the meeting, as it has done after UNOCA briefings in recent years, the

Council adopted a presidential statement addressing a variety of issues. The statement expressed concern over the security situation in parts of Central Africa, in particular the ongoing crisis in the CAR and its regional impact, the continuing threat of the LRA (including its cooperation in the CAR with other armed groups) and the expansion of terrorist group Boko Haram's activities into countries in the sub-region. The Council also called on the LRA-affected states to ensure that the LRA does not find safe haven in their territory. Finally, the Council requested that the Secretary-General keep the Council informed through a single report on UNOCA and the LRA by 15 May.

### Key Issues

The key issue for the Council, in light of recent successes in dismantling some of the LRA leadership, will be getting an updated analysis regarding implementation of the UN's regional anti-LRA strategy.

Addressing reports of LRA cooperation with armed groups in the CAR as well as Boko Haram activity in Central Africa are newly emerging issues for the Council.

A related issue is how the turmoil in the CAR continues to affect the LRA regional strategy and the AU-RTF.

### Options

One option for the Council is to issue a

**UN DOCUMENTS ON UNOCA/LRA** [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2014/25](#) (10 December 2014) expressed concern at the grave security situation in parts of Central Africa, including the expansion of Boko Haram activity. [Security Council Press Statement SC/11744](#) (20 January 2015) welcomed the arrival of Dominic Ongwen, the deputy commander of the LRA who was wanted by the ICC, at the Court that day. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7334](#) (10 December 2014) was a briefing by Bathily on the Secretary-General's UNOCA report and the implementation of the regional strategy to combat the Lord's Resistance Army. [Secretary-General's Report S/2014/812](#) (13 November 2014) was on the activities of UNOCA and on areas affected by the LRA.



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## UNOCA/LRA (con't)

presidential or press statement that:

- expresses support for UNOCA and the AU Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA while calling on the states in the region to maintain their full commitment to the AU-RTF;
- encourages member states to contribute more resources toward anti-LRA efforts and regional cooperation, especially in light of the turmoil in countries in the region;
- welcomes and commends the LRA-affected states for their cooperation, leading to recent achievements against the LRA leadership, and encourages further cooperation and efforts to that end;

- expresses concern over reports of LRA cooperation with rebel groups in the CAR and over the increasing threat of Boko Haram to the region; and
- expresses support for UNOCA's efforts in addressing the increasing political and security challenges in Central Africa. Taking no action at this time is another option.

### Council Dynamics

Council members are largely in agreement on LRA-related issues and strongly support the UN regional anti-LRA strategy. Council members are also supportive of Bathily's enhanced engagement in recent months with

Central African countries regarding issues such as the situation in the CAR and on the Boko Haram threat.

While it seems that the UN regional anti-LRA strategy is less of a focus for Council members due to other regional conflicts, support remains for the bi-annual consideration of the LRA to maintain attention to the issue. Some Council members, however, question the necessity and usefulness of issuing a bi-annual presidential statement on a regular basis, in the absence of particular developments or new concerns to address that may be effectively advanced by an outcome document.

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## Liberia

### Expected Council Action

In May, the Council is scheduled to receive a briefing from Karin Landgren, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), on events covered in the latest bi-annual Secretary-General's report on UNMIL and other recent developments. Ambassador Olof Skoog (Sweden), chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and its country-specific configuration on Liberia, who travelled to the region in April, is also likely to brief. Minister of Justice Benedict Sannah may attend.

### Key Recent Developments

On 16 March, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefed Council members in consultations regarding the impact of the Ebola outbreak on Liberia's stability and options for resuming the drawdown of UNMIL. A midterm report had been requested in resolution 2190 of 15 December 2014. Ladsous concluded that the political and security situation had stabilised sufficiently to resume the drawdown of UNMIL. In line with his recommendations, the Council adopted resolution 2215 on 2 April, authorising the reduction of UNMIL's military personnel from 4,811 to 3,590 and of its police from 1,795 to 1,515

by September 2015.

According to the latest World Health Organization report available at press time, the rate of Ebola transmission has dramatically declined in Liberia, with no new cases identified since 20 March. The person who was the last confirmed case in the country died on 27 March. Cumulatively, there have been 10,212 reported cases of Ebola and 4,573 reported deaths due to Ebola in Liberia, representing approximately 40 percent of the total cases (26,079) and deaths (10,823). Neighbouring countries Guinea and Sierra Leone continue to report new cases of Ebola, with 21 and 12 in the week up to 19 April, respectively, indicating the need for continued efforts toward eradicating Ebola within the region.

On 15 April, US President Barack Obama met at the White House with presidents Alpha Condé of Guinea, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone. Obama called for renewed international efforts to rebuild the health systems of the three countries to prevent future pandemics within the region. On 17 April, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim hosted a high-level meeting on Ebola recovery that included the three West African heads of state, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, International Monetary Fund Managing

Director Christine Lagarde, and representatives of UN agencies, states, regional development banks, NGOs and foundations. The World Bank announced it would provide \$650 million for Ebola recovery in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, in addition to earlier pledges of nearly \$1 billion and more than \$2 billion in debt relief.

### Peacebuilding Commission-Related Developments

On 6 April, Ambassador Skoog, chair of the PBC and its Liberia country-specific configuration, met with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in Monrovia to discuss the country's Ebola recovery process. The meeting was part of a 4-10 April trip, during which Skoog also visited Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Senegal. On 14 April, the PBC held a special meeting on Ebola. Skoog briefed on his trip to West Africa, a representative of the UN Development Programme provided an update on Ebola recovery and Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support Oscar Fernandez-Taranco noted that delayed Peacebuilding Fund projects are now being reviewed for implementation within a post-Ebola context. The permanent representatives of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone also addressed the meeting. On 23 April, Skoog transmitted a report of his trip to Council members.

### Key Issues

The principal focus for the Council during

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON LIBERIA** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2215](#) (2 April 2015) authorised a drawdown of UNMIL to 3,590 military personnel and 1,515 police by September 2015. [S/RES/2190](#) (15 December 2014) renewed the mandate of UNMIL until 30 September 2015. [Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/275](#) (28 April 2015) was on UNMIL. [S/2014/598](#) (15 August 2014) was on UNMIL. [Security Council Letter S/2015/282](#) (23 April 2015) transmitted a letter from the PBC chair to the Council.

**USEFUL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** [Ebola Situation Report](#), World Health Organization, 22 April 2015. [Chairperson's Summary](#), Peacebuilding Commission, 14 April 2015.

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## Liberia (con't)

the current mandate period ending 30 September will be on how to proceed with the scheduled drawdown of UNMIL without increasing the risk of instability in Liberia. More specifically, this should entail attention to the sequencing of UNMIL's drawdown and how the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and the Liberian National Police (LNP) will assume progressively greater responsibility for maintaining peace and security.

### Options

No formal Council action is expected following the May briefing. Council members could, however, hold an Arria-formula meeting concerning lessons learned during peacekeeping operation drawdowns to better understand the different types of challenges UNMIL is likely to encounter.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

As shown by the consensus on the adoption of resolution 2215, there is broad support among Council members for resuming the drawdown of UNMIL, which had been paused since September 2014 due to the Ebola outbreak. The drawdown process has been strongly supported by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in the past. Council members and DPKO believe that after nearly a dozen years since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Accra on 18 August 2003, which ended Liberia's second civil war, the AFL and LNP need to assume much greater responsibility for security in the country. There is also a sense that the UN's scarce peacekeeping resources should be transferred from comparatively stable post-conflict peacebuilding contexts to more urgent conflict situations, such as the

Central African Republic and South Sudan.

On the other hand, the poor performances of the AFL and LNP during the Ebola outbreak raise questions regarding their capacity and effectiveness. While the government of Liberia had been resistant to scaling down UNMIL's presence in the past, this position seems to have shifted. On 6 March, the National Security Council endorsed the government of Liberia's plan for UNMIL transition with an estimated budget of \$105 million. In her broadcast address to the nation on 1 April, Sirleaf stressed the importance of maintaining efforts toward security sector reform and assuming national responsibility for peace and security as UNMIL draws down.

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

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## Syria

### Expected Council Action

In May, Council members expect to receive their regular monthly briefings on the chemical weapons and humanitarian tracks in Syria. While there is no outcome planned at press time, it seemed possible that the crisis in Yarmouk will refocus the Council's attention this month on the use of siege tactics in Syria.

### Key Recent Developments

In May, Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura is expected to begin six weeks shuttle diplomacy in Geneva among Syrian actors, regional actors and P5 representatives. Syrian actors are the government, the Syrian National Coalition, other opposition groups and civil society. The regional actors are Syria's neighbouring countries as well as Iran and Saudi Arabia. De Mistura updated Security Council members on his plans on 24 April and said he hoped these consultations would tease out areas of commonality for implementing the Geneva Communiqué, a political transition plan agreed in June 2012 that has been continually stymied over the role of President Bashar al Assad. (Ahead of

these UN-facilitated talks, the P3 organised a closed Arria-formula meeting in New York on 29 April so that Council members could interact with the head of the Syrian National Coalition, Khaled Khoja.)

In a 24 April briefing to the Council, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos presented the Secretary-General's most recent humanitarian report, which included strong messages to President Bashar al Assad about his particular responsibility to end the bloodshed and start a political process, emphasising that a government aspiring to legitimacy does not massacre its own people. Amos said that despite three Council resolutions, the government, armed groups and terrorist groups continue to kill, maim, rape and torture civilians and that the total absence of accountability had undermined the credibility of the Security Council.

High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres also briefed on 24 April, reporting that neighbouring states are absorbing almost all of Syria's 4 million refugees. He said these states are the first line of defence for regional and collective security and

should be prioritised for support from the international community. Security concerns—as well as enormous pressures on the resources, social services and economies of host countries—have caused Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey to place restrictions on the influx of refugees. At this session, the Council adopted a presidential statement on the impact of Syria's humanitarian crisis on neighbouring countries.

Yarmouk also absorbed Council attention in April. Yarmouk—a Palestinian refugee camp on the outskirts of Damascus—has been besieged by the government for two years and was overtaken by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in early April. On 6 and 20 April, Council members held emergency consultations on the situation with the head of UNRWA, Pierre Krähenbühl. Following the 6 April consultations, Council members were only able to agree to “elements to the press” that condemned the terrorist groups and called for the protection of civilians and humanitarian access. These press elements did not include any specific condemnation of the government's siege and

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON SYRIA** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2139](#) (22 February 2014) was on humanitarian access. [S/RES/2118](#) (27 September 2013) was on chemical weapons. [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2015/10](#) (24 April 2015) was on the impact of Syria's humanitarian crisis on neighbouring countries. [Security Council Press Statement SC/11865](#) (20 April 2015) expressed concern about the situation in Yarmouk. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7433](#) (24 April 2015) was a briefing by OCHA, UNHCR and WFP on the humanitarian situation. [Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/264](#) (17 April 2015) was on the humanitarian situation. [S/2015/211](#) (25 March 2015) was on chemical weapons.

## Syria (con't)

aerial bombardment of Yarmouk. Following the 20 April meeting, Council members released a press statement, expressing grave concern and condemning aerial bombardment, but with no reference to the government's siege of the camp.

On the chemical weapons track, opposition groups have claimed that the government used chlorine bombs in March and April. The alleged attacks occurred during clashes between the government and opposition groups over control of Idlib in northwest Syria. The countryside surrounding Idlib has been in opposition hands for some time, but in late March a coalition of rebel groups, including Al-Nusra Front, captured the city—located on the main highway linking Aleppo and Damascus—from government forces. By 27 April, these fighters had also taken Jisr al-Shughour from the government—a city located between Idlib and the port city of Latakia held by the regime.

UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Angela Kane briefed on 2 April on the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons stockpile, and the allegations of recent chlorine bomb attacks were raised during the consultations. The first of these alleged attacks occurred on 16 March, just ten days after the Council adopted resolution 2209, which condemned the use of toxic chemicals such as chlorine and threatened sanctions. The US arranged a closed Arria-formula meeting on 16 April for Council members to hear first-hand accounts of chemical weapons attacks in Syria. In remarks to the press, the US said the Council needed an attribution mechanism to determine who carried out the attacks.

### Sanctions-Related Developments

On 12 February, the Council adopted resolution 2199, which addressed the funding of ISIS via illegal oil exports, trafficking in cultural heritage, ransom payments and external donations. To follow up on the implementation of that resolution, Jordan and France presided over an Arria-formula meeting on 27 April so that UNESCO and INTERPOL could provide guidance to member states on the prevention of illicit trade in Iraqi and Syrian cultural property.

A recent report of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee's Monitoring Team establishes that 25,000 foreign fighters from 100 countries are linked to Al-Qaida and ISIS, with an overwhelming majority of those fighters in Iraq and Syria. It also raises the spectre that the

unintended consequence of defeating ISIS in Iraq and Syria could be the global dispersal of these fighters as they return home or move on to other networks.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

On 27 March, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution extending the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry on Syria for another year (A/HRC/28/L.6), with 29 votes in favour, six votes against (including Security Council members China, Russia and Venezuela) and 12 abstentions. The resolution also called for all of the Commission's reports and oral updates to be transmitted to all relevant bodies of the UN and recommended that the Commission brief the General Assembly during its 69th session. Finally, it said that the Assembly should submit the reports to the Security Council for appropriate action.

### Key Issues

An immediate issue for the Council is the situation in Yarmouk as the government has made clear it will not tolerate the presence of ISIS so close to Damascus. There are concerns that a major military operation to rout ISIS would de facto mean an attack on other anti-government armed groups in Yarmouk and on the remaining civilians.

The overarching key issue for the Council—in the fifth year of the civil war—is to find ways to show leadership, particularly in supporting a cessation of violence and resuscitating efforts for a political solution.

In light of increasing high-level calls for accountability from within the UN system, including by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Amos and the head of UNESCO, pressure on the Council to respond to the widespread impunity in Syria may re-emerge.

Ongoing issues include how to get agreement to follow up on the violations of resolutions 2139, 2165 and 2191 on the humanitarian situation and 2118 and 2209 on chemical weapons—in particular aerial bombardment and the use of chlorine bombs.

### Options

While the Council has many tools at its disposal—such as imposing an arms embargo or targeted sanctions, referring Syria to the ICC and authorising a no-fly zone to disable Syria's aerial capacity—P5 divisions have made it impossible for the Council to fulfil its role in maintaining international peace and security in the case of Syria. There has

been a modicum of agreement on humanitarian, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism efforts, but there has not been the corresponding ability to effectively stop or hold accountable a government that has systematically attacked its own citizens for more than four years.

To counter the complacency among Council members that action is impossible due to Russia's veto power, Council members could heed Amos's call for bold action and put to a vote a resolution or resolutions that reflect her five recommendations made on 24 April:

- demand that attacks on education and health facilities cease;
- establish a commission of inquiry to conduct a fact-finding mission on the situation in besieged communities and investigate the militarisation of education and health facilities and responsibility for attacks on those facilities;
- demand humanitarian pauses and days of tranquillity;
- impose and enforce an arms embargo and targeted sanctions for violations of international humanitarian law; and
- seek accountability through an ICC referral.

While bold action may be the leverage the Council requires to shift the parties' priorities towards a negotiated solution, the Council has a history of not escalating pressure in the midst of a political process, such as the one de Mistura is preparing to facilitate. This may limit Council options to receiving more briefings confirming what is already widely known about the brutal tactics by the government and extremist groups. In this context, options for Council members concerned that elements of resolution 2139, such as demands regarding human rights and protection of civilians, are being flagrantly ignored include:

- inviting the Commission of Inquiry or the High Commissioner for Human Rights to give periodic briefings; and
- inviting Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Bangura to brief on her recent visit to Syria and Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, countries that host the conflict's refugees.

An option for Council members concerned about the government's continued use of chlorine bombs would be to put forward a resolution determining that Syria has



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## Syria (con't)

breached resolutions 2118 and 2209 and impose targeted sanctions. Given that chlorine is delivered in barrel bombs, such an outcome could be an opportunity to address the broader and more pervasive issue of indiscriminate aerial bombardment.

An option for the Secretary-General to follow up on the US suggestion for an “attribution mechanism” on the use of chemical weapons would be to establish his own investigative team. It could be charged with independently reviewing the work of the 2013 Sellström investigation into the sarin attack on Ghouta and the work of the fact-finding mission of the OPCW into the chlorine bomb attacks. Because such a team would be reviewing existing evidence there would be no need to enter Syria. If the reviewed evidence warranted attribution, the findings could be transmitted to the Security Council by the Secretary-General under Article 99 of the UN Charter.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

Despite overwhelming indications that various resolutions threatening consequences for lack of implementation have been continually breached, it is unlikely that Council members will push for follow-up measures,

such as targeted sanctions or another effort at an ICC referral. The assumption that Russia would veto any effort specific to the government remains a deterrent.

On the political track, Council members expect de Mistura will likely want to limit expectations about whether conditions on the ground have shifted enough to untangle what has become known as the “Assad knot” enshrined in the Geneva Communiqué—i.e. trying to find openings between Iran’s and Russia’s support for the Assad regime and the position of the P3 and their Arab allies that Assad must go. Several Council members have suggested the need for more action from the Council on the political track. In this regard, they see the return to higher-level talks in Geneva as a positive sign, but without major shifts on the part of the US and Russia, most members are aware that little may come from this next round of bilateral talks.

It is unclear to Council members whether the direct intervention of Saudi Arabia in the Yemen conflict, combined with the kingdom’s reported rapprochement with Turkey on a possible alliance to unseat Assad, will influence the Syrian government’s stance in Geneva. Similarly it is unclear what, if any, immediate impact two April developments—the

US train-and-equip programme for the Syrian opposition and talks between Arab states to form a joint force to intervene in regional crises—will have on the parties’ calculations in Geneva.

On the chemical weapons track, fundamental differences remain despite the adoption of resolution 2209. The US views resolution 2209 to be a final warning to Damascus before consequences are sought for its use of chlorine bombs. Russia insists that the Council cannot apportion blame to Damascus since only the OPCW has the capacity to fully assess the situation. While the OPCW fact-finding mission can investigate whether chlorine has been used as a weapon, it is prohibited from attributing blame. Many Council members are curious about what form the US-suggested “attribution mechanism” might take.

France is the penholder on Syria overall, though the last text it put forward was the vetoed ICC referral in May 2014. Jordan, New Zealand and Spain lead on humanitarian issues. In practice, however, most texts need to be agreed between Russia and the US prior to agreement by the broader Council.

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## Sudan (Darfur)

### Expected Council Action

In May, Ambassador Rafael Ramírez (Venezuela), the chair of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee, is expected to provide the quarterly briefing to Council members on the Committee’s work.

### Key Recent Developments

Darfur remains mired in a security and humanitarian crisis, marked by high levels of inter-communal violence, continued fighting between government and rebel forces, and increasing displacement. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), there were 2.5 million internally displaced people in Darfur as of 19 April. As many as 121,000 of them have been

displaced in 2015.

Inter-communal clashes continued to be reported in recent months. In February and March, clashes between the Berti and Zaiyadia communities in Mellit locality, North Darfur, displaced approximately 4,500 people. On 1 April, fighting between the Maalia and Rizeigat communities occurred in East Darfur’s Abu Karinka locality; 20 people died in the 1 April clashes, which were sparked when Rizeigat stole several hundred Maalia-owned sheep in retaliation for a cattle-rustling incident.

On 1 April, ten bombs were dropped in an aerial attack in Rowata, Central Darfur, resulting in the deaths of 14 civilians and injuring an additional 18. According to

Stéphane Dujarric, the Secretary-General’s spokesman, an AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) patrol in Rowata on 6 April “witnessed another aerial bombardment, consisting of five bombs dropped close to” their location. (The Sudanese government is the only party in the area with aerial capacity).

Unidentified assailants attempted to attack UNAMID peacekeepers on 23 and 24 April in separate incidents in South Darfur. On 23 April, UNAMID troops guarding a water hole in Kass locality were fired upon by approximately forty men riding camels and horses. Four assailants were killed and two peacekeepers were injured in the skirmish. On 24 April, four UNAMID troops were

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON SUDAN (DARFUR)** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2200](#) (12 February 2015) renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the Sudan Sanctions Committee until 12 March 2016. [S/RES/2173](#) (27 August 2014) renewed UNAMID’s mandate to 30 June 2015. [Secretary-General’s Reports S/2015/163](#) (6 March 2015) was the special report on the implementation of UNAMID’s strategic review. [S/2015/141](#) (26 February 2015) was the quarterly report on UNAMID. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7405](#) (17 March 2015) was a briefing by Ladsous on Darfur. [S/PV.7320](#) (24 November 2014) was a quarterly briefing on the work of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee. [Other S/2015/31](#) (19 January 2015) was the final report of the Panel of Experts of the Sudan Sanctions Committee.

## Sudan (Darfur) (con't)

injured when fired upon close to a UNAMID base in Kass.

On 25 April, heavy fighting reportedly occurred in South Darfur, when the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the government-affiliated Rapid Support Forces clashed with the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minnawi rebel groups. Both government and rebel forces alleged that they had inflicted heavy casualties on their adversaries, while seizing significant quantities of equipment. Adam Mahmoud Jar El-Nabi, the governor of South Darfur, claimed on 25 April that the rebels had come from South Sudan, and the SAF reiterated previous allegations that South Sudan is supporting rebel groups in Darfur.

On April 14, students at El Fasher University in North Darfur demonstrated against Sudan's 13-15 April presidential and National Assembly elections. Security forces and student militants attacked the protestors; 12 of them were reportedly detained and two were wounded.

The joint working group (AU, UN and government of Sudan) assigned to develop an exit strategy for UNAMID has continued to meet. The group includes 16 Sudanese officials, 13 UN personnel and eight AU representatives. According to a UNAMID press release, the working group convened in Khartoum from 16 to 19 April in what were described as "cooperative and professional" meetings. It is expected to meet again in May.

Ambassador Ramírez last briefed on the work of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee in consultations on 5 February. He said that some members of the Committee believed that the government of Sudan's cooperation with the Panel of Experts had improved in comparison to the past. He told Council members that various members of the Committee had expressed concern that the arms embargo on Darfur had continued to be violated. And he noted the view of some members that the targeted sanctions (i.e. the travel bans and assets freezes) were not working.

On 17 March, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefed the Council on Darfur. Ladsous noted the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur over the

past year, criticising the Sudanese government for preventing UNAMID from accessing conflict-affected areas and for restricting humanitarian access. He said that the joint working group on UNAMID's exit strategy "will review the situation in Darfur and develop a road map for the gradual exit of the mission." Ladsous added that, upon the completion of its work, the working group will submit a report on its efforts to the government of Sudan, the AU Commission and the UN Secretariat. Subsequently, the report will be forwarded to the AU Peace and Security Council and the UN Security Council. (The Secretary-General may provide an update on the exit strategy to the UN Security Council by the end of May.)

### Key Issues

With regard to sanctions, a key issue is the apparent ineffectiveness of the Sudan Sanctions regime, which is marred by violations of the arms embargo and by what some members see as ineffective targeted sanctions. The shortcomings of the sanctions regime appear to undermine the credibility and authority of the Council.

The overall underlying issue is what the Council can do to facilitate political settlements to end the fighting between the government and the rebel groups, as well as among different communities, while mitigating the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Considerable challenges continue to face the political track, especially given the failings of the Doha peace process and the national dialogue process.

### Options

The Council could request that the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and for Sexual Violence in Conflict share relevant information with the Sudan Sanctions Committee, as is being done in the case of the newly formed South Sudan Sanctions Committee.

The Council could hold the May quarterly briefing in a public session. When Argentina chaired the Sudan Sanctions Committee in 2013-2014, it held its final quarterly briefing on the Committee's work in a public meeting on 24 November 2014, before Council members discussed the issue in closed

consultations. In 2014, numerous sanctions committee chairs briefed in public, followed by closed consultations. However, this trend, it seems, is being reversed. For example, the 5 February quarterly briefing on the work of the Sudan Sanctions Committee was held in closed consultations.

The Council might consider extending the arms embargo to all of Sudan, rather than just Darfur, although this is unlikely, given the dynamics of the Council.

### Council Dynamics

Perceptions of the situation in Darfur vary among Council members. Several members express concern at the humanitarian and security crisis in Darfur, the attacks on civilians and the violations of the arms embargo. Among these members, the P3 and other Western countries in particular are highly critical of Sudan for human rights abuses, lack of compliance with the arms embargo and aerial bombardments. China and Russia, on the other hand, tend to have a more sympathetic view of Sudan. They believe that international actors should forgive Sudan's external debt so that it can more effectively address under-development in Darfur, which they argue is exacerbating the conflict.

In March, the UK, the penholder on Darfur, attempted unsuccessfully to get agreement on a draft presidential statement to welcome the special report on the implementation of UNAMID's strategic review. The initial draft statement painted a dire picture of the security situation in Darfur and its impact on civilians. The draft noted that, given the challenges on the ground, an exit strategy for Darfur should take into consideration benchmarks outlined in past Secretary-General's reports. The necessary consensus could not be achieved to adopt the statement. In large part this was because Russia wanted a text that did not link the exit strategy to benchmarks and that did not highlight the deteriorating security situation. Instead, Russia would have preferred a more technical text that did not place caveats on the exit strategy and welcomed what it believes is progress in the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. By early April, efforts to reach consensus had failed and the initiative seemed to be abandoned.

# DPRK (North Korea)

## Expected Council Action

In May, the chair of the 1718 Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Román Oyarzun (Spain), is due to brief Council members in consultations on the work of the Committee.

## Key Recent Developments

Since the Committee chair's last briefing on 26 February, the DPRK has conducted several short-range missile launches in violation of Council resolutions. On 2 March, it launched two Scud-type ballistic missiles into the sea between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. The launch coincided with the start of the US-Republic of Korea (ROK) annual joint military exercises, Foal Eagle and Key Resolve. (Key Resolve, a defence exercise, ended on 13 March, whereas Foal Eagle, a series of joint field-training exercises, ended on 24 April.) In a 1 March statement transmitted to the Council on 3 March, the DPRK's Korean People's Army condemned the exercises as "dangerous nuclear war drills" aimed at invading the country and said it was fully ready to strike back. The statement also warned that the DPRK would further bolster its weapons to annihilate the enemy.

On 12 March, according to ROK officials, the DPRK fired another seven missiles off its eastern coast. On 7 April, it fired two missiles off its western coast, two days ahead of a visit to the ROK by the US Secretary of Defense, Ashton B. Carter. According to a New York Times article, a US official commenting on the launches said the US believed the DPRK nuclear threat was growing.

Through resolution 2207 adopted on 4 March, the Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts assisting the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee until 5 April 2016. Closely following the language of the previous mandate renewal in resolution 2141, it asked the Panel to provide a midterm report to the Committee by 5 August 2015 and a final report no later than 5 February 2016. In a 30 March letter, the Secretary-General informed the Council that he had appointed the eight members of the new Panel, seven of whom had served on the previous panel. (The only new expert was Jiahu Zong, a

Chinese national.) Hugh Griffiths (UK) was reappointed as the coordinator.

DPRK has continued to experience severe humanitarian challenges. On 8 April, the UN Resident Coordinator for the DPRK, Ghulam Isaczi, announced that the UN urgently needed \$111 million to fund its humanitarian operations in the DPRK in 2015 and characterised the DPRK as a silent and underfunded humanitarian situation. According to the latest assessment by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 18 million people, or approximately 70 percent of the population, are considered food insecure, and the chronic malnutrition rate among children under five is 27.9 percent.

## Sanctions-Related Developments

The Sanctions Committee met on 20 April. (It had not met since 11 February; a meeting scheduled in March was cancelled due to a lack of interpretation.) The Committee first discussed the 2 March missile launches, but views differed on how to respond. It was proposed that the launches should be included in an addendum to the Panel of Experts' final report under its previous mandate.

Committee members also considered the recommendations from that report, which focused in particular on how to counter sanctions evasion by Ocean Maritime Management Company (OMM), the entity that was designated by the Sanctions Committee on 28 July 2014 for its involvement in the Chong Chon Gang case. (Chong Chon Gang was the ship that was intercepted by Panama in July 2013 on its way from Cuba to the DPRK with weapons concealed in a cargo of sugar.) It was agreed that discussion of the recommendations would continue in informal consultations in the following weeks. The Committee also discussed a letter from Mexico requesting guidance regarding the vessel *Mu Du Bong* which has been held in the Mexican port of Tuxpan after it ran aground in the Gulf of Mexico last July. According to the Panel of Experts, the ship is owned by OMM, but the DPRK has denied this and has accused Mexico of illegally detaining it.

The last agenda item was the review and updating of the lists of sanctioned individuals and entities as well as prohibited items. (In resolution 2094 the Council directed the Committee to review and update the list of prohibited items on an annual basis, and the Committee guidelines call for the targeted sanctions list to be continuously reviewed and regularly updated.)

## Human Rights-Related Developments

During its 28th session in March, the Human Rights Council (HRC) considered the report of the special rapporteur on the situation of human

rights in the DPRK, Marzuki Darusman, which proposed a strategy for addressing the issue of international abductions and enforced disappearances. The report also noted that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is finalising arrangements to open the field-based office in the ROK assigned to strengthen the monitoring and documentation of the human rights situation in the DPRK as provided for in HRC resolution 25/25.

On 27 March, the HRC adopted a resolution submitted by Japan and the EU that condemns the long-standing and ongoing systematic, widespread and gross human rights violations and other human rights abuses committed in the DPRK. It also expresses grave concern at the detailed findings made by the commission of inquiry in its report, urges the government of the DPRK to implement the report's recommendations and expresses deep concern at the commission's findings concerning the situation of refugees and asylum seekers who have been returned to the DPRK to face punishment, including internment; torture; cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; sexual violence; enforced disappearance; or the death penalty. It also welcomed the Security Council's 22 December meeting on the human rights situation in the DPRK and looked forward to the Council's continued engagement. The resolution was adopted by 27 votes in favour, six votes against (including Security Council members China, Russia and Venezuela) and 14 abstentions.

## Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is the DPRK's continued flouting of all relevant resolutions and its apparent rejection of any dialogue aimed at denuclearisation.

An additional issue, following the placement of the situation in the DPRK on the Council's agenda in December 2014, is what kind of action the Council should consider on the human rights situation in the DPRK.

At the Sanctions Committee level, a key issue is the implementation of the Panel of Experts' recommendations.

## Options

One option for the Council would be to issue a statement following the Committee chair's briefing, condemning the DPRK's recent missile launches and other violations, urging Pyongyang to demonstrate commitment to the dismantling of its nuclear programme and to return to the six-party talks involving China, Japan, the ROK, Russia and the US and calling on the Sanctions Committee and

**UN DOCUMENTS ON THE DPRK** Security Council Resolution S/RES/2207 (4 March 2015) extended until 5 April 2016 the Panel of Experts' mandate. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7353** (22 December 2014) was the meeting on the human rights situation in the DPRK. **Other S/2015/223** (30 March 2015) was the Secretary-General's letter on the appointment of the new Panel of Experts. **A/HRC/28/L.18** (23 March 2015) was the draft resolution on the DPRK adopted by the HRC on 27 March. **A/HRC/28/71** (18 March 2015) was the report by the special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK. **S/2015/156** (3 March 2015) was the DPRK letter on the US-ROK joint military exercises. **S/2015/131** (23 February 2015) was the final report from the Panel of Experts under resolution 2141.



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## DPRK (North Korea) (con't)

member states to implement the recommendations of the Panel of Experts.

For the Committee, the main option is to implement the relevant recommendations of the Panel of Experts' report, which includes designating additional individuals and entities, updating the sanctions list to include entities controlled by OMM and issuing additional guidance related to the Chong Chon Gang incident, possibly in the form of an implementation assistance notice to clarify implementation of the assets freeze.

### Council and Sanctions Committee Dynamics

Discussions at the 20 April Committee meeting followed traditional dividing lines among Council members. China and Russia, with the support of Venezuela, continued to advocate for a cautious approach, favouring dialogue and consultation and stressing the need for all sides to exercise restraint, avoid confrontation and create "favourable conditions"

for the resumption of six-party talks. It seems they also suggested that the US-ROK joint military exercises could be considered a provocation and saw no need for the Committee to take any action in response to the DPRK's recent missile launches. By contrast, the P3 and like-minded elected members such as Lithuania and New Zealand stressed that the launches defied the authority of the Council, with some also expressing concern they might be followed by more serious violations. The US refuted the accusations concerning the joint military exercises, citing the fact that the exercises had been going on for 15 years.

Views among Council members also differed on the Panel's findings. While several members strongly supported the recommendations relating to the OMM, others argued that they must be studied more closely, in particular to verify the alleged links between the OMM and the entities proposed by the Panel for inclusion on the sanctions list. On the question of whether vessels are economic

assets, there was a suggestion to use the guidelines developed by the 1267 Committee. (An explanatory note on the assets freeze posted on that Committee's website on 24 February confirms that vessels should be considered an economic asset.) It seems China and Russia argued, however, that these guidelines could not automatically be applied in the case of the DPRK and that further consideration was needed. Similar differences were also reflected in the discussions about the Mexican request for guidance in the Mu Du Bong case. At press time, the Committee had yet to agree on a response.

With regard to the six-party talks, media outlets reported in March that China, Japan, Russia, the ROK and the US had agreed on conditions for the resumption of the talks to present to Pyongyang, but there was apparently no reference to any such developments in recent Council discussions.

The US is the penholder on the DPRK.

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## Libya

### Expected Council Action

In May, International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda will deliver her semi-annual briefing on recent developments concerning cases in Libya.

The mandates of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and the Panel of Experts assisting the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee expire on 15 September 2015 and on 30 April 2016, respectively.

### Key Recent Developments

Relations between Libya and the ICC have been tense since the decision by the ICC to try Saif Al-Islam Qaddafi, son of deposed leader Muammar Qaddafi, in The Hague, as per the referral in resolution 1970. Briefing the Council on 11 November 2014, Bensouda reiterated that Libya had not yet surrendered Qaddafi to the custody of the ICC, acknowledged the limited extent of her office's interaction with the Libyan

government and highlighted how the combined effect of instability in Libya and lack of resources has severely undermined the ICC's investigative efforts, including of new instances of international crimes. On 23 December 2014, UNSMIL and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published a report that established that many of the recent violations and human rights abuses in Libya potentially fall under the jurisdiction of the ICC.

On 10 December 2014, the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber issued a decision on the non-compliance of Libya with the Court on the case against Qaddafi, by which the matter was referred back to the Council. On 27 March, the Council adopted resolution 2213, in which it noted the ICC decision and emphasised strongly the importance of the Libyan government's full cooperation with the ICC and the Prosecutor.

The trial of 37 Qaddafi-era officials

accused of serious crimes during the 2011 revolution—including Saif al-Islam Qaddafi initially testifying via video link—has been ongoing intermittently in Tripoli since 24 March 2014. Both UNSMIL and OHCHR have voiced their concern that the trial risks falling short of basic international standards such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Resolution 2213 also refocused UNSMIL's mandate on the provision of support to the Libyan political process and security arrangements through mediation and good offices as an immediate priority. During March and April, several rounds of talks among different Libyan political actors were facilitated by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNSMIL, Bernardino León, in Algeria, Belgium, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. On 24 March, León presented a proposal for a new government structure until a new constitution is adopted

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON LIBYA** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2214](#) (27 March 2015) focused on counter-terrorism efforts. [S/RES/2213](#) (27 March 2015) renewed UNSMIL and the 1970 Libya Panel of Experts. [S/RES/1970](#) (26 February 2011) referred the situation in Libya to the ICC. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7398](#) (4 March 2015) was a briefing by León. [S/PV.7306](#) (11 November 2014) was the eighth briefing by the ICC Prosecutor on Libya. [Security Council Press Statements SC/11870](#) (21 April 2015) deplored a maritime tragedy in the Mediterranean Sea that resulted in hundreds of casualties. [SC/11867](#) (20 April 2015) condemned the apparent murder of over 30 Ethiopian Christians by an ISIS affiliate in Libya. [SC/11861](#) (14 April 2015) condemned the terrorist attacks against the embassies of the Republic of Korea and Morocco in Tripoli, Libya, on 12 and 13 April. [SC/11857](#) (13 April 2015) reiterated the Sanctions Committee's readiness to consider sanctions on spoilers of the political process.

## Libya (con't)

and elections are held. The proposal includes the formation of a national unity government headed by a prime minister and two deputies, the House of Representatives as the legislative body and a High State Council with an advisory role. On 29 April, León briefed Council members in consultations on the latest developments in the political process and expressed his intention to facilitate a meeting with leaders of armed groups.

Despite UNSMIL's mediation efforts, fighting continues between the two main coalitions—Misrata-based and Islamist militias (collectively known as Libya Dawn) and Zintan-based militias and elements of the army commanded by General Khalifa Haftar (Operation Dignity). The fighting has mostly been focused on ports and airports (such as Tripoli, Zintan, Mitiga, Zuwara or Sidra). There was a renewed outbreak of violence in several neighbourhoods in Tripoli in mid-April.

The lives of civilians continue to be endangered by the conflict. According to a 26 February Secretary-General's report, approximately 400,000 people are estimated to be internally displaced. On 19 April, more than 700 migrants drowned after the boat on which they were crowded sank near Libya. According to the Integrational Organization for Migration, more than 1,500 have drowned since the beginning of January in the Mediterranean Sea. In a 21 April press statement, Council members expressed grave concern at the recent proliferation of the smuggling of migrants off the coast of Libya.

Groups pledging allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) have clashed with both warring coalitions. Fighting also persists between Operation Dignity and the Ansar al-Sharia-dominated "Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council" in the East. (The Council lists Ansar al-Sharia as an Al-Qaida affiliate.) On 27 March the Council adopted resolution 2214, which expresses strong support for the efforts of the Libyan government to combat ISIS and other Al-Qaida affiliates. On 14 April the Council condemned the 12 and 13 April terrorist attacks against the embassies of the Republic of Korea and Morocco in Tripoli, and on 20 April it condemned the apparent murder of more than 30 Ethiopian Christians in Libya by an ISIS affiliate.

### Sanctions-Related Developments

Resolution 2213 consolidates the existing sanctions-related resolutions on Libya, including on crude oil illicitly exported from Libya, an assets freeze and the travel ban on former Qaddafi-era regime officials. Despite calls from Egypt and Libya for a lifting of the arms embargo for the government, the sanctions regime was not modified. Resolution 2213 provides more detail on the designation criteria for those undermining the successful completion of Libya's political transition, which includes, among others, human rights and humanitarian law violations; attacks against ports, Libyan state institutions or installations and foreign missions; violations of the arms embargo; and acting for, on the behalf of, or at the direction of a listed individual or entity.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

The Human Rights Council (HRC) considered the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Libya and on related technical support and capacity-building needs during its 28th session in March (A/HRC/28/51). The report documents incidents of indiscriminate shelling and other violations of international humanitarian law, summary executions, abductions and torture, as well as attacks against the justice system, which is no longer functioning in parts of the country. It contains recommendations to address the protection of civilians, improve the administration of justice and support legal reform, transitional justice and national institutions.

On 27 March, the HRC adopted, without a vote, a resolution on technical assistance and capacity-building in Libya that requests the High Commissioner for Human Rights to urgently dispatch a mission to investigate violations and abuses of international human rights law that have been committed in Libya since the beginning of 2014 and to submit a written report to the HRC at its 31st session in March 2016 (A/HRC/28/L.7/REV.1).

### Key Issues

In the context of the upcoming briefing, a key issue for the Council is the tension between Libya and the ICC regarding the Qaddafi trial. The Council's lack of follow-up on the recent finding of non-compliance is a critical issue.

An overarching issue is achieving a ceasefire between warring parties, and supporting the dialogue process facilitated by León to bridge the current standoff between institutions in Tripoli and Tobruk/al-Bayda. A further related issue is the role of regional and international actors that are contributing to the escalation of conflict in Libya.

Stopping continual violations of

international humanitarian law by the parties is an urgent issue. A related issue is ensuring that accountability mechanisms are addressed in the UN-facilitated talks.

An increasingly urgent issue is the growing threat posed in Libya by terrorist groups with regional reach.

### Options

With respect to the ICC, receiving a briefing and taking no action seems the most likely option, but the Council could react to the 10 December 2014 finding of non-compliance by issuing a statement that:

- demands that the Libyan government cooperate with the ICC;
- expresses concern about attacks against civilians in Libya that can amount to international crimes;
- urges the government and militias to ensure the protection of the thousands of conflict-related detainees being held without due process; and
- reiterates its support for the ICC investigations of serious crimes committed by all parties since 26 February 2011.

More broadly, regarding the overall situation in Libya, a further option for the Council, following the recent adoption of resolutions 2213 and 2214, is to impose measures against armed militias and other spoilers that threaten the peace, stability or security of Libya. The Council could also impose sanctions on those violating, or assisting in the evasion of, the provisions of the arms embargo in Libya as per resolution 2213.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

It seems that addressing accountability efforts in Libya is a topic of low priority to some Council members. The existence of other pressing problems in Libya, lack of a common vision among Council members that are parties to the Rome Statute and operational issues hindering the investigative work of the Court have increasingly lowered the expectations of this semi-annual discussion.

Bensouda has shown increased frustration with the Council's lack of support. Briefing on 23 October during a debate on working methods, she argued for the Council to use stronger language in its ICC referrals to counter the current ambiguity as to whether all states are obliged to cooperate and for the Council to support carrying out the

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## Libya (con't)

arrest warrants issued by the Court. She also informed the Council how the lack of bilateral or UN financing for Council referrals negatively impacts the ability of her office to conduct investigations in both Darfur and Libya. Briefing the Council on Darfur in December, she said that given a complete lack of cooperation from the government and a lack of support from the Council as well as a lack of political will, she was suspending her

investigations of Darfur cases.

So far the Council has not responded to the recent finding of non-compliance on Libya (or for that matter to the repeated findings of non-cooperation on Darfur). In fact, the initial draft of resolution 2213 noted with concern the 10 December 2014 ICC decision on Libya's non-compliance. After the opposition of some Council members, the final text simply notes the decision without specifying

that it was a finding of non-compliance or that it was related to the case against Qaddafi. It seems that Council members that are parties to the Rome Statute have not been able to find a common voice in Council discussions to respond to these findings, undermining accountability efforts that the Council itself decided to undertake in its referrals to the Court.

The UK is the penholder on Libya.

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## Small Arms

### Expected Council Action

In May, the Council will hold an open debate at the initiative of Lithuania to consider the Secretary-General's biennial report on small arms. (At press time, the report had just been issued.) Lithuania has circulated a concept note highlighting the human cost of illicit small arms as a key focus for the debate and has proposed a resolution as an outcome.

The Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, are expected to brief. A victim directly affected by small arms misuse has also been invited to speak, but at press time was not yet confirmed.

### Background and Recent Developments

The Council first considered small arms as a thematic issue in 1999, but its attention to the matter has been inconsistent. There were six presidential statements on small arms between 1999 and 2007, but during the five-year period from 2008 to 2013 the issue was largely absent from the Council's agenda. (There was no debate on the Secretary-General's 2011 small arms report, just a briefing in a closed meeting.) It was only in September 2013 that the Council adopted its first thematic resolution on this issue. Drafted by Australia, resolution 2117 built on agreed language from the presidential statements and aimed to strengthen the Council's response to small arms-related threats to international peace and security.

Among other things, the resolution reminded member states of their obligation

to comply with Council-mandated arms embargoes while also expressing the Council's intention to monitor and strengthen their implementation; emphasised the role of UN peacekeeping operations relating to arms embargoes and capacity-building for host governments; encouraged information-sharing and cooperation among relevant actors; and called on states to support weapons collection, disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and stockpile management.

The resolution also recognised the impact of small arms on the protection of civilians and highlighted the need to implement relevant obligations under resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and to take into account the special needs of children. Finally, it encouraged states to accede to the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and its protocols, urged states to consider signing and ratifying the Arms Trade Treaty adopted by the General Assembly on 2 April 2013 and stressed the importance of implementing the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms.

Since the resolution was adopted, the Council has imposed arms embargoes in two new cases: the Central African Republic (CAR) and Yemen, adding to the 11 embargoes already in place. In resolution 2127 on the deepening crisis in CAR, the Council imposed an embargo on 5 December 2013 banning the supply, sale and transfer of any arms to the CAR. In resolution 2216 on Yemen, the Council decided on 14 April to address the worsening situation there by

establishing an arms embargo specifically targeting leaders of the Houthi rebel group and those supporting the former president, Ali Abdullah Saleh.

In the case of the CAR, the Council also included provisions on small arms in a subsequent resolution adopted on 10 April 2014 establishing a UN peacekeeping operation—the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA). Among other tasks, the mission is mandated to assist with disarmament, including the destruction of weapons and ammunition, help the CAR Sanctions Committee and Panel of Experts and monitor implementation of the arms embargo. The resolution also calls on the transitional government and its international partners to address illicit small arms, stockpile management and collection and destruction of illicit weapons.

With the addition of MINUSCA, there are now four UN peacekeeping operations mandated to assist in monitoring the implementation of arms embargoes. (The other three are in Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia.) The AU/UN hybrid operation in Darfur also has such a mandate while the UN operation in Mali, where there is no arms embargo, is mandated to support government action on small arms.

The Arms Trade Treaty entered into effect on 24 December 2014. At the time of writing, 130 states had signed and 66 had ratified the treaty.

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON SMALL ARMS** Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2216 (14 April 2015) imposed an arms embargo related to the situation in Yemen. S/RES/2149 (10 April 2014) established MINUSCA. S/RES/2127 (5 December 2013) imposed an arms embargo on the CAR. S/RES/2117 (26 September 2013) was the small-arms resolution. Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2007/24 (29 June 2007) requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on small arms on a biennial basis. Secretary-General's Reports S/2013/503 (22 August 2013) was the last report on small arms. S/2011/255 (5 April 2011) was a previous report on small arms. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7036 (26 September 2013) was a debate on small arms.



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## Small Arms (con't)

### Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is the implementation of resolution 2117 and its impact since it was adopted. A related issue is whether there is a need for further Council action on small arms, in particular to enhance implementation of the provisions agreed in that resolution in key areas such as arms embargoes, the role of UN operations in combating the proliferation of illicit small arms and other measures aimed at preventing diversion of arms into the illicit market, such as stockpile management and security sector reform.

Another key issue is whether to encourage implementation of any of the recommendations of the Secretary-General's report.

An additional issue is the increased diversion and misuse of heavy weapons and whether the Council should address this as part of a broader conventional arms agenda.

The Council's possible contribution to the effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty is another potential key issue.

### Options

The main option for the Council is to adopt a resolution as proposed by Lithuania that, building on resolution 2117, would seek to provide more detailed and "operational" guidance on how to achieve the agreed objectives while highlighting the human cost of illicit small arms. Possible new elements include:

- welcoming the entry into force of the

Arms Trade Treaty and expressing the Council's intention to contribute to its effective implementation;

- welcoming the Secretary-General's report and taking up some of its recommendations;
- requesting the Secretary-General to consistently integrate small arms issues into all planning and review processes for UN operations at the earliest possible stage, address small arms issues in all relevant reports and provide recommendations to the Council as appropriate;
- requesting the Secretary-General to develop UN guidelines aimed at improving cooperation and information-sharing relating to arms embargoes between relevant UN operations, country teams and sanctions panels to ensure that panels receive the assistance they need;
- emphasising the need to address the supply of ammunition in all efforts to prevent the misuse of small arms; and
- requesting the Secretary-General to include in his next report information about the diversion and misuse of heavy weapons.

### Council Dynamics

The dynamics in the Council on small arms have been difficult. In 2006, an Argentinian initiative for a Council resolution on small arms failed due to opposition from the US, which argued it was an issue best dealt with in

the General Assembly. When resolution 2117 was adopted, Russia abstained, citing the omission of an amendment it had proposed aimed at preventing the transfer of small arms to non-state actors. There are also important differences among Council members on sanctions-related issues that may come into play. At the end of 2014, an Australian proposal for a thematic resolution on sanctions was withdrawn after Russia threatened to veto it (a move that was widely seen as a response to sanctions imposed in relation to Ukraine), and Russia abstained on resolution 2216 on Yemen, partly due to reservations about the arms embargo.

Among Council members, Chad, France, Lithuania, New Zealand, Nigeria and the UK have ratified the Arms Trade Treaty while Angola, Chile, Malaysia and the US have signed it. Of the remaining four, Jordan voted in favour of the treaty when it was adopted by the General Assembly, while China, Russia and Venezuela abstained.

At press time, negotiations on the draft resolution had yet to begin, but in light of recent experiences, there seemed to be some concern it might be difficult to get agreement on a text, especially from Russia. At the same time, it was hoped that strong support among the Council's African, Latin American and European members would help achieve a substantive outcome.

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## Counter-Terrorism

### Expected Council Action

In May, the Council is scheduled to hold a briefing on the implementation of resolution 2178 on the growing threat of foreign terrorist fighters. Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius is expected to preside and justice and interior ministers of Council have been invited to attend. Expected to brief on UN counter-terrorism efforts are the Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson, and the chairs of

the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen (New Zealand), and the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė (Lithuania). Secretary-General of INTERPOL Jürgen Stock will also brief the Council. The adoption of a presidential statement is the likely outcome.

### Background

According to the Analytical Support and Monitoring Team of the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, there are around 25,000 foreign terrorist fighters from more than half the countries in the world involved with listed Al-Qaida affiliates. Although the phenomenon is not new, these numbers are higher than ever, in particular in Iraq and Syria, with a growing problem also evident in Libya.

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON COUNTER-TERRORISM** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2199](#) (12 February 2015) was on ISIS and Al-Nusra's illicit funding via oil exports, trafficking in cultural heritage, ransom payments and external donations. [S/RES/2178](#) (24 September 2014) imposed obligations on member states to respond to the threat of foreign terrorist fighters. [S/RES/2170](#) (15 August 2014) condemned the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters by ISIS and Al-Nusra. [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2014/23](#) (19 November 2014) focused on international cooperation in combating terrorism. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7432](#) (23 April 2015) was an open debate on "The role of youth in countering violent extremism". [S/PV.7316](#) (19 November 2014) was a high-level open debate on counter-terrorism. [S/PV.7272](#) (24 September 2014) was a summit-level debate on counter-terrorism chaired by US President Barack Obama. [Sanctions Committee Documents S/2014/807](#) (7 November 2014) was a preliminary report of the CTED on member state capacity to implement resolution 2178. [S/2014/815](#) (3 November 2014) was a report of the Monitoring Team on the sources of ISIS's and Al-Nusra's recruitment, funding and arms. [Security Council Letter S/2015/123](#) (18 February 2015) was a report on challenges in prosecutions related to foreign terrorist fighters.

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## Counter-Terrorism (con't)

This debate follows the 23 April open debate on “The role of youth in countering violent extremism” organised by Jordan which signalled the limits of military and police solutions when dealing with the phenomenon of young people leaving their homes to join a violent extremist movement. Several speakers highlighted the importance of addressing socio-economic exclusion, amplifying local alternative narratives and providing youth with opportunities to realise their expectations.

On 24 September 2014, the Council held a summit meeting chaired by US President Barack Obama on this issue. Resolution 2178, which was adopted unanimously at the meeting, included several innovations to the Council’s counter-terrorism framework. It came up with a definition of foreign terrorist fighters as individuals who travel or attempt to travel to a state other than their states of residence or nationality “for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts, or the providing or receiving of terrorist training”. The resolution also introduced an international obligation which required member states to establish criminal offenses so that would-be terrorist fighters could be prosecuted for their intention to travel in order to participate in terrorist acts.

This obligation requires member states that have “credible information that provides reasonable grounds to believe” that a certain individual might become a foreign terrorist fighter to prevent the entry or transit through their territories. An 18 February report by the CTC’s Executive Directorate (CTED) raised some of the issues that prosecutors of cases against these fighters face, including finding admissible evidence to support such cases, proving criminal intent and converting intelligence into evidence.

On 19 November 2014, Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop presided over a high-level open debate on counter-terrorism. A presidential statement was adopted reiterating the Council’s call for member states to make use of INTERPOL databases and to require that airlines under their jurisdiction provide advance passenger information to national authorities.

On 12 February the Council adopted resolution 2199 targeting some of the sources of funding of the Islamic State of Iraq and

al-Sham (ISIS) and Al-Nusra Front. The resolution imposes a new legal obligation on member states to prevent the trade in cultural property illegally removed from Syria since 15 March 2011. Given the evidence that vehicles departing from or going to areas held by ISIS or Al-Nusra could be used to transfer economic resources for sale on international markets or barter for arms, the resolution encourages neighbouring member states to prevent and disrupt activity that would result in violations of the asset freeze and targeted arms embargo and to report to the 1267/1989 Committee within 30 days of the interdiction in their territory.

### Sanctions-Related Developments

The 1267/1989 Committee has focused its work on responding to the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters. At least 11 of the 31 new listings by the 1267/1989 Committee since September 2014 are related to this phenomenon. At press time, two reports from the Monitoring Team were expected to be released, including one on the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters.

### Counter-Terrorism Committee Developments

The CTC has adopted its work programme for 2015, which includes holding two special meetings to discuss ways to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and to prevent terrorists from exploiting the Internet and social media, while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. The CTED is expected to report to the CTC on gaps in the use of advance passenger information and make recommendations to expand its use as well as to identify principal gaps in member states’ capacities to implement Council resolutions 1373 and 1624 that may hinder states’ abilities to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. (Resolution 1373 of 28 September 2001 obligates states to criminalise the financing of terrorism and recruitment for terrorist groups, and resolution 1624 of 14 September 2005 calls upon member states to prohibit by law the incitement to commit terrorist acts.)

### Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is devising an effective global framework to address the growing challenges related to foreign terrorist fighters. Making sure that counter-terrorism activities worldwide are undertaken with due respect for international human rights norms, including due process guarantees, is an ongoing related issue.

Another key 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.

A further related issue is to ensure that there is coherence between the Council’s subsidiary bodies in charge of assessing the implementation of relevant resolutions by member states and the provision of technical assistance by bilateral and multilateral partners, such as the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre.

### Options

The Council could adopt a presidential statement that:

- calls for the formalisation of coordination mechanisms between the CTED and the CTITF;
- reiterates the need to develop counter-terrorism strategies with due respect for international human rights norms;
- requests member states to actively update the Council on the implementation of resolution 2178; and
- underscores the critical need not only to prevent radicalisation and build resilience among communities most at risk of recruitment, including youth, but to have policies in place to mitigate the potential negative impact of returning terrorist fighters and provide opportunities for their reintegration.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

Counter-terrorism appears to be one of the issues generating unanimous support among Council members, as well as high visibility for Council actions. Most of the differences among Council members are related not as much to this particular topic but to its scope and potential for political misuse. This has been the case in previous negotiations on whether the Council should refer to tackling extremism also when it does not result in violence, which some Council members perceived as outside the mandate of the Council. Also, some Council members have stressed in the past that the 1267/1989 Committee should take the lead in tackling foreign terrorist fighters rather than the CTC, which has a broader scope. Some Council members seem aware of the rule of law dimension to counter-terrorism efforts and have advocated in the past for the inclusion of references to

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## Counter-Terrorism (con't)

member states' compliance with domestic law and international law, including human rights law when fulfilling their international counter-terrorism obligations and in their domestic counter-terrorism policies.

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## Protection of Civilians

### Expected Council Action

In late May, the Council is expected to hold an open debate at ministerial-level on the protection of journalists in conflict situations, which will be chaired by Linas Linkevičius, Lithuania's foreign minister. UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson is expected to brief. Other briefers will include Christophe Deloire, the Secretary-General of Reporters Without Borders and a journalist from a conflict-affected country. The Secretary-General's report on the protection of civilians, which is produced once every 18 months, will likely be transmitted to the Council in early June, and thus will not be available prior to the debate.

At press time, a resolution was a potential outcome.

### Background and Key Recent Developments

The Council has focused on the protection of journalists over the years, albeit sporadically. It has adopted one resolution specifically on this issue. Resolution 1738, adopted on 23 December 2006, condemned intentional attacks against journalists and associated personnel. The resolution recalled that journalists and associated personnel must be considered civilians and urged parties in a conflict to prevent abuses against them and to respect their professional independence and rights. It also expressed its willingness to consider, when authorising missions, measures in response to media broadcasts inciting genocide, crimes against humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law.

In 2013, the protection of journalists garnered some attention among Council members. The Council expressed concern about acts of violence against journalists in its 12 February 2013 presidential statement adopted during an open debate on the protection of

civilians. This adoption marked the first time the Council had specifically addressed the protection of journalists in a thematic decision since resolution 1738. It also focused on the issue in one open debate on 17 July 2013 and in an Arria-formula meeting on 13 December 2013.

Several journalists were killed in conflict situations in 2014, with the Council responding to these events with press statements. In 2015, the Council has issued three press statements in response to the killings of journalists. On 7 January, it condemned the attack on the Charlie Hebdo headquarters in Paris, which resulted in the deaths of 12 people, including 10 media professionals; on 25 January, it deplored the murder of a Japanese journalist by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in Syria; and on 1 February, it deplored the murder of another Japanese journalist by ISIS, also in Syria.

Journalists continue to face significant danger in conflict zones around the world. According to Reporters Without Borders, in 2014, 69 journalists were killed in the line of duty. The six most deadly places for journalists last year were country-specific situations addressed by the Council: Syria (15 deaths), Iraq (four), Ukraine (six), Palestine (seven), Libya (four) and Somalia (four). Thus far in 2015, 22 journalists have been killed; 12 of them died in country-specific situations regularly addressed by the Council, including South Sudan (five), Iraq (two), Yemen (two), Syria (one), Ukraine (one) and DRC (one).

On 4 November 2014, the third UN inter-agency meeting on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity was held in Strasbourg. (The first two inter-agency meetings on this matter were held in September 2011 in Paris and in November 2012 in Vienna. The UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity—which

is designed to create “a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers in both conflict and non-conflict situations”—was produced at the Paris meeting and approved in April 2012 by the UN Chief Executives Board.) The November 2014 meeting—which was co-hosted by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Council of Europe—focused on implementation of the Plan of Action during 2013 and 2014. Following the meeting, 23 civil society organisations issued a statement in which, inter alia, they encouraged greater consistency at the country-level in implementing safety measures, emphasised the need to adhere to decisions of regional bodies to combat impunity and noted the importance of enhancing awareness of the Plan of Action among UN entities and member states.

In preparation for the debate, Lithuania is drafting a concept note that is expected to be circulated in early May.

### Key Issues

One key issue is what steps can be taken to enhance implementation of resolution 1738 and improve the protection of journalists on the ground. While recognising the importance of protecting international journalists, a related issue is how to protect national journalists, who are the victims of attacks in the overwhelming majority of cases.

Another key issue is whether UN peace operations can play an enhanced role in protecting journalists.

Also an important issue is whether the Council can play a role in the implementation of the UN Plan of Action.

### Options

One option is for the Council to adopt a

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS** [Security Council Resolution S/RES/1738](#) (23 December 2006) focused specifically on the protection of journalists. [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2014/3](#) (12 February 2014) was the Council's most recent presidential statement on the protection of civilians and included the most recent version of the aide-mémoire as an annex. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7374](#) (30 January 2015) was the open debate focusing on the protection challenges of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings. [S/PV.7003 and Resumption I](#) (17 July 2013) was on the protection of journalists. [Security Council Press Statements SC/11762](#) (1 February 2015) deplored the murder of a Japanese journalist by ISIS. [SC/11752](#) (25 January 2015) deplored the murder of a Japanese journalist by ISIS. [SC/11727](#) (7 January 2015) deplored the attack on *Charlie Hebdo's* offices.



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## Protection of Civilians (con't)

resolution on the protection of journalists that:

- deplores attacks on journalists in conflict areas and highlights the high rate of impunity for these crimes;
- condemns the rising threat to the safety and security of journalists posed by terrorist groups;
- identifies the specific risks (i.e. sexual violence) facing female journalists in conflict zones and calls for efforts to enhance awareness of these risks and develop strategies to mitigate them;
- calls on media organisations to ensure that journalists receive proper training and are furnished with necessary safety equipment, underscoring in particular the efforts in this respect of local media organisations whose staff are most susceptible to violence; and

- requests that issues related to the protection of journalists be more consistently addressed in Secretary-General's reports in relevant country-specific situations.

The Council could also request prior to the open debate that, as part of Eliasson's briefing, an overview be provided on the next steps in the implementation of the UN Plan of Action.

### Council Dynamics

Several Council members believe that the protection of journalists in armed conflict is an important issue worthy of the Council's engagement. Some likewise note that over the years, this issue has been addressed only sporadically in the Council, and, given the high rate of attacks on media personnel in conflict zones, they would like to see more consistent reporting from the Secretariat on the matter

in country-specific and thematic contexts. Of particular concern to Council members is the fact that perpetrators of attacks on journalists are usually not held accountable.

In spite of support for the issue, some members note that the Council should address this issue strictly in the context of armed conflict. This was a point, for example, that Russia made during the last debate on the protection of journalists in July 2013 and is consistent with resolution 1738.

At press time, a resolution appeared to be a possible outcome, but those most supportive of this option were keen to ensure that any Council outcome builds on the language of resolution 1738.

The UK is the penholder on the protection of civilians.

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## Sudan and South Sudan

### Expected Council Action

Council members are expected to hold consultations in May to consider the Secretary-General's report on the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) due by 1 May.

The mandate of UNISFA expires on 15 July.

### Key Recent Developments

Relations between the Misseriya and Ngok-Dinka communities in Abyei have continued to be poor. Violent clashes have occurred in Abyei in recent months, with several attacks perpetrated by Misseriya assailants in the area. On 1 March, a group of approximately 100 armed Misseriya attacked the Ngok-Dinka village of Marial Achak, setting fire to several homes and kidnapping four children. On 29 March, Misseriya raiders seized several hundred cattle from cattle camps close to Majok Toc. And on 6 April, six people were killed during a Misseriya raid on the village of Kouldet.

On 17 March, Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous briefed Council members on Abyei under "any other business", focusing on the 1 March incident. He said UNISFA

peacekeepers fired on the attackers of Marial Achak, killing three and detaining eight others. Based on interrogations that UNISFA conducted, Ladsous reported that the mission learned that one of the attackers was affiliated with Sudanese military intelligence and also that the attackers had received support from wealthy individuals in Khartoum.

Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan and Special Representative to the AU Haile Menkerios briefed Council members on 24 March in consultations on Sudan/South Sudan. Menkerios said that the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC), which had not met since May 2013 following the assassination of the Ngok-Dinka paramount chief Kuol Deng Kuol by a Misseriya, would reconvene by the end of March. Menkerios stated that UNISFA was in contact with Sudan regarding the attack on Marial Achak, and he said that the four abducted children would be released shortly.

Indeed, on 9 April, through negotiations conducted by UNISFA, the kidnapped children were returned to their homes. Of the eight Misseriya detained by the mission, six were handed over to Misseriya community

leaders, and two (the military intelligence officer and an officer in a local militia group) were remanded to Sudanese officials in the expectation that they will face appropriate legal measures.

The AJOC convened on 29-30 March in Addis Ababa. At the conclusion of the meeting, the two AJOC co-chairs, Hassan Ali Nimir of Sudan and Deng Mading Mijak of South Sudan, issued a brief statement in which they called for Misseriya and Ngok-Dinka leaders to convene in Addis Ababa to "address their common concerns", condemned recent security incidents in the Abyei area, agreed to support humanitarian and development initiatives in the area and reiterated that Abyei should be free of weapons. The co-chairs also agreed that the AJOC would reconvene after the meeting of the Misseriya and Ngok-Dinka community leaders, which is expected in May.

### Key Issues

The ongoing key issue is whether and how the Council can induce Sudan and South Sudan to establish temporary administrative and security institutions to fill the law-and-order

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## Sudan and South Sudan (con't)

vacuum in Abyei, and, over the longer term, to resolve the final status of the area.

Another key issue is whether the Council can play a role in supporting inter-communal dialogue and reconciliation between the Misseriya and Ngok-Dinka communities.

With the recent resumption of the AJOC activity after a nearly two-year hiatus, an important issue is how the Council can help maintain the momentum and encourage Sudan and South Sudan to hold regular AJOC meetings to work on issues of mutual concern.

Another key issue is the future of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM) along the Sudan-South Sudan border. (In resolution 2024 of 14 December 2011, the Council authorised UNISFA to assist the parties in monitoring the border within the Safe Demilitarised Border Zone. However, more than three and

a half years after the adoption of this resolution, the mission's monitoring tasks have been minimal, and in his last report to the Council on Abyei, the Secretary-General said that he would be offering his recommendations on the JBVMM's operations in his next report [due by 1 May], considering that it "is effectively not being supported by the parties themselves".)

### Options

The Council could consider adopting a statement:

- welcoming the recent meeting of the AJOC and encouraging the committee to meet regularly;
- condemning recent inter-communal attacks in the area and calling for accountability for these attacks; and
- reiterating its demand that Sudan withdraw its oil police from the Diffra oil

facility in Abyei.

### Council Dynamics

There has long been frustration among Council members with the stalemate on a number of issues related to Abyei, including the inability of the parties to establish temporary administrative units in the area, to demilitarise the area and to make progress on negotiations on its final status. Despite this lack of progress, some members point to the recent reconvening of the AJOC as an encouraging sign. There is also recognition on the Council that Sudan and South Sudan are each focusing much of their energy and attention on their own domestic crises, leaving little room for serious engagement on the challenges in Abyei.

The US is the penholder on Abyei.

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## Kosovo

### Expected Council Action

In May, the Council is expected to hold its quarterly debate on Kosovo. Farid Zarif, Special Representative and head of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), is expected to brief on the latest Secretary-General's report and recent developments. Both Serbia and Kosovo are likely to participate at high-level.

### Key Recent Developments

After more than ten months of suspension, the EU-facilitated dialogue on implementation of the 19 April 2013 "First Agreement on Principles Governing the Normalisation of Relations between Belgrade and Pristina" resumed in Brussels. The dialogue had been suspended in part because of Serbian elections in March 2014 and the inability of Kosovo's political leaders to agree on the composition of the new government following Kosovo's June 2014 elections.

Under the framework of the EU-facilitated dialogue, on 9 February, EU High Representative Federica Mogherini hosted a meeting with prime ministers Aleksandar Vučić of Serbia and Isa Mustafa of Kosovo. The initial

meeting continued until the early-morning hours of 10 February, when Vučić and Mustafa reached an agreement on the judiciary in Kosovo. The agreement stipulates that Kosovar Serb judges and prosecutors will be integrated into Kosovo judicial institutions and that court and prosecutor offices will be established in Serb-dominated northern Kosovo. At press time, the exact details of the agreement were not publicly available. However, according to public remarks by Vučić and Mustafa following the meeting, it seems that it was agreed that judges and prosecutors would include both ethnic Serbs and ethnic Albanians. A decision on the way in which cases will be distributed has not been taken yet.

On 26 and 27 March, Mogherini visited Pristina and Belgrade and met with the prime ministers and senior government officials of both Serbia and Kosovo. Mogherini used her visit to discuss with the leaders issues related to the implementation of the agreements on normalisation of relations between Belgrade and Pristina as well as the next steps in Serbia's and Kosovo's EU integration process.

The high-level Belgrade-Pristina dialogue

continued on 21 April when Mogherini hosted Vučić and Mustafa in Brussels. Issues discussed at this meeting included progress of the implementation of the existing agreements between Belgrade and Pristina as well as other outstanding questions such as the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb Municipalities which is one of the main points of the 19 April agreement. The Association/Community is intended to bring broad powers to the municipalities with Serb majority.

On 3 February, Mustafa dismissed Aleksandar Jablanović, minister for communities and returns, after immense pressure from Kosovar Albanians. In January, Jablanović made highly critical public remarks about Kosovar Albanians who confronted Serb pilgrims visiting holy sites in Kosovo. This resulted in massive protests throughout Kosovo calling for Jablanović to resign. Shortly after Jablanović's dismissal, members of the Srpska List, the major political party representing Kosovar Serbs, decided to suspend their participation in the government and the Assembly of Kosovo. The members of Srpska List who decided to suspend participation

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UN DOCUMENTS ON KOSOVO Security Council Resolution S/RES/1244 (10 June 1999) authorised NATO to secure and enforce the withdrawal of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia forces from Kosovo and established UNMIK. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7377 (6 February 2015) was the most recent quarterly debate on UNMIK.

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## Kosovo (con't)

included those holding nine out of 20 seats in the Assembly guaranteed for minorities and two ministers in the government of Kosovo. On 23 April, Srpska List members called off their boycott and decided to return to the government and Assembly of Kosovo.

Though expected to be fully operational at the beginning of 2015, formation of the special court that is supposed to investigate cases of war crimes committed by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) during the conflict in Kosovo is still pending. The court is expected to operate under Kosovo law, but it will be based in the Netherlands and staffed with international judges. In early March, the Kosovo government proposed an amendment to the constitution that would allow the formation of the court within Kosovo's judicial system. After review, the Constitutional Court of Kosovo ruled on 15 April that the amendment is constitutional, thus allowing a vote in the Assembly. At press time, the Assembly had not yet held a vote on the amendment.

### Key Issues

Maintaining stability in Kosovo remains one

of the main issues for the Council.

Another issue for the Council will be the role UNMIK can play in normalisation of relations between Belgrade and Pristina.

Related issues for the Council will be the implementation of the existing agreements between Belgrade and Pristina.

The establishment of the special court for investigating alleged war crimes committed by the KLA may become an issue for the Council if the current delays continue.

### Options

Considering the relative stability on the ground, the Council could contemplate reducing UNMIK's presence in Kosovo.

Also, with progress made in the normalisation of relations between Belgrade and Pristina, the Council could consider lengthening the Secretary-General's reporting cycle from the current three-month interval.

In case Kosovo authorities fail to move on the issue of the establishment of the special court, the Security Council could consider setting up an ad hoc accountability mechanism for alleged KLA crimes.

### Council Dynamics

In recent years Kosovo has been an issue of relatively low intensity for the Council. Other regional organisations, primarily the EU, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, play more active roles in Kosovo.

The Council's dynamics on Kosovo remain unchanged, notwithstanding a change in the composition of the Council at the beginning of 2015. Permanent members have remained divided. France, the UK and the US recognise Kosovo while Russia does not and is strongly supportive of Serbia's position.

In addition to Russia, other countries on the Council that do not recognise Kosovo are Angola, Chile, China, Spain and Venezuela. Spain is one of the five EU members that have not recognised Kosovo.

In recent debates on Kosovo, several Council members, most notably the UK, the US and Lithuania, have recommended lengthening the reporting cycles for Secretary-General's reports on Kosovo. Russia remains strongly opposed to any attempt by the Council to alter UNMIK's reporting cycle.

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## Bosnia and Herzegovina

### Expected Council Action

In May, the Council will hold its biannual debate on Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The High Representative for BiH, Valentin Inzko, will brief the Council, presenting the latest report of the Office of the High Representative (OHR), which is expected in early May. No outcome is anticipated.

The authorisation of the EU-led multinational stabilisation force (EUFOR ALTHEA) expires on 11 November.

### Key Recent Developments

Nearly six months after the 12 October 2014 general elections, a new BiH government was formed on 31 March when parliament approved the appointments of the nine members of the Council of Ministers. Denis Zvizdić, of the nationalist-Bosniak Party of Democratic Action (SDA), was named the

Council chair. The length of time needed to form the government was a marked improvement from 2010 when it took almost 14 months to agree on a government. The Alliance of Independent Social Democrats, the party of Republika Srpska entity President Milorad Dodik, known for his secessionist rhetoric, is not part of the cabinet for the first time since 2006. A bloc of smaller Bosnian Serb parties is instead represented. BiH's tripartite presidency took office on 17 November 2014.

Efforts to reinvigorate BiH's stalled EU integration process have been central to recent developments. On 15 December 2014, the EU Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) agreed on a plan that would activate BiH's Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA), a precursor to applying for EU membership, if BiH leaders made a written commitment

to implement various socio-economic, rule of law and good-governance reforms. The offer by the FAC to BiH leaders was based on a German-UK initiative proposed in early November, which appeared to be in response to the country's violent protests in February 2014 against stagnant economic conditions, poor governance and corruption.

The FAC decision represented a shift in EU policy, notably by no longer requiring that BiH first amend its constitution to comply with the 2009 European Court of Human Rights ruling in the Sejdić-Finci case before further steps towards EU accession could be initiated. This requirement had been a critical factor delaying the entry into force of BiH's SAA, originally signed in 2007. BiH will still need to implement the ruling, but the EU's renewed approach will now allow this to be done later in the

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UN DOCUMENTS ON BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA Security Council Resolution S/RES/2183 (11 November 2014) authorised EUFOR ALTHEA for 12 months. Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7308 (11 November 2014) was a briefing by the High Representative for BiH and Council debate. S/PV.7307 (11 November 2014) was the vote renewing the authorisation of EUFOR ALTHEA and Russia's explanation of vote.



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## Bosnia and Herzegovina (con't)

accession process. (In the Sejdić-Finci case, BiH's constitution was determined to be in violation of EU human rights law since it prohibits minorities or individuals who do not identify themselves as Bosniak, Croat or Serb from running for the country's tri-partite presidency and other offices.)

As requested, BiH's tripartite presidency issued a joint declaration on 29 January confirming their commitment to deliver institutional reforms at all state levels to prepare the country for future EU membership. The declaration further affirmed that BiH would develop a reform agenda in agreement with the EU, with the intention of implementing the Sejdić-Finci ruling at a later date. The statement was subsequently signed by the leaders of BiH's 14 political parties, and parliament endorsed the declaration on 23 February. This led the EU foreign ministers to activate BiH's SAA on 16 March. The ministers noted in a statement the need for meaningful progress in implementing a reform agenda in order for the EU to consider a membership application.

### Key Issues

Ethnic divisions among Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs and secessionist rhetoric from the Republika Srpska, which is a direct challenge to BiH's territorial integrity and the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement, are ongoing key issues.

Making progress towards achieving a set of objectives and conditions established by members of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the UK, the US, the EU, the European Commission and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference) for closing the OHR is another issue for the Council and is likely to be recalled at the debate.

Underlying problems, which will also likely be on members' minds, are issues of economic stagnation, poor governance and corruption that led to last year's violent protests and have stalled European and NATO integration.

### Options

Most likely, the Council will hold the debate and take no action. It could, however, issue a statement welcoming recent positive developments in forming a government and BiH leaders' commitments to economic and governance reforms.

### Council Dynamics

The Council usually follows the lead of the EU when it comes to BiH. However, negotiations last November on the resolution to renew the authorisation of EUFOR ALTHEA were more divisive than usual and introduced a new dynamic. Russia abstained on the resolution—the first time since 2000 that a Council resolution on the international

presence in BiH was not adopted by consensus. In particular, Russia raised concerns over language that referred to BiH's Euro-Atlantic integration, claiming that such references were imposing this decision externally on BiH. Russia also opposed EUFOR ALTHEA's authorisation under Chapter VII, stating that this could be viewed as a tool to accelerate BiH's integration into the EU and NATO. Having previously accepted such references in prior resolutions on BiH, it seems that Russia's position was fallout from the Ukraine conflict.

This led to a fairly testy negotiation that spilled into the ensuing debate as Western countries countered that Euro-Atlantic integration was one of the few issues that BiH's often divided political class agreed on. It remains to be seen whether this continues to be an issue at the upcoming debate.

Other dynamics include Russia's preference to see OHR closed, perceiving it as unfairly blaming Republika Srpska for BiH's problems and overlooking political dysfunction within the other entity—the Federation of BiH, the predominantly Bosniak-Croat entity. Reflecting the EU's already changing approach on BiH, last November's resolution removed a reference to the Sejdić-Finci case, language that had been inserted into the resolution only one year earlier.

## Notable Dates for May

REPORT DUE	REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION IN MAY	REQUESTING DOCUMENT
19 March	Monitoring Team of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee on foreign terrorist fighters	S/RES/2178
27 April	SG report on small arms	S/RES/2117
28 April	OPCW report on the implementation of resolution 2118 (Syrian chemical weapons)	S/RES/2118
28 April	SG report on UNMIL (Liberia)	S/RES/2190
28 April	SG report on UNMISS (South Sudan)	S/RES/2187
29 April	SG report on UNMIK (Kosovo)	S/RES/1244
30 April	SG report on UNAMI (Iraq)	S/RES/2169
early May	SG report on Iraq/Kuwait missing persons and property	S/RES/1284
1 May	SG report on UNISFA (Abyei)	S/RES/2205
5 May	High Representative's report on Bosnia and Herzegovina	S/RES/2183
12 May	SG report on UNSOM (Somalia)	S/RES/2158
14 May	SG report on UNOCA/LRA (Central Africa)	S/PRST/2014/25
19 May	SG report on the humanitarian situation in Syria	S/RES/2139

  

MANDATES EXPIRE	RELEVANT DOCUMENT
28 May	UNSOM (Somalia) S/RES/2158
30 May	UNMISS (South Sudan) S/RES/2187

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