

# Monthly Forecast

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## Overview

Malaysia will hold the Council's presidency in June and is planning a ministerial-level open debate on [children and armed conflict](#), with Foreign Minister Dato' Sri Anifah Aman presiding and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict Leila Zerrougui among the briefers. A resolution is the expected outcome.

Debates are planned on:

- the ad hoc [international criminal tribunals](#), with the presidents and prosecutors of the ICTY and ICTR expected to brief. The ICTY President will also brief the Council as President of the Residual Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals, as will the ICTR Prosecutor as the Residual Mechanism's Prosecutor; and
- [Afghanistan](#), with a briefing by the head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, Nicholas Haysom.

Briefings are expected on:

- the [counter-terrorism committees](#), by Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė (Lithuania), chair of the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee, Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen (New Zealand), chair of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, and Ambassador Román Oyarzun (Spain), chair of the 1540 Committee;
- the annual report of the [PBC](#) by Antonio de Aguiar Patriota (Brazil) and Olof Skoog (Sweden), the PBC's former and current chairs;
- [Darfur](#) by ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda;
- [UN peacekeeping](#) by DPKO head Hervé Ladsous and force commanders Lieutenant General Yohannes Gebremeskel Tesfamariam (Ethiopia) of UNMISS in South Sudan, Major General Michael Lollesgaard (Denmark) of MINUSMA in Mali and Major General Michael Finn (Ireland), the chief of staff of the UN Truce Supervision Organization; and
- the work of the [1737 Iran Sanctions Committee](#), by its chair, Ambassador Oyarzun (Spain).

Briefings, followed by consultations, are expected on:

- 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 (initially expected in May);
- the situation in [Côte d'Ivoire](#), by the head of UNOCI, Aïchatou Mindaoudou;
- the work UNAMID in [Darfur](#), by Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet;
- the situation in [Mali](#) by the head of MINUSMA, Mongi Hamdi;
- [Libya](#) by Special Representative and head of UNSMIL Bernardino León and by Ambassador Ramlan Ibrahim (Malaysia) on the work of the [1970 Libya Sanctions Committee](#);
- the humanitarian situation in [Syria](#) by OCHA's deputy head, Kyung-wha Kang; and
- [Israel/Palestine](#), by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman.

Briefings in consultations are likely on:

- [chemical weapons in Syria](#), by High Representative for Disarmament Kim Won-soo;
- [Sudan and South Sudan](#) relations, by Special Envoy Haile Menkerios; and
- the work of UNDOF in the [Golan Heights](#), most likely by Mulet.

Formal sessions will be needed to renew the mandates of:

- the Panel of Experts assisting the [1737 Iran Sanctions Committee](#);
- [UNOCI](#);
- [UNAMID](#);
- [UNDOF](#); and
- [MINUSMA](#).

Throughout the month members will be following closely developments in [Burundi](#), the [DRC](#), [Ukraine](#), [Yemen](#), the [Boko Haram-affected areas of Africa](#), as well as the [migrant crises](#), and additional meetings may be scheduled. •

**1 June 2015**  
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## Status Update since our May Forecast

### Yemen

On 1 May, at the request of Russia, Council members were briefed in consultations by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman, and Russia presented a draft press statement on the humanitarian situation in Yemen. Council members issued a UK-drafted press statement on 12 May that incorporated elements from the Russian draft and welcomed the five-day humanitarian pause in the conflict (SC/11888). On 20 May, Council members were briefed in consultations by Special Envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, via video teleconference, and Operations Director of OCHA John Ging. Afterwards, Council members issued elements to the press welcoming the Secretary-General's announcement of consultations among all Yemeni stakeholders in Geneva on 28 May and calling on all Yemeni parties to attend these talks and engage without preconditions. At press time, the talks had been postponed.

### Liberia

On 5 May, the Special Representative and head of the UN Mission in Liberia, Karin Landgren, briefed the Council, presenting the latest UNMIL report (S/2015/275). Ambassador Olof Skoog (Sweden), Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and its country-specific configuration on Liberia, and Liberia's Minister of Justice Benedict Sanoah also addressed the Council (S/PV.7438).

### DRC

On 7 May, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefed Council members under "any other business" on his latest visit to the DRC. The previous day, Council members had issued a press statement condemning a 5 May attack against peacekeepers in North Kivu (SC/11883).

### CAR

On 7 May, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefed Council members under "any other business" on his latest visit to the CAR. On 15 May, Council members issued a press statement welcoming the holding of the Bangui forum on national reconciliation from 4 to 11 May 2015 (SC/11895). Council members commended the adoption of the Republican Pact for Peace, National Reconciliation and Reconstruction, including

commitments for a swift presidential and legislative electoral process.

### Burundi

On 8 May, Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Said Djinnit briefed Council members in consultations via video teleconference on his mediation efforts between the government and the opposition in Burundi. In elements to the press, Council members expressed concern over the influx of refugees into neighbouring states and called on all sides to refrain from violence. On 14 May, Djinnit briefed Council members in consultations again after an attempted coup against Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza. Council members agreed on press elements that condemned attempts to seize power unlawfully and called for the swift return of the rule of law and the holding of credible elections in the spirit of the Arusha Agreements. The next day, Council members issued a press statement calling for the establishment of a genuine dialogue between all Burundians to create the necessary conditions for credible elections (SC/11896). On 24 May, Council members issued another press statement condemning the killing of opposition leader Zedi Feruzi on 23 May in Bujumbura (SC/11905). On 27 May, Djinnit briefed Council members again in consultations via video teleconference on his latest mediation efforts.

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 12 May, the Council held its semi-annual debate on Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/PV.7440). High Representative Valentin Inzko briefed on his office's latest report (S/2015/300). Inzko stressed the country had an opportunity to break the negative political and economic trends with the EU's recent initiative to activate Bosnia and Herzegovina's Stabilization and Association Agreement, a precursor to applying for EU membership.

### South Sudan

On 12 May, at the request of the US, Council members held consultations regarding options for accountability and transitional justice in South Sudan. Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and UN Legal Counsel Miguel de Serpa Soares briefed along with Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šiminović. On 14 May, Special Representative Ellen Margrethe Løj

presented the most recent UNMISS report (S/2015/296) and Ambassador Carlos Olguín Cigarroa (Chile), representative of the chair of the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee, briefed the Council (S/PV.7444). On 17 May, Council members issued a press statement condemning renewed large-scale violence in Unity state caused by a recent offensive by the government of South Sudan (SC/11897). On 28 May, the Council adopted resolution 2223 renewing the mandate of UNMISS for six months.

### Small Arms

On 13 May, the Council held an open debate on small arms and light weapons (S/PV.7442). Lithuania had circulated a concept note on 1 May highlighting the human cost of small arms as a key focus for the debate (S/2015/306). The Secretary-General briefed on his 27 April report on small arms (S/2015/289). He was followed by High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein and the president of the Côte d'Ivoire chapter of the West Africa Action Network on Small Arms, Karamoko Diakité, who had been invited to speak about the human cost of illicit small arms. On 22 May, the Council adopted resolution 2220 on small arms in a split vote of nine in favour and six abstentions (S/PV.7447). Resolution 2220 contained new provisions aiming to strengthen UN coordination and action on small arms, promote effective implementation of UN arms embargoes and support the Arms Trade Treaty while at the same time emphasizing the negative impact of the proliferation of small arms on the protection of civilians. Five of the six Council members that abstained, Angola (on behalf of the three African members of the Council), Chad, China, Russia and Venezuela, had explanations of vote highlighting the absence of an explicit reference to "non-state actors" in the resolution's provisions regarding the need to prevent the transfer of small arms to armed groups.

### Iraq

On 14 May, newly appointed Special Representative Ján Kubiš briefed the Council, presenting the most recent UNAMI report (S/2015/305) and the report on Iraq/Kuwait missing persons and property (S/2015/298). Kubiš said that for military gains against ISIS to hold, the government would have to restore civilian authority in areas liberated

## Status Update since our *May Forecast* (con't)

from ISIS—a reference to the Sunni western provinces which have a strained relationship with the Shi'a-led government in Baghdad. (Three days later Ramadi fell to ISIS as government forces fled. There have been subsequent reports of Iraqi authorities blocking civilians fleeing Ramadi from entering Baghdad.) OCHA head Valerie Amos also briefed on the humanitarian situation, reporting that 8.2 million people required assistance, an increase of three million in five months.

### Cyprus

On 15 May, Council members issued a press statement welcoming the resumption of the settlement talks (SC/11894).

### Israel/Palestine

On 19 May, in his first monthly briefing to the Council as Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov warned that given the vicious tide of terror and extremism in the region, it was even more critical for Israelis and Palestinians to negotiate a two-state solution and end actions that imperil an agreement (S/PV.7446).

### Somalia

On 19 May, Special Representative and head of UNSOM Nicholas Kay and Special Representative of the AU for Somalia and head of AMISOM Maman Sidikou briefed the Council via video teleconference from Addis Ababa (S/PV.7445). Kay presented the most recent UNSOM report (S/2015/331). On 26 May, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2221, renewing the mandate of UNSOM until 7 August. The brief mandate renewal—for a period of just over ten weeks—will enable Council members to consider an upcoming joint AU-UN report on AMISOM, particularly the provisions related to UNSOM's mandate.

### Meeting Between the Security Council and EU Political and Security Committee

On 20 May, Council members held an informal meeting with members of the EU PSC to discuss EU-UN peacekeeping cooperation, Libya and Ukraine.

### Women, Peace and Security

On 21 May, Council members held a closed Arria-formula meeting, organised by Spain,

focusing on key women, peace and security recommendations to the Security Council from Radhika Coomaraswamy, lead author of the Global Study on the implementation of resolution 1325; Ameerah Haq, Vice-Chair of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations; and Ambassador Gert Rosenthal, head of the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture. In other developments, Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Hawa Bangura briefed members of the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee on 8 May (SC/11891). This briefing was a follow-up to resolution 2206 which requested the Special Representative to share information with the Committee.

### Counter-Terrorism

On 22 May Council members condemned the terrorist attack claimed by ISIS at a mosque in Qatif, Saudi Arabia (SC/11903). On 29 May, the Council adopted a presidential statement on identifying priority actions to stem the flow foreign terrorist fighters (S/PRST/2015/11) at a meeting presided by Lithuania's Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius (S/PV.7453). The 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Monitoring Team recently submitted a report to the Council on this issue (S/2015/358) and Lithuania circulated a concept note to help members prepare for the meeting (S/2015/324). Expected to brief on UN counter-terrorism efforts were Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and the chairs of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Gerard van Boemen (New Zealand), and the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee, Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė (Lithuania). Murmokaitė covered the work of the CTC on this issue, including reports on the implementation of 2178 (S/2015/338), challenges in prosecutions related to foreign terrorist fighters (S/2015/123) and on the use of advanced passenger information by member states (S/2015/377). Secretary-General of INTERPOL Jürgen Stock also briefed.

### Kosovo

On 26 May, the Council held a quarterly debate on Kosovo with a briefing by Special Representative Farid Zarif (S/PV.7448) who presented the latest Secretary-General's report (S/2015/303). The prime ministers of Serbia and Kosovo participated in the debate.

### Protection of Civilians

On 27 May, the Council held an open debate on the protection of journalists and adopted resolution 2222 (S/PV.7450). According to a concept note circulated by Lithuania on 1 May (S/2015/307) the aim of the debate was to review implementation of resolution 1738, the only previous Council resolution on the protection of journalists, and discuss lessons learned. The meeting was chaired by Lithuania's foreign minister Linas Linkevičius and featured briefings by Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, Secretary-General of Reporters Without Borders Christophe Deloire, and Mariane Pearl, the widow of Daniel Pearl, the Wall Street Journal reporter who was kidnapped and beheaded in Pakistan in early 2002. Resolution 2222 focused on the need to combat impunity for attacks against journalists, enhance reporting on violence against journalists and improve international coordination to strengthen the protection of journalists.

### DPRK (North Korea)

On 28 May, Ambassador Román Oyarzun (Spain) briefed Council members on the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee. The Committee had only held one meeting, on 20 April, since his last briefing on 26 February. On 6 May, in response to a request from Mexico the Committee sent a letter confirming that the vessel *Mu Du Bong* is under sanctions. *Mu Du Bong* is being held in the Mexican port of Tuxpan after it ran aground in the Gulf of Mexico last July. According to the 1718 Panel of Experts, the ship is owned by Ocean Maritime Management Company which was designated by the Committee on 28 July 2014. On 21 May, the Council received a letter from the DPRK (S/2015/365) on its 9 May underwater ballistic missile launches from a submarine and on statements made by US Secretary of State John Kerry on 18 May.

### Myanmar

On 28 May, under “any other business”, High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein briefed Council members via video teleconference on the human rights situation in Myanmar, in particular on the Rohingya and the related migration crisis in Southeast Asia.



# Mali

## Expected Council Action

In June, the Council is expected to renew the mandate of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The Council also expects to receive a briefing from the Special Representative and head of MINUSMA, Mongi Hamdi, followed by consultations. MINUSMA's mandate expires on 30 June.

Separately, the Council will be briefed in June on peacekeeping, including by MINUSMA's force commander.

## Key Recent Developments

In April and May there were multiple clashes between the parties to the conflict, including the Malian Defence and Security Forces (MDSF), and different armed groups. These included the occupation on 27 April of Ménaka by the Groupe Autodéfense Touareg Imghad et Alliés and others from the coalition of armed groups closely aligned with the government known as the Platform, and attacks on Goundam and Leré in the following days by the Coordination—another coalition of armed groups seeking autonomy for the north—which left several MDSF soldiers and at least one child dead. On 1 May, Council members issued a press statement condemning the attacks and stressing that they violated the ceasefire. Despite statements by the parties that they are committed to respecting the ceasefire, clashes have continued, including in Ménaka, which, despite a proposal by MINUSMA to take control of the town, at press time remained under control of the Platform.

Against this backdrop, the government and the Platform signed a partial peace agreement in Bamako on 15 May. The Coordination had initialled the agreement a day earlier but refused to participate in the signing, reiterating its position that the document did not take into account the legitimate aspirations of the people of Azawad and highlighting concerns it wanted addressed prior to signing the agreement.

Beginning on 1 March, the Algerian-led mediation team worked for a month and a half to persuade the Coordination to initial and then sign the agreement. On 4 March the Council issued press elements encouraging the Coordination to initial the agreement,

and a 10 April press statement welcomed the agreement, which Council members considered “balanced and comprehensive”. Briefing Council members under “any other business” on 7 May, peacekeeping head Hervé Ladsous presented the conditions for the Secretariat to support a partial signature of the peace agreement: the agreement had to remain open to subsequent signatures of remaining parties, dialogue with them must continue, the ceasefire must be respected and implementation of the main provisions by the signatories must begin as soon as possible. On 28 May, Ladsous briefed again under “any other business” to update Council members on his recent visit to Mali to attend the 15 May signing of the partial peace agreement.

MINUSMA, its contractors and other international actors (including NGOs), continue to be targeted by Al-Qaida-affiliated terrorist groups through improvised explosive devices, ambushes and other attacks. (Four of these groups—the Mouvement pour l'Unification et le Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest, Ansar Eddine, Al-Mourabitoun and Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb—are listed under the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida sanctions regime.) The assaults included a 15 April attack on a MINUSMA camp in Ansongo by a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device in which two civilians were killed and nine peacekeepers were wounded. The group Al-Mourabitoun, which claimed responsibility for the attack and recently pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, announced on 18 May that it was holding a Romanian hostage. On 26 May, a Bangladeshi peacekeeper was killed in what seemed to be the second attack in days against MINUSMA in Bamako, Mali.

As of 30 April, 82 percent of MINUSMA's authorised uniformed personnel had been deployed. According to the 27 March Secretary-General's report, outstanding deployments “continued to hamper the force's ability to fulfil its mandate and protect convoy movements”. Given the significant changes to the political and security environment in Mali since the establishment of MINUSMA, the mission concept and the concepts of operations of related components have been reviewed ahead of its mandate renewal.

A fact-finding inquiry was launched by

the Secretary-General after three people were killed by MINUSMA forces during a demonstration against the mission in Gao on 27 January. Ladsous briefed Council members on 2 April under “any other business” on the results of the inquiry, which concluded that Rwandan members of a formed 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. As a response to the results of this inquiry, Rwanda decided to withdraw most of its police contribution to MINUSMA.

On 4 May, OCHA highlighted how insecurity has hampered humanitarian access and the delivery of humanitarian assistance. OCHA has recorded significant access constraints in northern Mali linked to violence against humanitarian personnel, assets or facilities as well as to the conduct of hostilities or military operations.

## Human Rights-Related Developments

The Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on technical assistance and capacity-building for Mali in the field of human rights on 27 March (A/HRC/28/L.9). The resolution strongly condemns the abuses and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that have been committed against civilians, including women and children, and the recruitment of the latter; extends the mandate of the independent expert on Mali for one year; and asks the High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide technical assistance to the government of Mali, in particular to the Commission for Dialogue, Truth, Justice and Reconciliation.

In a press briefing on 14 April, the spokeswoman for the High Commissioner for Human Rights deplored the continued targeting of UN personnel and humanitarian workers in the country and called on government forces to ensure that counter-terrorism operations are conducted in line with international human rights standards. The Office of the High Commissioner is following up closely with the Malian authorities on allegations of human rights violations and abuses that may have been committed during such operations.

## Key Issues

Preventing further escalation of violence by the warring parties is an imminent issue of concern for the Council.

An overarching issue is the deadlock in the political process over the signing of the peace agreement and how to maintain the impartiality

**UN DOCUMENTS ON MALI Security Council Resolution S/RES/2164** (25 June 2014) renewed MINUSMA. **Secretary-General's Report S/2015/219** (27 March 2015) was the latest Mali report. **Security Council Press Statements SC/11879** (1 May 2015) expressed deep concern at the outbreak of violence in Mali since 27 April. **SC/11855** (10 April 2015) welcomed the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation initialled by representatives of the Malian government and one of the coalitions of armed groups. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7425** (9 April 2015) was a briefing by DPKO on Mali.

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## Mali (con't)

of MINUSMA in the context of a peace agreement that is not signed by all parties.

The marked increase in terrorist attacks and the deliberate targeting of MINUSMA, and addressing the safety concerns of troop- and police-contributing countries are further key issues for the Council.

Preventing terrorist groups from taking advantage of the current stalemate in the political process is a related issue.

### Options

If the agreement is signed by all parties before the current MINUSMA mandate ends, the Council could adopt a resolution modifying the mandate to ensure the implementation of the agreement in matters such as security arrangements, decentralisation of government and transitional justice.

If the agreement is not signed by all parties, the Council could adopt a resolution:

- calling on all parties to act with restraint and refrain from any further violence;
- reiterating its support for the work of Hamdi and of MINUSMA;
- establishing a sanctions regime to impose measures on those violating the ceasefire, whether directly or through proxies; and
- prioritising the good offices mandate of MINUSMA to bring about an inclusive agreement and the monitoring of the ceasefire, while conditioning other tasks—such as the support to the return of state

authority to the north—to the signing of the agreement by all.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

Discussions on MINUSMA's mandate may be divisive, given the differences in approach that Council members might favour regarding MINUSMA's actions in the absence of a peace agreement signed by all. In this context, the need for a more robust mandate for the mission, or the establishment of a regional force as requested by Mali, might feature in the discussions.

Council members are concerned about the deadlock over the signing of the agreement and the impact that the stalemate in the political process is having on the security situation in the north. After the repeated violations of the ceasefire, Council members reiterated in a 1 May press statement the reference to imposing further measures and expressed its intention “to evaluate next steps in light of these violations and events on the ground”. It seems that the discussion regarding sanctions is for now focused on violations of the ceasefire and not broader designation criteria, such as “undermining the political transition”.

Even though the Secretariat had in the past cautioned against rushing to an agreement at any cost without addressing the grievances of the parties or providing for a sustainable solution, both the Council and the Secretary-General have given public

support to the agreement. A 15 May statement by the Secretary-General characterised the agreement as “a strong basis on which to build a just and lasting peace in Mali”.

MINUSMA's relations with the host government have never been easy. Most recently, during the signing ceremony in Bamako, Ladsous delivered a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General warning against the utilisation of the partial signature as a pretext for the resumption of military operations against non-signatory groups and President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta reacted by accusing MINUSMA of partiality.

Council members are worried about the continuous attacks targeting MINUSMA in northern Mali. Given the exceptionally high numbers of fatalities and casualties in MINUSMA, and despite improvements in the living conditions for troops deployed in the north, the tension between the troop-contributors willing to deploy their forces in the most dangerous territory (whose troops are not necessarily the best equipped) and other, more risk-averse contributors reflects what is seen as an increasing gap between contributors from the developing and the developed world. These issues are expected to be addressed more broadly in the annual Council briefing by force commanders, which is also scheduled for June.

France is the penholder on Mali.

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## Côte d'Ivoire

### Expected Council Action

In June, the Council is scheduled to receive a briefing from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Aïcha-tou Mindaoudou, regarding the Secretary-General's semi-annual report on UNOCI.

The Council is likely to adopt a resolution renewing the mandate of UNOCI, which expires on 30 June. The authorisation of French forces supporting UNOCI, also due to expire on 30 June, may also be renewed by the Council.

### Key Recent Developments

On 15 May, 13 politicians formed an opposition coalition, Coalition nationale pour le changement (CNC), to challenge incumbent President Alassane Ouattara and his ruling party, Rassemblement des républicains, in the presidential election this October. According to media reports, the CNC is largely composed of dissidents who have left the Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (which has backed Ouattara's candidacy), such as former prime minister Charles Konan Banny and the ex-president of the national assembly

Mamadou Koulibaly. Other members of the CNC include Aboudramane Sangaré, who heads a faction of hardliners in the Front populaire ivoirien, the party of former president Laurent Gbagbo. The CNC's charter calls for Gbagbo, who is in custody at The Hague awaiting trial by the ICC, and other “political prisoners” to be released.

The ICC announced on 7 May that the joint trial of Gbagbo and the former minister of youth, Charles Blé Goudé, would start on 10 November. (Before the ICC combined it with Goudé's on 11 March, Gbagbo's trial

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON CÔTE D'IVOIRE** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2219](#) (28 April 2015) renewed sanctions measures until 30 April 2016. [S/RES/2162](#) (25 June 2014) renewed the mandate of UNOCI until 30 June 2015. [S/RES/1603](#) (3 June 2005) requested appointment of a High Representative for elections in Côte d'Ivoire. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7436](#) (28 April 2015) concerned the adoption of resolution 2219. [S/PV.7431](#) (22 April 2015) was a briefing concerning the 1572 Côte d'Ivoire sanctions regime. [Sanctions Committee Document S/2015/252](#) (13 April 2015) was the final report of the 1572 Côte d'Ivoire Group of Experts. [Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/320](#) (7 May 2015) and [S/2014/892](#) (12 December 2014) were UNOCI reports.

## Côte d'Ivoire (con't)

had been scheduled to start on 7 July.) Gbagbo and Goudé have each been charged with four crimes against humanity (murder, rape, other inhumane acts or attempted murder and persecution) during a period of post-election violence in Côte d'Ivoire between 16 December 2010 and 12 April 2011.

The Secretary-General's 7 May report on UNOCI makes three main recommendations regarding the peacekeeping operation:

- extend UNOCI's mandate for a period of one year;
- maintain UNOCI's current authorisation of 5,437 military personnel and 1,500 police personnel and postpone any further drawdowns of deployed personnel until after the electoral period; and
- expand UNOCI's electoral assistance mandate as outlined in the Secretary-General's report of 12 December 2014.

More specifically, the electoral assistance would include deploying dedicated expertise to support the Special Representative's good offices mandate, assisting national authorities in developing an operational plan for the October 2015 presidential election and providing limited logistical support.

### Sanctions-Related Developments

Ambassador Cristián Barros (Chile), chair of the 1572 Côte d'Ivoire Sanctions Committee, briefed the Council on 22 April regarding the final report of the Group of Experts and a Committee meeting held on 10 April. He summarised several of the concerns outlined in the Group's report, including the continued presence of "elements linked to the radical pro-Gbagbo group"; large amounts of unregulated arms and ammunition in the country; inadequate police capacity, particularly with respect to the need to maintain public order during the upcoming presidential election; a lack of cohesion in the military; an incomplete disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) process; and cross-border linkages among non-state armed groups in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

On 28 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2219, renewing the targeted sanctions of the 1572 Côte d'Ivoire sanctions regime until 30 April 2016. These include a partial arms embargo, travel ban and asset freeze. The mandate of the Group of Experts supporting the 1572 Côte d'Ivoire Sanctions Committee was also extended, until 30 May 2016. Following the vote, Ambassador Bafetigue Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire) noted the "cautious posture" of Council members regarding any potential modification of sanctions preceding the October 2015 election, while stating his government's support for completely removing the sanctions regime and continuing the drawdown of UNOCI toward a full withdrawal by early 2017.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on 13 March welcomed the 9 March decision by the parliament of Côte d'Ivoire to eliminate capital punishment from its penal code. It had been abolished by the country's constitution, which was adopted in 2000, but had remained in the penal code.

The independent expert on capacity-building and technical cooperation with Côte d'Ivoire in the field of human rights, Mohammed Ayat, provided the Human Rights Council with an oral update during its 28th session on 24 March. Referring to the upcoming presidential elections in October, he emphasised that continued efforts by the government to improve security were essential and that the most delicate task in connection with this was the DDR of former combatants. Some 30,000 combatants await demobilisation and reintegration. Dialogue with the opposition and listening to social movements were indispensable to further improve the security situation, he added. A written report will be submitted at the 29th session.

On 31 March, the Human Rights Committee – a body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by its state parties – adopted its concluding observations on the initial periodic report of Côte d'Ivoire (CCPR/C/CIV/CO/1). On 19 March, Committee members had raised concerns over judicial independence, long pre-trial detention, suspicions of torture carried out by the secret service, gender equality, the public participation of women in administration, marital and domestic violence, female genital mutilation and child trafficking. The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in combatting impunity was also raised, as were investigations into cases of enforced disappearances. Committee members welcomed reforms to the penal code and praised significant advancement in efforts to eliminate forms of child labour.

### Key Issues

The main issue for the Council with respect to the situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains the potential for election-related violence in October similar to the clashes in 2010 and 2011, which resulted in more than 1,000 civilian deaths. Côte d'Ivoire's long history of seven postponements of its presidential election from October 2005 to the eventual polls on 31 October and 28 November 2010 (initially with authorisation by the AU and endorsement by the Council, then via mechanisms of the Ouagadougou peace agreement, and finally unilaterally by then-President Gbagbo) coupled with the state's institutional weakness for effectively managing the 2010 election, are worth keeping in mind during

the current pre-election period.

In particular, numerous risk factors identified in reports by the Group of Experts and the Secretary-General remain of concern during the pre-election period, including:

- the continued presence of "radical" supporters of former president Gbagbo;
- widely held perceptions of victor's justice by opposition party members;
- large amounts of unregulated arms and ammunition available in the country;
- weak police capacity for crowd control and a lack of cohesion in the military;
- thousands of former combatants yet to be included in the DDR process; and
- links between non-state armed groups in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.

### Options

With respect to UNOCI's mandate, there seem to be three main options for the Council (in declining order of probability):

- following the Secretary-General's recommendations by renewing the mandate of UNOCI for one year, maintaining current authorisation levels for troops and police at least until after the electoral period and adding new election-related components;
- renewing the mandate of UNOCI for one year, maintaining current authorisation levels for troops and police at least until after the electoral period, but not adding any new election-related components; or
- renewing the mandate of UNOCI for one year, but immediately continuing the drawdown process and not adding any new election-related components.

The Council could also consider requesting an interim 90-day oral briefing between now and October with a specific focus on election-related developments.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

The renewal of the 1572 Côte d'Ivoire sanctions regime in April is likely indicative of how the Council will approach the upcoming mandate renewal of UNOCI in June. In his 22 April briefing to the Council, the Committee chair identified numerous factors potentially influencing the risk of future conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, particularly within the context of the upcoming presidential election. Cognisant of these factors, the Council renewed sanctions measures without modification for one year. Meanwhile, Ambassador Ouattara said the government of



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## Côte d'Ivoire (con't)

Côte d'Ivoire supports terminating the sanctions regime and continuing the drawdown of UNOCI but tacitly acknowledged that neither was probable until after the elections in October. There is likely to be strong support among

Council members for the recommendations of the Secretary-General, particularly regarding maintaining UNOCI's deployment levels during the pre-election period. Adding an electoral component, as was done with the UN Mission

in Liberia for senatorial elections in December 2014, also seems probable.

France is the penholder on Côte d'Ivoire and Chile is the chair of the 1572 Côte d'Ivoire Sanctions Committee.

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## Sudan (Darfur)

### Expected Council Action

In June, the Council expects to renew the mandate of the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) ahead of its 30 June expiry. Prior to this, it will be briefed on the Secretary-General's report on UNAMID.

Also in June, ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda is expected to provide a semi-annual briefing on the Court's work regarding Darfur.

### Key Recent Developments

Violent incidents continued in several parts of Darfur. On 23 and 24 April, UNAMID peacekeepers exchanged fire with gunmen near Kass, South Darfur. According to UNAMID, peacekeepers protecting a water point returned fire on 23 April after they were attacked by about 40 gunmen on horses and camels, killing four of the attackers. On 24 April, UNAMID peacekeepers were attacked while on patrol near Kass and returned fire. The Chairperson of the Commission of the AU, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued statements condemning the attacks on UNAMID peacekeepers. In a conflicting version of these events, Sudan claims the peacekeepers fired on civilians first in the two incidents, killing five Zaghawa tribesmen on 23 April and then two more on 24 April.

On 25 and 26 April, there were major clashes in South Darfur state between the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebel group and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) government militia. (The RSF, which is a successor to the Janjaweed militias, has been widely accused of human rights violations during its counter-insurgency operations in Darfur.) Sudan claims that the government of South Sudan provides support to JEM and allows the rebel group to use the country as a rear base. There were significantly differing reports of the border area

battle, with Sudan's claim of a military victory by the RSF likely more credible than JEM's similar assertion of battlefield success.

Inter-communal clashes have also continued to be a problem in Darfur. On 10 May, fighting erupted between the Southern Reizegat and Ma'aliya tribes in East Darfur. The two groups have had intermittent disputes over land and cattle for several years. The catalyst for the current conflict was apparently cattle raids by both sides during April. The fighting occurred near the town of Abu Karinka, where there was significant damage to infrastructure and the local population urgently required water and food. UNAMID issued a statement on 11 May welcoming the government's deployment of troops to create a buffer zone and supporting ongoing efforts to mediate the conflict.

The Council last addressed UNAMID on 17 March, when Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefed on two reports of the Secretary-General: a regular quarterly report on UNAMID released 26 February and a 6 March special report with analysis of implementation of an earlier strategic review of UNAMID. In addition to assessing implementation of UNAMID's three strategic priorities and providing an update on the situation in Darfur, Ladsous said that the Secretary-General's proposal for transitioning some functions from UNAMID to the UN country team would be covered in the next Secretary-General's report on UNAMID due 27 May. He also stated that a plan for UNAMID's exit strategy being developed by a tripartite working group comprising the UN, AU and government of Sudan, would be presented to the AU Peace and Security Council and the UN Security Council at the end of May.

On 12 December 2014, Bensouda provided the semi-annual briefing to the Council on the ICC's work in Sudan. "In the almost ten years that my office has been reporting to the Council, no strategic recommendation has ever been provided to my office, and neither have there been any discussions resulting in concrete solutions to the problems we face in the Darfur situation", she said. Consequently, she declared, the ICC was suspending its investigations in Darfur and would apply its limited resources elsewhere.

On 9 March, the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber II decided in favour of a request for a finding of non-compliance submitted by the Prosecutor. The decision, transmitted to the Council on 20 March, found that Sudan has failed to cooperate with the Court with respect to its requests for the arrest and surrender of Sudan's President Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir and referred the matter back to the Council "for the Council to take appropriate measures". It should be noted that the Court has previously issued a non-cooperation decision with respect to Sudan, on 25 May 2010, which has not had any impact on the Sudanese government's actions. The South African government has invited Bashir to attend the AU summit in Johannesburg, taking place in early June. If Bashir attends, as a state party to the Rome Statute, South Africa would be obliged to arrest him. Bashir has previously travelled to six ICC state parties without being arrested: Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Kenya, Malawi and Nigeria.

### Sanctions-Related Developments

At press time, Ambassador Rafael Ramirez (Venezuela) was scheduled to brief Council members in quarterly consultations on 28 May regarding the work of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee. The briefing is expected to cover the work of the

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON SUDAN (DARFUR)** Security Council Resolution S/RES/2173 (27 August 2014) renewed the mandate of UNAMID. Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7405 (17 March 2015) was a briefing by DPKO on UNAMID. S/PV.7337 (12 December 2014) was a semi-annual briefing on the ICC's work in Darfur. Security Council Letter S/2015/202 (20 March 2015) transmitted the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber II's finding of non-compliance. Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/163 (6 March 2015) analysed implementation of UNAMID's strategic review. S/2015/141 (26 February 2015) was a UNAMID report. S/2014/138 (25 February 2014) was a strategic review of UNAMID.

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## Sudan (Darfur) (con't)

1591 Committee since his last Council briefing on 6 February.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

On 5 May, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination concluded its consideration of periodic reports of Sudan on its implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Committee experts recognised the efforts of Sudan to emerge from several conflicts, including over water and land, which had exacerbated ethnic tensions and led to instability in the country, particularly in Darfur, South Kordofan and the Blue Nile. Experts noted that the closure of the Salima Centre for Women's Research in June 2014 led to concerns of a civil society crackdown. The failure to replace the 2005 Provisional Constitution with a permanent one was another source of concern. Experts commended the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission but questioned the independence of its members, who were appointed by the country's president. They also raised concern over the performance of the National Security Agency, which enjoyed immunity from prosecution for human rights violations. Other issues raised related to the situation of the Dinka people and the people in the Nuba Mountains, return of internally displaced persons, laws applicable to non-Muslim populations and the complaint mechanisms available to the victims of racial discrimination.

### Key Issues

Regarding UNAMID, the main focus for the Council will be deciding how to proceed with the upcoming resolution renewing the peacekeeping operation's mandate, including:

- any substantive modifications to the mandate;
- mechanisms for transitioning to the UN country team; and
- the scale and timing of drawdown, plus exit strategy.

Another critical issue concerns the Council's unwillingness to act on requests by the ICC to take measures against state parties to the Rome Statute that do not fulfil their responsibilities, which erodes the effectiveness

of the Court and undermines the credibility of the Council's referral resolutions.

### Options

In practical terms, the main options for the Council's approach to UNAMID will likely be derived from the forthcoming reports of the Secretary-General and the joint working group on exit strategy. Recommendations in these reports could plausibly fall within this range:

- renewing UNAMID's mandate for one year, retaining the current mandate, and maintaining the hybrid peacekeeping operation's existing force structure; and
- renewing UNAMID's mandate for a shorter period of time, modifying the mandate to shift tasks to the government and UN country team, narrowing the geographic scope of deployment to higher intensity conflict areas and further drawing down troops, thus enabling withdrawal within the medium term.

There are several options that the Council could consider with respect to the ICC:

- formally acknowledging the ICC's finding of non-compliance by Sudan (as well as responding to the eight other outstanding communications from the ICC to the Council);
- threatening appropriate measures against Sudan for a lack of cooperation with the ICC and against relevant state parties for a failure to adhere to their obligations under the Rome Statute; and
- holding an informal interactive dialogue or an Arrria-formula meeting with the Office of the Prosecutor to constructively discuss next steps.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

As penholder, the UK was unable to facilitate consensus in March on a draft presidential statement welcoming the special report

analysing implementation of UNAMID's strategic review. That failure is indicative of deeply entrenched divisions among Council members regarding Sudan. The initial draft statement painted a dire picture of the security situation in Darfur and its impact on civilians, noting that given the challenges on the ground, UNAMID's exit strategy should take into consideration the benchmarks outlined in past Secretary-General's reports. The necessary consensus could not be achieved largely 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 text that did not place caveats on the exit strategy and that welcomed implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. In the absence of a significant shift by either the P3 or Russia and China, negotiations on UNAMID's upcoming mandate renewal are likely to be similarly contentious.

There are also strong differences of perspective among Council members regarding the work of the ICC in Darfur, which makes it difficult for the Council to take constructive action on this issue. The P3 and several others have been very supportive of the Court's efforts, while expressing strong concerns about impunity in Darfur. On the other hand, several African states, including those on the Council, have viewed the ICC as a political instrument exclusively focused on Africa and questioned whether its pursuit of justice complements the pursuit of peace. Chad is a state party to the ICC and has hosted Bashir in the past without executing the ICC's warrant for his arrest. China and Russia have generally supported the AU position on the ICC. Ten Council members have ratified the Rome Statute (Chad, Chile, France, Jordan, Lithuania, New Zealand, Nigeria, Spain, the UK and Venezuela) and five have not (Angola, China, Malaysia, Russia and the US).

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## Sudan and South Sudan

### Expected Council Action

In June, Council members will hold their quarterly meeting on the implementation

of resolution 2046 on Sudan-South Sudan relations. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Sudan and South Sudan, Haile

Menkerios, is expected to brief. At press time, no outcome was anticipated.

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN** Security Council Resolution S/RES/2046 (2 May 2012) provided a roadmap for Sudan, South Sudan and the SPLM-N to resolve outstanding issues. **Secretary-General's Report S/2015/302** (29 April 2015) was a report on UNISFA.

**USEFUL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** *AU Peace and Security Council Communiqué* [PSC/PR/COMM.(CDLVI)], 12 September 2014



## Sudan and South Sudan (con't)

### Key Recent Developments

Mired in their respective domestic crises, Sudan and South Sudan have been unable to make progress on bi-lateral issues including border demarcation and the final status of the Abyei area. Furthermore, accusations continue regarding cross-border military activity and support for rebel groups in each other's territory. On 8 April, South Sudan accused Sudan of bombing civilian areas just across the border in Western and Northern Bahr el Ghazal states. Sudan has denied responsibility for these bombings. On 28 April, following clashes between Sudan's Rapid Support Forces (RSF) militia and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebel group, Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir threatened to pursue JEM from South Darfur into South Sudan, whose government he accused of providing support to the Darfuri rebels.

The mediation process led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, chair of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel on Sudan and South Sudan (AUHIP), appears to have reached an impasse once again. On 1 April, AUHIP released a statement announcing an indefinite suspension of the pre-dialogue meeting initially scheduled for 30 and 31 March. (On 12 September 2014, the AU Peace and Security Council mandated AUHIP to facilitate an effective, transparent and inclusive national dialogue among Sudanese stakeholders, including the convening of a meeting to resolve procedural and process issues.) AUHIP suspended the pre-dialogue meeting due to a lack of participation by relevant stakeholders, particularly representatives of Sudan's governing National Congress Party (NCP). On 10 April, the head of the government's negotiating team, Ibrahim Ghandour, attributed the NCP's refusal to participate to its objections regarding holding the AUHIP-mediated negotiations prior to upcoming national elections.

On 27 April, Omar al-Bashir was re-elected president of Sudan with 94 percent of the vote in an election boycotted by the major opposition parties. The troika countries (Norway, the UK and the US) issued a statement criticising Sudan's "failure to create a free, fair and conducive elections environment" and stating that "the outcome of these elections cannot be considered a credible expression of the will of the Sudanese people". The

national elections were conducted over a four-day period starting on 13 April. According to official figures, voter turnout was 46 percent, but many observers suspect that the actual level of voter participation was lower.

During the run-up to the election, the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) launched offensives in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states (the Two Areas). This included shelling Kadugli, the capital city of South Kordofan, attacking government forces and numerous garrisons and seizing a vehicle carrying ballot boxes. The stated purpose of the offensives was to disrupt the conduct of elections in the Two Areas in support of the boycott by opposition parties. Following the election, there appears to be a renewed determination by government forces to undertake offensives against the SPLM-N before the onset of the rainy season. On 4 May, Mohamad Hamdan Daglo, commander of the RSF, vowed to intensify attacks on the SPLM-N. On 6 May, Defence Minister Abdelrahim Mohamed Hussein claimed that the Sudan Armed Forces and RSF would "clear out the rebels".

Council members last held consultations on Sudan and South Sudan on 24 March, when Menkerios briefed via video teleconference. More recently, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet briefed Council members in consultations on 5 May regarding the latest Secretary-General's report on the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). One issue that has implications for Sudan-South Sudan relations beyond the status of Abyei is the operation of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM), which UNISFA is mandated to support. According to the Secretary-General's 29 April report on UNISFA, an assessment of the JBVMM is underway, and its conclusions will be presented to the Council prior to consideration of UNISFA's mandate renewal in July.

### Key Issues

The principal challenge is whether and how the Council can encourage constructive negotiations between Sudan and the SPLM-N, particularly as a considerable escalation of the conflict in the Two Areas appears to be imminent.

An underlying risk is that support

(frequently alleged and consistently denied) by Sudan and South Sudan for rebel groups operating in each other's territory could potentially lead to an interstate conflict of even greater magnitude.

### Options

Incentives and disincentives—"carrots" and "sticks"—the Council could consider deploying in support of the mediation work of Mbeki and Menkerios include:

- offering backing for debt relief in exchange for peace and democratisation in Sudan (nearly 25 percent of Sudan's total external debt of \$45 billion is held by France, the US, China and the UK, in declining order);
- requesting the Secretary-General to establish an independent commission of inquiry to investigate allegations of war crimes committed in South Kordofan and Blue Nile;
- imposing (or threatening to impose) a targeted asset freeze, travel ban and territorial arms embargo over South Kordofan and Blue Nile; and
- requesting a report from the Secretariat on alleged support by Sudan and South Sudan for rebel groups on either side of the border.

### Council Dynamics

While there seems to be frustration among Council members that Sudan and South Sudan have not made progress in resolving fundamental border-related challenges, members realise that the internal crises in both countries have made it difficult for them to exert the energy and attention required to address these bilateral issues.

Divisions on the Council regarding South Kordofan and Blue Nile continue to prevent it from playing a constructive role in mitigating the suffering of civilians, as the government prevents humanitarian aid from reaching rebel-held territories and carries out indiscriminate aerial bombardments. These divisions also appear to have pre-empted innovative thinking regarding how it could more influentially intercede in support of external mediation efforts aimed at resolving conflict in the Two Areas.

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

# Libya

## Expected Council Action

In June, the Council will be briefed on developments in the Libya political process by Bernardino León, the Special Representative and head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). The Council will also receive the periodic briefing by the chair of the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Ramlan Ibrahim (Malaysia), followed by consultations on the Libya sanctions regime.

The mandates of UNSMIL and the Panel of Experts assisting the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee expire on 15 September and 30 April 2016, respectively.

## Key Recent Developments

Briefing Council members on 29 April, León said he had shared a draft agreement with the parties providing for the formation of a government of national unity, with the House of Representatives as the legislative body and a new High State Council as an advisory body. He told Council members of his intention to convene the first direct talks among armed groups in early May, and to finalise an agreement before the start of Ramadan (17 June). So far, the parties have objected to the proposal made by León and have yet to meet again. The round of talks with the armed groups that was planned for early May was cancelled.

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). There were renewed outbreaks of violence in several neighbourhoods in Tripoli in mid-April and May, military operations are ongoing in Benghazi and there were renewed clashes between Tabu and Touareg tribes in southern Libya.

Violations of human rights and international humanitarian law are ongoing. In mid-May, UNSMIL condemned the shelling of residential areas in Benghazi, Gheryan, al-Zawiya and the loss of civilian lives, including children. On 15 May, UNSMIL released a briefing note reporting on the spike in abductions of civilians since March by both Libya Dawn and Operation Dignity. UNSMIL has documented how those abducted are

usually at risk of torture and other ill-treatment. UNSMIL also reported abductions committed by the Benghazi Revolutionary Shura Council (BRSC), which is dominated by Ansar al-Sharia, an Al-Qaida affiliate. According to resolution 2213, adopted on 27 March, human rights and humanitarian law violations are considered designation criteria for sanctions. A resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 27 March requested the High Commissioner to urgently dispatch a mission to investigate violations and abuses of international human rights law committed in Libya since the beginning of 2014.

Groups pledging allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) continue to clash with both warring coalitions, notably in Sirte and Derna. Fighting also persists between Operation Dignity and the BRSC in the east. A string of suicide bombings in al-Qubba (19 May), Sirte (20 May) and Misrata (21 May) were claimed by ISIS.

On the smuggling of migrants on the Mediterranean Sea, coming mostly through Libya, the Council was briefed about the EU response on 11 May by Federica Mogherini, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The Council was also briefed by the permanent observer of the AU to the UN, Ambassador Tété António, and Peter Sutherland, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for international migration. In an informal interactive dialogue held afterwards, Mogherini discussed the need for a resolution that would authorise an EU operation to use all necessary measures to inspect, seize and dispose of vessels when there are grounds to believe that they are participating in the smuggling of migrants. Such a mission (EU NAVFOR Med) was established by the EU Council on 18 May and at press time negotiations were ongoing among some Council members on a draft resolution authorising the mission. According to the International Organization for Migration and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, more than 141,000 persons (including migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees) travelled from Libya to Italy across the Mediterranean in unseaworthy boats in 2014, and up to 1,800 have drowned in the

sea since the beginning of January.

Briefing the Council on 12 May, the ICC Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, referred to the 10 December 2014 ICC decision on the non-compliance of Libya with the Court regarding the case against Saif al-Islam Gaddafi. (The Court referred the matter back to the Council given the failure of Libya to comply with the ICC in accordance with article 87.7 of the Rome Statute.) Bensouda encouraged the Council not only to press Libyan authorities to comply but also to consult with the Court to resolve any problems that may impede or prevent the execution of this decision.

## Sanctions-Related Developments

Resolution 2213, adopted on 27 March, reiterated the Council's willingness to impose sanctions on those threatening the peace, stability or security of Libya. A confidential annex to the 23 February final report of the Panel of Experts to the 1970 Sanctions Committee included a proposed list of 13 people who were found to be obstructing or undermining the successful completion of the political transition. (This designation criterion was established in resolution 2174 of 27 August 2014.) Even though León has repeatedly emphasised the usefulness of sanctions to advance the political process, no member state has submitted a name to the Committee for listing.

## Key Issues

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 based in Tripoli and Tobruk/al-Bayda. Related to this 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, together with ensuring that accountability mechanisms are addressed in the UN-facilitated talks.

The growing threat posed in Libya by terrorist groups with regional reach is of increasing urgency.

An immediate issue for Council members is the impact on the political process and the mediation of the effort to obtain Libya's consent for the EU operation.

**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. Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7441 (12 May 2015) was the ninth briefing on Libya by the ICC Prosecutor. S/PV.7439 (11 May 2015) was a briefing on the smuggling of migrants on the Mediterranean Sea. Human Rights Council Document A/HRC/RES/28/30 (27 March 2015) requested the High Commissioner to dispatch a mission to investigate human rights violations in Libya since 2014.

## Libya (con't)

### Options

The Council could impose sanctions on leaders of armed groups and other spoilers that threaten the peace, stability or security of Libya, and/or on those violating, or assisting in the evasion of, the provisions of the arms embargo on Libya as per resolution 2213.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

On several occasions, Council members have asked León to assess the usefulness of imposing sanctions on spoilers to the political process in Libya, but it seems that some permanent members are reluctant to use this tool. No discussion in the 1970 Sanctions Committee has taken place on the possibility of new listings.

On 11 May, Council members, at the request of Chile, held an informal interactive

dialogue with Bensouda. The briefing was an opportunity to follow-up on Court decisions on Libya and it showed how, in addition to the difficulties posed by members that are not parties to the ICC, Council members that are parties to the Rome Statute have not been able to find a common voice on this issue.

The negotiations on the EU draft aimed at tackling the smuggling of migrants on the Mediterranean were still ongoing at press time between some Council members and the Libyan authorities. (For at least one permanent member the consent of the Tobruk/al-Bayda-based government seems to be indispensable for the adoption of the resolution.) In the past, it has been difficult to get agreement on resolutions authorising the interception of vessels, whether in the context

of the implementation of sanctions or counter-piracy measures. Some Council members feel strongly about not contravening the principle of freedom of navigation codified in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. As such, they have tended to focus their discussions in the past on such issues as the procedures to authorise interdiction, whether the consent of the flag state is required and the maritime zones where the interdiction is authorised to happen. In the informal interactive dialogue with Mogherini, some Council members inquired about the potential impact that requesting consent from Libya could have on the political process.

The UK is the penholder on Libya.

## Syria

### Expected Council Action

In June, Council members expect to receive their regular monthly briefings on the chemical weapons and humanitarian tracks in Syria. While no outcome is planned, at press time the US draft resolution to set up a process to attribute responsibility for the use of chlorine bombs in Syria was being discussed among the P5. Meanwhile, the humanitarian leads—Jordan, New Zealand and Spain—were discussing with the P3 ways to strengthen the Council's response to the use of siege tactics in Syria and the violation of the principles of medical neutrality.

Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura has been in Geneva facilitating low-level shuttle diplomacy on a political solution to the Syrian crisis. It seemed possible that he might report back to Council members this month.

### Key Recent Developments

On 4 May, de Mistura and UNRWA representative Michael Kingsley-Nyinah briefed Council members under “any other business” on the situation in Yarmouk—a Palestinian refugee camp on the outskirts of Damascus that has been besieged by the government for

two years and was briefly overtaken by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in early April. The US drafted a press statement condemning the government's aerial bombardment of the camp, which had resumed in late April. Russia insisted that the draft include references to the 64 people that were killed on 1 May near Aleppo, allegedly as a result of a US-led anti-ISIS airstrike. No press statement was issued.

Nevertheless, the crisis in Yarmouk has refocused the Council's attention on the use of siege tactics in Syria. The humanitarian leads are reviewing how to take up Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos's recommendation, made to the Council in her 24 April briefing, to conduct a mission on the situation in besieged communities.

On 28 May, Amos presented the Secretary-General's most recent humanitarian report during her final briefing to the Security Council in her role as head of OCHA. The report detailed the plight of the 422,000 people besieged in Syria, largely by the government and ISIS. The report said that, aside from the security situation, the lack of humanitarian access is a consequence of active obstruction by the parties to the

conflict, in particular the government. It noted that attacks on medical facilities were the highest ever seen in comparison to previous reporting periods. All fourteen of the reported attacks were carried out by government forces, over half by barrel bombs and the remainder by missiles, rockets and mortar fire. The report underscored that the deliberate targeting of civilians via barrel bombs is a war crime and that those responsible must be held accountable.

On the political track, de Mistura launched UN-facilitated consultations in Geneva on 5 May among low-level representatives of the Syrian government, the Syrian National Coalition, the P5, neighbouring states and regional actors Iran, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The aim of these consultations is to find 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 and Iran's support for the regime.

The consultations had a rocky start on 11 May when the Syrian National Coalition refused to attend due to its concerns that de Mistura was too partial to the government's position and that Iran was invited to participate.

**UN DOCUMENTS ON SYRIA** Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2209 (6 March 2015) and S/RES/2118 (27 September 2013) were on chemical weapons. S/RES/2139 (22 February 2014), S/RES/2165 (14 July 2014) and S/RES/2191 (17 December 2014) were on the humanitarian situation. Security Council Press Statement SC/11904 (22 May 2015) was on the seizure of Palmyra by ISIS. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7452 (28 May 2015) was a briefing by OCHA on the humanitarian situation. Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/368 (22 May 2015) was on the humanitarian situation. S/2015/295 (28 April 2015) was on chemical weapons.



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## Syria (con't)

Similarly, there has been no discernible shift in Syria's or Russia's position, with both prioritising a "united front" against terrorism over discussions of a political transition.

Meanwhile, Iran has been invited but whether it will participate is less clear. Ongoing P5+1 talks on the Iranian nuclear file are set to conclude in June. It remains an open question whether a rapprochement between Washington and Tehran on the nuclear file will create momentum toward resolving the Syrian crisis or further aggravate regional rivalries between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

On 7 May, Council members received their monthly briefing on the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons stockpile. During these consultations, allegations were raised that the government had used chlorine bombs in March and April during clashes with opposition groups over control of Idlib. The US has drafted a resolution to set up a process to attribute responsibility for the use of chlorine bombs. However, at the time of writing it had only been shared with the P5.

On 19 May, Council members agreed to "press elements" condemning a mortar attack on the Russian embassy in Damascus.

### Key Issues

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.

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 deter Syria from using its 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. While some feel that such action might 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 other sensitive processes,

such as the political consultations de Mistura is facilitating and the ongoing P5+1 negotiations on the Iran nuclear file.

The Council has found 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 systematically attacks its own citizens. In practice, the Council has limited its options to receiving more briefings that confirm what is already widely known about the brutal tactics by the government and extremist groups. In this context, options for the Council include:

- inviting the Commission of Inquiry or the High Commissioner for Human Rights to give periodic briefings to the Council;
- inviting Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Bangura to brief on her 16–29 April visit to Syria and to the countries that host the conflict's refugees (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey); and
- taking up Amos's 24 April recommendation for the Security Council to mandate a mission to assess the needs among and facilitate sustained access to besieged communities.

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 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.

Another option is to follow up on the US suggestion for an "attribution mechanism" on the use of chemical weapons. The US has drafted a Chapter 7 resolution that creates the legal obligation for Syria to allow access for a panel to travel to sites of alleged chemical weapons attacks since resolution 2209 was adopted in March and report its findings back to the Council. However, the Chapter 7 provision continues to be a red line for Russia and, at time of writing, the draft had not been discussed beyond the P5. An alternative to a Council-mandated panel would be for the Secretary-General 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 brought to the attention of the Security Council by the Secretary-General.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

Despite overwhelming indications that various resolutions threatening consequences for lack of implementation have continually been breached, it is unlikely that Council members will push for follow-up measures, such as targeted sanctions or another attempt at an ICC referral. The assumption that Russia would veto any effort specific to the government remains a deterrent. Any discussion of a Council-authorised no-fly zone is also a non-starter among Council members, due to Russia's veto power but also the lack of US interest in pursuing this course of action.

Indeed, the Council's ability to agree on countering violent extremism while simultaneously being impotent to counter the government's responsibility for the devastating violence in Syria was demonstrated in a 22 May press statement on the ISIS's seizure of Palmyra, a world heritage site. While the statement highlighted the Syrian authorities' primary responsibility to protect civilians it did not directly condemn the government, despite reports that Syrian forces blocked civilians from leaving Palmyra ahead of ISIS's takeover.

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. Council members acknowledge that the Geneva consultations may be little more than a place holder until there is a major shift on the part of the US or Russia to tilt the balance toward a political solution. US Secretary of State John Kerry met with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on 12 May to discuss the Iranian nuclear file as well as Syria, reportedly without any significant breakthroughs.

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## Syria (con't)

On the chemical weapons track, fundamental differences remain. The US has maintained that it 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, its mandate prohibits it from attributing responsibility. Many Council members are curious about what form the US-suggested “attribution mechanism” might

take if it makes it out of the confines of the P5.

France is the penholder on Syria overall. 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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## UNDOF (Golan Heights)

### Expected Council Action

The Council is expected to extend for six months the mandate of the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), which expires on 30 June. A representative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) will brief Council members in consultations on the UNDOF report, due on 11 June.

The Council will hold its regular meeting with troop-contributing countries prior to adopting the mandate renewal. Separately, the Council will be briefed in June by force commanders, including the head of the UN Truce Supervision Organization, which provides UNDOF with military observers.

UNDOF was established in 1974 to monitor the ceasefire between Israel and Syria.

### Key Recent Developments

Due to the spillover of the Syrian civil war into UNDOF's area of operations, the mission has significantly altered how it carries out its mandate. The majority of UNDOF peacekeepers relocated from the Bravo (Syrian) side to the Alpha (Israeli) side of the ceasefire line in September 2014, shortly after Al-Nusra Front overran Syrian government forces in Quneitra—a Syrian district close to the Israeli-occupied Golan. Some peacekeepers are still deployed on the Syrian side at Mt. Hermon, and the UNDOF command has moved its headquarters from Camp Faouar in the area of operation to Damascus.

The civil war in Syria continues to adversely affect UNDOF's ability to function and increases the possibility of escalating tensions not only between Israel and Syria but also between Israel and Lebanon due to the overt presence in the Golan of Hezbollah—the

Tehran-backed Lebanese militia fighting on the side of the Syrian regime.

The forthcoming Secretary-General's report is expected to describe the ongoing clashes between government forces and armed opposition groups and between competing armed groups in the area of separation. The presence of Syrian armed forces and heavy weapons in the mission's area of separation, Syrian airstrikes, Israeli airstrikes and artillery fire over the ceasefire line are all violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. (No military forces other than those of UNDOF are allowed in the area of separation.) Errant fire from these clashes lightly injured UN personnel in two separate incidents on 1 and 4 May.

The report is also expected to describe the 26 April Israeli airstrike that killed four men whom Israel suspected of planting explosive devices near the technical fence dividing the Alpha and Bravo sides of the ceasefire line. Israel cleared the area before UNDOF was able to investigate. According to media reports, this strike occurred two days after Israel had targeted a Syrian military facility housing long-range missiles that Israel suspected were to be transferred to Hezbollah.

Syrian authorities have acknowledged to UNDOF that Syria's “allies” carry out military operations, a veiled reference to Hezbollah. Israel has maintained that it has a neutral policy vis-à-vis the Syrian crisis except to block any transfer of strategic weapons via Syria to Hezbollah in Lebanon. Despite Israel's claims of neutrality, for more than a year UNDOF has observed the transfer of people and cargo trucks across the ceasefire line, as well as Israeli forces interacting with members of armed groups. Israel characterises

these transfers and interactions as humanitarian in nature while Hezbollah suspects Israel of aiding Al-Nusra in the south.

Hezbollah has said that the Golan and south Lebanon are now a single front against Israel. In mid-May Israeli military officials alluded to another looming confrontation with Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. Iran responded that any Israeli attack would lead to Hezbollah's missiles being fired on Israeli cities. However, the militia's presence in the Golan may have little to do with this escalation in rhetoric or an aggressive posture towards Israel from the Golan. Their presence is more likely linked to assisting the Syrian government in securing areas south of Damascus from opposition fighters. Hezbollah also wants to secure the Golan from any Al-Nusra infiltration into Hezbollah's stronghold in neighbouring southern Lebanon.

Mt. Hermon straddles this border area between Syria and Lebanon, and UNDOF has observed increased movements between Lebanon and the Golan since the Syrian crisis began. Mt. Hermon's location makes it a strategic position requiring a sustained UNDOF presence. If UNDOF were to abandon it, there would be unimpeded access across the border.

### Key Issues

The spillover of the Syrian crisis into UNDOF's area of operations and escalating ceasefire violations will be of primary concern to the Council.

Given the deteriorating security situation in the Golan, the full return of UNDOF to the Syrian side seems unlikely in the foreseeable future, significantly constraining the mission's ability to carry out its monitoring tasks.

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON UNDOF** [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2192](#) (18 December 2014) renewed UNDOF for six months. [Secretary-General's Report S/2015/177](#) (13 March 2015) was the most recent UNDOF report.

**OTHER RELEVANT FACTS** [Force Commander Major General Purna Chandra Thapa](#) (Nepal) [Size of Mission](#) 785 troops [Troop Contributors](#) Fiji, India, Ireland, Nepal and the Netherlands

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## UNDOF (Golan Heights) (con't)

In that respect, the key issue for the Council is whether UNDOF should be allowed more mobility for its patrolling tasks on the Israeli side of the ceasefire line, in particular access to elevated sites on hilltops. (DPKO has discontinued discussions regarding the use of new technologies, such as unmanned, unarmed aerial vehicles or satellite imagery, to carry out observation tasks. Permission was not forthcoming from either party.)

Regarding risk mitigation, an issue is how the safe and sustained provision of supplies to the remaining peacekeepers on the Syrian side of the ceasefire line will be guaranteed. Mt. Hermon is strategically important for Israel, and if there were no UNDOF security presence there, Israel might feel compelled to man the position itself. This would be an especially difficult challenge to regional security and the 1974 disengagement agreement.

### Options

UNDOF was established as a Syria-based mission. How it operates is subject to the disengagement agreement, and any changes require agreement by Israel and Syria. The majority of personnel are now based on the

Alpha (Israeli) side, which has restricted the mission's mobility and operational capacity. DPKO is in active conversations with both parties on ways it can continue its observation tasks.

In the resolution renewing the UNDOF mandate, the Council could:

- support DPKO's efforts;
- reiterate the need for all parties to exercise restraint;
- urge Israel to allow UNDOF to establish more positions west of the ceasefire line on the Alpha side, given the mission's limited mobility there, in particular access to elevated sites for improved observation; and
- urge Syria to allow UNDOF to reinforce Mt. Hermon, in particular by enabling the position to be supplied from the Bravo side by establishing another base between Damascus and Mt. Hermon.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members are concerned about the increasing clashes in the area of operations, both in number and intensity, as well as the tension between Israel and Syria along the armistice line, which has been greatly

exacerbated by the presence of Hezbollah.

The Council has always generally agreed that UNDOF contributes to stability in the region in the absence of a peace agreement between Israel and Syria. However, its liaison function is particularly important now in order to avoid further negative security implications for the region. For that reason, most members are keen for the Council to sustain the support of troop-contributing countries to ensure UNDOF's ability to operate, even in its currently constrained configuration.

While both Israel and Syria highly value UNDOF's presence and want to see the return of the mission to the Bravo side, it seems that if the security situation does not improve on the Bravo side by year's end then DPKO may recommend that the Council reassess the mission.

Though the US is the penholder on the Golan Heights, resolutions renewing UNDOF have been jointly authored with Russia since June 2012, suggesting consensus on an aspect of the Syria file that is otherwise characterised by highly divisive P5 dynamics.

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## Iran

### Expected Council Action

In June, the Council is due to renew the mandate of the Panel of Experts assisting the 1737 Iran Sanctions Committee. (According to resolution 2159 the mandate expires on 9 July, but the Council expressed its intention to take action regarding further extension by 9 June.) Later in the month, the chair of the Committee, Ambassador Román Oyarzun (Spain), is scheduled to brief the Council.

### Key Recent Developments

On 2 April, Iran and the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the UK and the US) announced that they had reached "solutions on key parameters of a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action" regarding Iran's nuclear programme and would start writing a text with the aim of reaching a final deal by 30 June. (On 24 November 2014 the parties extended

the Joint Plan of Action initially agreed on 24 November 2013 until 30 June 2015, but set an initial deadline of 31 March for agreeing on a political framework containing the main elements of a final accord, leaving time for technical details to be worked out during the remaining three months.)

The US issued a press release that same day outlining what was termed "key parameters ... that were decided" in the negotiations. According to this, Iran agreed to:

- reduce by approximately two-thirds the number of installed centrifuges for enriching uranium, from some 19,000 to 6,104, with only 5,060 of these enriching uranium for ten years;
- not enrich uranium over 3.67 percent for at least 15 years and reduce its current stockpile of low-enriched uranium from 10,000 kilograms to 300 kilograms.

- convert its Fordow facility so that it can no longer enrich uranium;
- redesign and rebuild the Arak heavy-water research reactor so that it will not produce weapons-grade plutonium; and
- implement the Additional Protocol of the IAEA, grant expanded access for verification purposes and implement an agreed set of measures to address concerns about the possible military dimensions of its nuclear programme.

According to the press release, if Iran "verifiably abides by its commitments", US and EU sanctions would be suspended. If, on the other hand, Iran at any time fails to fulfil its commitments, the sanctions would "snap back into place". With regard to sanctions imposed by the Security Council, all existing resolutions on Iran would be lifted simultaneously with Iran's completion of its commitments. However, at

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON IRAN** [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2159](#) (9 June 2014) extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 9 July 2015. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7412](#) (24 March 2015) was the most recent briefing by the chair of the Sanctions Committee. [Other A/HRC/RES/28/21](#) (27 March 2015) was the Human Rights Council resolution on Iran. [A/HRC/28/70](#) (12 March 2015) was the report by the special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran.



## Iran (con't)

the same time, core Council provisions dealing with transfer of sensitive technology and activities would be re-established by a new Council resolution endorsing the final agreement and urging its full implementation. Such a resolution would also create a special, dedicated procurement channel for Iran's nuclear programme, to monitor and approve the transfer to Iran of certain nuclear-related and dual-use materials and technology. It would include continued restrictions on conventional weapons and ballistic missiles as well as provisions on cargo inspections and asset freezes. In subsequent comments, however, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif said that some of the parameters listed by the US contradicted what Iran believed had been agreed.

At press time, talks were continuing in Vienna after several rounds of negotiations elsewhere, including in New York on the sidelines of the review conference for the Non-Proliferation Treaty from 27 April to 22 May. The modalities for the lifting of sanctions apparently remained a key sticking point, with internal differences among the P5 possibly adding to the difficulties. While the US has made clear it wants to make sure that any lifting of UN sanctions can be easily reversed—what negotiators refer to as “snapback”—Russia seemed to argue in comments to the press that even if Iran is found to be in non-compliance with a final accord, sanctions should not be automatically re-imposed. Another main sticking point appeared to focus on the monitoring and verification measures to be included in the agreement, in particular with regard to access by inspectors to military sites.

On 14 May, the US Congress approved a bill that will require President Barack Obama to send the text of any final agreement with Iran to Congress for review as soon as it is completed. The bill gives Congress 30 days to review and vote on the agreement, during which congressionally imposed sanctions against Iran cannot be lifted. (If the agreement is submitted after 10 July, the review period will be 60 days.)

### Sanctions-Related Developments

The last 90-day briefing was held on 24 March. Oyarzun reiterated what his predecessor said in briefings last year—that the measures imposed on Iran by the Council remained fully in effect while negotiations with the P5+1 continued and that member states remained obliged to implement them. He said that no new incidents had

been reported to the Committee since the previous briefing in November.

The Sanctions Committee has not met since 4 February. At press time, it was scheduled to meet on 1 June to consider the final report of the Panel of Experts under resolution 2159. According to the report, available to Council members in April, the Panel had not received any new incident reports from member states about illicit Iranian procurement activities. However, this did not necessarily mean that there had been a reduction in such activities; it could reflect general caution among states about any action that could negatively impact the ongoing negotiations. The report noted that the UK had informed the Panel that it was aware of an active Iranian procurement network involving an entity under UN sanctions, Kalay Electric Company. Other member states had also informed the Panel that they believed Iran's procurement practices and sanctions circumvention techniques remained unchanged. There were no new recommendations in the report, but the Panel referred to those in the previous report as still valid.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

On 27 March, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on the situation of human rights in Iran that also extended the mandate of the special rapporteur, Ahmed Shaheed, for one year. On 8 May, Shaheed and the special rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, Christof Heyns, issued a statement condemning the sharp increase in executions in Iran and urging the government to establish a moratorium with a view to abolishing the practice altogether. According to the statement, between 9 and 26 April as many as 98 prisoners were reported to have been executed, an average of more than six per day, bringing the total number of executions since 1 January to more than 340, including at least six political prisoners and seven women. In many instances, executions had gone unreported by official sources, and the names of prisoners had not been published, the statement added.

### Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is what action will be required in the event of an agreement between Iran and the P5+1 and the future role of the Council in monitoring compliance with the agreement. It is clear from media reports that discussions are already well under way among the P5 on the new Council resolution foreseen as part of the agreement, but key details still have to be worked out as part of the larger deal. However, there is no current mechanism for the P5 to keep the Council's elected members at least minimally informed about the negotiation process and the planned Council resolution.

A related issue is whether the review bill

adopted by the US Congress will have an impact on the timing of any Council action.

Another key issue for the Council in June is the mandate renewal for the Panel of Experts in light of the uncertainties surrounding the outcome of the negotiations; and whether there should be any follow-up Committee action at this stage in response to the Panel of Experts' report.

### Options

Options for the Panel of Experts' mandate renewal include:

- taking a business-as-usual approach, i.e. extending the mandate unchanged for another 13 months, but adding a new review provision;
- adopting a short technical roll-over of a few months; or
- taking no action at this stage and instead waiting to see if an agreement is reached in order to incorporate any changes that might be required in relation to the Panel and the role of the Committee.

In addition, elected members could request a briefing by the P5 on the current state of the negotiations with Iran, in particular on the main elements of the future resolution referred to in the framework agreement, opportunities for elected members to be involved in the process and the expected timing of Council action.

### Council Dynamics

Given the current stage of the P5+1 negotiations with Iran, Council members remain in a waiting mode. There is some frustration among elected members about the lack of information, in particular as to what to expect in terms of Council action, but there is also an understanding that the political realities in this case make it hard to have an inclusive process.

With regard to the Panel of Experts' mandate renewal, some Council members believe the best solution at this stage, given the uncertainties about the outcome of the negotiations with Iran and the potential for additional delays, would be to simply extend it for another 13 months with the understanding that the Council can review it at any time if required. It seems, however, that a short-term technical roll-over is considered the more likely outcome.

The US is the penholder on Iran.

# Afghanistan

## Expected Council Action

In June, the Council will hold its quarterly debate on Afghanistan, during which it will consider the Secretary-General's 90-day report on the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Special Representative Nicholas Haysom, the head of UNAMA, is expected to brief.

Also during June, the 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee will likely consider a report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team. The report, due by 1 June in accordance with paragraph (a) of the annex of resolution 2160, is expected to provide recommendations on improving the implementation of sanctions measures.

No outcome is expected from the Council meeting. At press time, specific Committee actions were not anticipated either.

## Key Recent Developments

The civilian population continues to bear a heavy toll as a result of the conflict. On 12 April, UNAMA released civilian casualty figures from January to March 2015, revealing that the trend of record-high civilian casualties continued from 2014. There was a two percent decrease in civilian casualties (totaling 1,810) compared to the same period in 2014, but civilian casualties caused by ground engagements between pro-government forces and anti-government elements were up eight percent.

In early April, the Taliban overran a number of army checkpoints in the north-eastern province of Badakhshan, killing twenty-one soldiers and police. Heavy fighting has continued in the province. The Taliban announced the launch of its annual offensive in a statement on 22 April and violent incidents escalated across much of the country. On 24 April, the Taliban attacked Kunduz city, the capital of the northern province of Kunduz. The attack, which caught the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by surprise and included fighters from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and Chechnya, led to concerns that the city would be overrun, and thousands of reinforcements had to be deployed in order to hold it. According to the spokesman for the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Kabul, at least 100,000 people fled their homes due to the fighting around the city.

The intensity of fighting in the north represented the continued expansion of the Taliban insurgency beyond its more traditional areas of fighting in the south and east. This year also marks the first time that the ANSF is confronting the Taliban offensive without the support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which withdrew at the end of 2014 and was followed by a smaller NATO training mission, called the Resolute Support Mission (RSM).

Terrorist attacks in urban areas have continued. A suicide bomber killed 35 people and injured more than 100 in Jalalabad on 18 April. An attack by the Taliban on the Park Palace Hotel in Kabul on 13 May left 14 people dead, including nine foreigners. The capital has seen a number of other attacks, including a 17 May bombing near the entrance to the heavily secured international airport in which two teenage girls and a British contractor were killed and 18 people were wounded.

On the political front, President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah announced 16 ministerial nominees on 21 March. The nominees were subsequently confirmed by the Wolesi Jirga (the Afghan lower house) and were sworn in on 21 April. Seven months after Ghani and Abdullah's agreement to establish a power-sharing national unity government, the appointments represented the near-completion of their cabinet, which now comprises 24 ministers. On 21 May, President Ghani nominated Mohammed Masoom Stanekzai as defence minister, the last appointment outstanding, who now needs parliamentary approval.

From 2 to 3 May, Taliban representatives and Afghan officials met in their personal capacity along with civic activists at a conference in Qatar organised by the Pugwash Council, a Nobel Peace laureate. The informal discussions have been described as a possible first step towards starting more formal negotiations. Secret talks were held from 19 to 20 May, hosted by China in the north-western city of Urumqi and also involving the cooperation of Pakistan, bringing together Stanekzai and three former senior Taliban officials. The meeting reportedly focused on discussing preconditions for a possible peace process.

In other developments, Ghani signed a decree on 21 March establishing the

Electoral Reform Commission, composed of 15 members including a UN representative. As expected, elections for the Wolesi Jirga, scheduled to be held by 23 May, did not take place. The terms of the current members expire in June. (Some Afghan officials have indicated that the elections could take place in October, though it seems more likely that parliamentary and district elections will only be organised next year due to security concerns and plans for electoral reforms.)

## Sanctions-Related Developments

The 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee met with Special Representative Haysom on 25 March. The following day the Committee held a meeting with Afghanistan's National Security Council Adviser, Mohammad Hanif Atmar. The meetings were organised in order for the Committee to gain a deeper understanding of the situation on the ground and the impact and role of the sanctions regime. At press time, Committee members were still awaiting the latest report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, expected by 1 June, on the implementation of the sanctions.

## Human Rights-Related Developments

Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović visited Afghanistan from 15 to 21 April to assess the human rights impact of the handover of security responsibilities to the ANSF and increased ground engagements across the country. Šimonović visited Kabul and the provinces of Nangarhar and Kapisa and met with Ghani, government ministers, the chair of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, civil society organisations and women's rights NGOs. During his visit, Šimonović issued a statement on 18 April strongly condemning the brutal suicide attack in Jalalabad that day, which coincided with his visit to the city. Šimonović participated in the launch of a new report by UNAMA and the UN Human Rights Office on 19 April, *Justice through the Eyes of Afghan Women: Cases of Violence against Women Addressed through Mediation and Court Adjudication*. The report documents the experiences of 110 women and girls in seeking accountability and redress for violence committed against them. In a 21 April statement at the end of his visit, Šimonović said there are new opportunities for peace talks that would have been unimaginable only a few months ago, but the conflict looks set to intensify as insurgents test the strength of the security forces, hoping to gain leverage in future negotiations. He emphasised that it is unacceptable that Afghans should face such violence on a daily basis and there can be no doubt that the tactics used represent war crimes, and those responsible for organising or perpetrating such attacks must be brought to justice. He also encouraged Afghanistan to

## Afghanistan (con't)

institutionalise torture prevention by ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, which would lay the basis for a national inspection mechanism for places of detention, and welcomed the appointment that week of four women as government ministers.

### Key Issues

A key issue is the ongoing violence and the need for the Afghan security forces to maintain stability in the country in light of the departure of ISAF. The high number of civilian casualties caused by the conflict is a related area of concern for members.

Advancing a peace and reconciliation process is another important issue.

Also important is how effectively Ghani, Abdullah and their supporters continue to work together in the government of national unity to advance reforms to address corruption and improve governance and fiscal management.

Related to this is protecting advances in human rights, including women's rights.

Drug trafficking from opium production and exploitation of natural resources, which provide funding for anti-government groups, is another issue.

### Options

Having renewed UNAMA's mandate in March, the most likely option is for the Council to hold the debate without taking additional action.

The Council could issue a statement expressing serious concern over the high number of civilian casualties and demanding that all sides avoid killing and injuring civilians, while recalling that targeting civilians is a war crime.

### Council Dynamics

Council members are increasingly concerned by the violence in Afghanistan and the impact of the conflict on civilians. They are particularly mindful that this year's fighting is a test of the ANSF's ability to maintain stability with NATO forces no longer playing a direct role, as the RSM is a non-combat mission.

Most members emphasise that ending the fighting requires a political solution and therefore stress the importance of national reconciliation and the role of other countries in the region. China expressed last year an intention to play a greater mediating role, and the recent talks in Urumqi may signal progress in these efforts.

At their last debate, members were keen to see the formation of the cabinet of the new unity government, which they see as critical in order for the government to move forward on key reforms that can increase Afghans' confidence in the state and address the fragile economy—underlying issues that contribute to the insurgency. A number of members also emphasise the importance that gains in the rights of women since 2001 are consolidated and built upon. France and Russia are among members that consistently highlight their concerns about drug production and trafficking.

Spain is the penholder on Afghanistan (including UNAMA), while New Zealand chairs the 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee.

## Children and Armed Conflict

### Expected Council Action

In June the Security Council will hold its second open debate this year on children and armed conflict. The debate, which will be chaired by Malaysia's Foreign Minister Dato' Sri Anifah Aman, is expected to focus on the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict. (Malaysia is the chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict.) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict Leila Zerrougui, as well as representatives from the UN Children's Fund and civil society, are expected to speak.

A resolution, possibly adding abductions as an additional violation to trigger inclusion of a party in the Secretary-General's annexes, is a likely outcome of the debate. Malaysia is planning to circulate a concept note ahead of the debate that will focus on abduction of children and suggest that members during the debate provide their views on how to address and prevent abductions.

### Key Recent Developments

The Secretary-General's annual report is expected to cover global trends and provide updates on the implementation of relevant Council resolutions. Members will be particularly interested in whether any parties will be added or removed from the report's annexes for grave violations against children. (Last year's annexes listed 51 armed groups and eight armed forces in 15 country situations.) There is particular interest about whether Israel will be added to the Secretary-General's annexes for violations against children related to attacks on schools and hospitals during the Gaza war last summer. This year's report is expected to be released just before the debate, which is later than usual.

On 27 March, the Council held an open debate on children and armed conflict focused on child victims of non-state armed groups. There were briefings by the Secretary-General, Zerrougui, Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF Yoka Brandt and the

child protection advisor from Save the Children in the Central African Republic (CAR), Julie Bodin. Junior Nzita Nsuami, a former child soldier from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and president of the NGO Paix pour l'enfance shared his experiences as a child soldier.

Both the Secretary-General and Zerrougui covered the growth of violent extremist groups, abductions and the "Children, Not Soldiers" campaign in their briefings. (The campaign is aimed at ending the recruitment and use of children by armed forces by 2016.) Zerrougui also covered attacks on schools and hospitals by non-state armed groups, girl victims and reintegration of children from armed groups, as well as mediation and peace processes as an entry point for securing commitments from non-state armed groups. A number of member states focused on the issue of abductions, citing the recent abduction of schoolgirls by Boko Haram in Nigeria and of Kurdish boys in Syria and Yazidi

**UN DOCUMENTS ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT** Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7414 (25 March 2015) was an open debate focused on child victims of non-state groups. Security Council Letter S/2015/168 (6 March 2015) was a concept note circulated by France for the March open debate. Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict Document S/AC.51/2015/1 (12 May 2015) were the conclusions on South Sudan.



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## Children and Armed Conflict (con't)

children in Iraq by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), as well as abductions by groups in the CAR, DRC and Yemen.

Several states, including Council members Angola, Chad, France, Lithuania, Malaysia, Spain and the UK, supported adding abductions as an additional trigger for listing of groups in the Secretary-General's annexes. Following the debate, France circulated a non-paper in its national capacity containing a summary of the different proposals and ideas expressed by participants during the debate. The aim of the non-paper was to facilitate a follow-up on some of the issues during the June debate on children and armed conflict.

On 8 May, Zerrougui and Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Hawa Bangura briefed members of the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee. This briefing was a follow-up to resolution 2206, which applied financial and travel measures to individuals and entities involved in violations against children and requested the Special Representatives to share information with the Committee.

The briefing by the two Special Representatives to the Sanctions Committee is timely, as the situation for children in South Sudan has worsened since the start of the conflict in December 2013. There had been some progress between South Sudan's independence in 2011 and the end of 2013 in protecting children, but since the outbreak of hostilities in December 2013, violations against children, particularly recruitment, have increased. The Secretary-General's 2014 annual report listed several parties in South Sudan, including the Sudan People's Liberation Army and several opposition groups.

The government signed an action plan in 2011 to end recruitment and use of children in the armed forces, to which it recommitted itself during Zerrougui's visit to South Sudan in June 2014. However, UNICEF estimates that parties involved in the conflict have recruited up to 12,000 underage combatants since the start of the conflict in December 2013. In February, UNICEF reported the abduction of up to 89 children in Upper Nile State, where thousands of people have been internally displaced. On a more positive

note, a peace deal between the South Sudan Democratic Army/Movement-Cobra faction and the government has led to the release of 1,752 children since January. Furthermore, on 4 May, South Sudan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### Developments in the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict

On 6 February, the Special Representative introduced the first report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in South Sudan. The Working Group adopted conclusions on the report on 8 May. However, it was not able to start working on another report, as the next report on the programme of work, on Afghanistan, was not ready. At press time, no new Secretary-General's reports on children and armed conflict had been published in 2015, although reports on Afghanistan, Chad, Iraq, and possibly the CAR, Somalia and Sudan are planned for this year.

### Key Issues

In negotiating a draft resolution that adds abductions as a new trigger, a key issue will be how best to define abductions within the framework of international law. (While abductions, as such, are not addressed explicitly under international law, there are violations of international law that occur as a consequence of abduction, including hostage-taking, forcible transfer of children and enforced disappearance.) If the draft resolution contains language on detention, this is likely to be a contentious issue for some members.

There is now a four to five-year gap between Secretary-General's reports on children and armed conflict in country-specific situations, making it difficult to follow up on conclusions and put pressure on parties in the Secretary-General's annexes.

While having abductions as one of the trigger violations may be useful as a political signal, an issue is how to put pressure on groups like Boko Haram and ISIS, as well as other non-state armed groups, that are unlikely to respond to exhortations to sign an action plan.

The Council's ability to act with respect to the impact on children when a new crisis emerges or a situation deteriorates continues to be an issue.

### Options

The most likely option for the Council at the open debate is to adopt a resolution adding abductions as one of the violations that would result in a party being listed in the Secretary-General's annexes.

Members may consider an independent review of the children and armed conflict architecture to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1612, which set up the Working Group and monitoring and reporting mechanism.

In line with this, an option is to hold a retreat of the Working Group to discuss ways that it can better respond to fast-changing situations and build more flexibility into its work. The effectiveness of the Working Group is limited by the rigidity of its work programme and working methods that do not allow it to act rapidly in changing situations.

Options for the Council to integrate children and armed conflict concerns into its country-specific work include briefings to the Working Group from the Office of the Special Representative, UNICEF and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations ahead of mandate renewals, and having the Working Group chair work with the experts drafting resolutions on country-specific situations so that appropriate language on children and armed conflict is included in the initial draft.

### Council Dynamics

Following several years when the composition of the Council made it difficult to advance the children and armed conflict agenda, the current mix of members has the potential to broaden the agenda by adding to the violations that could trigger a listing. There are also signs that this greater openness could prompt some members to push for improvements in the working methods of the Working Group. However, it may be difficult to move away from established practices.

While the adoption of the South Sudan conclusions was relatively smooth, the upcoming negotiations on the draft resolution may be a more accurate gauge of members' positions on some of the more sensitive issues.

# Counter-Terrorism

## Expected Council Action

In June, the Council is scheduled to receive the semi-annual briefing from the chairs of its counter-terrorism-related committees, possibly followed by a debate. The briefers will be Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen (New Zealand), chair of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee; Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė (Lithuania), chair of the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC); and Ambassador Román Oyarzun (Spain), chair of the 1540 Committee, which focuses on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

## Key Recent Developments

### *1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee*

According to its annual report, the Committee convened 12 informal consultations in 2014. At least 11 of the 31 new listings by the 1267/1989 Committee since September 2014 are related to the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters. At press time, two reports from the Committee's Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team were expected to be released including recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the sanctions regime and the work of the Committee.

The Ombudsperson, Kimberly Prost, who is responsible for making recommendations on requests for removing names from the sanctions list, submitted her ninth report to the Council on 2 February. Since 31 July 2014, six new cases had been submitted to the Ombudsperson, bringing the total number of petitions received since the office was established to 61 as of 31 January. During the reporting period, three individuals and one entity were delisted on her recommendation.

On 12 February, the Council adopted resolution 2199, targeting some of the sources of funding of two Al-Qaida affiliates, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and Al-Nusra Front. 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 to be bartered 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.

### *1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee*

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 CTC's Executive Directorate, or CTED, is expected to release two reports to the CTC on gaps in the use of advance passenger information, as well as to identify gaps in member states' capacities to implement Council resolutions 1373 and 1624 that may hinder their abilities to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. (Resolution 1373 of 28 September 2001 obliges states to criminalise the financing of terrorism and recruitment to terrorist groups. Resolution 1624 of 14 September 2005 calls upon member states to prohibit by law the incitement to commit terrorist acts.)

### *1540 Committee*

In a meeting on 25 February (the only formal 1540 Committee meeting so far this year), Oyarzun outlined his five main priorities as chair: concluding the comprehensive review of the implementation of resolution 1540 requested by resolution 1977, achieving universality in reporting by member states (19 states have yet to submit national implementation reports), improving the efficiency of matching offers of support with states requesting assistance, identifying regions that should be given particular attention and increasing the visibility of the work and role of the Committee as an essential instrument of non-proliferation.

On 30 January, Oyarzun submitted to the Council the Committee's programme of work for the period 1 February 2015 to 30 January 2016. The Committee will continue to operate a system of four working groups, focused on monitoring and national implementation (chaired by Chile), assistance (chaired

by France), cooperation with international organisations and other relevant UN bodies (chaired by Jordan) and transparency and media outreach (chaired by the US).

According to the work programme, a key task for the Committee this year will be preparing for the 2016 comprehensive review. The Committee will develop a plan for the review, identifying objectives, scope, timing and participants in the process by mid-2015 and then create and execute a strategy based on that plan by 31 August 2015.

In April the Committee agreed on a modalities paper outlining additional details for the review. As a first step, the working groups are required to develop work plans to be submitted to the Committee by 12 June for approval. The Committee is expected to approve these plans, including a schedule of outreach events, by 30 June. In June 2016, the Committee will hold formal open meetings on the review with UN member states, international organisations and civil society. The first draft of the report on the review should be ready for the Committee's consideration by 1 September 2016 and a final report submitted to the Council by 31 October 2016. Although not explicitly stated in the modalities paper, it is understood that the outcome of the review process will be a new Council resolution endorsing the main findings.

## Key Issues

A key issue for the 1267/1989 Committee is to address patterns of non-compliance with the sanctions regime by member states, either due to lack of will or capacity.

An important 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 (such as CTED) 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.

A key issue for the 1540 Committee is the 2016 comprehensive review.

**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, traffic in cultural heritage, ransom payments and external donations. S/RES/2161 (17 June 2014) renewed the measures targeting Al-Qaida associates and extended the mandates of the Office of the Ombudsperson and the Monitoring Team for 30 months. S/RES/1977 (20 April 2011) decided that the 1540 Committee should conduct a review of the implementation of resolution 1540 before December 2016. *Security Council Meeting Records* S/PV.7319 (24 November 2014) was the most recent briefing by the chair of the 1540 Committee. S/PV.7316 (19 November 2014) was a high-level open debate on counter-terrorism that included a briefing by the chairs of the CTC and the 1267/1989 Committee. *Sanctions Committee Documents* S/2015/80 (2 February 2015) included the ninth report of the Ombudsperson. S/2014/923 (17 December 2014) was a report on the activities of the 1267/1989 Sanctions Committee in 2014. *Security Council Letter* S/2015/75 (30 January 2015) was from the chair of the 1540 Committee submitting its current programme of work to the Council.

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## Counter-Terrorism (con't)

### Council 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 so much to this particular topic but rather as to its scope and potential for political misuse.

Also, some Council members have stressed in the past that the 1267/1989 Committee—rather than the CTC whose scope is broader—should take the lead in tackling foreign terrorist fighters. Some Council members are not very supportive of the promotion of transparency about the Committee's work.

In the 1540 Committee, there is general

consensus about the importance of the Committee's work. The preparations for the comprehensive review have so far progressed smoothly, although there are some differences among Council members in their emphasis on priorities, with developing countries attaching particular importance to the Committee's role in facilitating assistance.

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## Peacebuilding

### Expected Council Action

In June, the Council expects briefings by Antonio de Aguiar Patriota (Brazil) and Olof Skoog (Sweden), the former and current chairs of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), on the eighth annual report of the PBC.

That same day, an informal interactive dialogue is expected involving Council members, the six PBC country-configuration chairs and ambassadors of PBC-agenda countries.

No outcome is expected.

### Key Recent Developments

On 22 January, the Secretary-General announced the formation of the seven-person Advisory Group of Experts to conduct the first stage of the 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture. (This review was requested in 2010 by Security Council resolution 1947 and General Assembly resolution 65/7.) The Advisory Group is expected to submit a report based on five case studies to the Council and the General Assembly by the end of June. That will start an intergovernmental process to review its analysis and recommendations.

Skoog travelled to West Africa from 5 to 10 April, visiting Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Senegal to assess the impact of Ebola on peacebuilding. The trip was also taken in the context of PBC efforts to incorporate a greater regional perspective in peacebuilding and to strengthen cooperation with regional organisations. The visit included meetings with the Secretary-General of the Mano River Union, Saran Daraba Kaba, and the head of the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA),

Mohammed Ibn Chambas. On 23 April, Skoog transmitted a report about his trip to the Council.

On 14 April, the PBC held a special session on Ebola. Skoog briefed on his trip, and a representative of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) briefed about its Ebola recovery assessment conducted in January. Following this session, Skoog attended a high-level meeting hosted by the World Bank in Washington D.C. on 17 April, during which the presidents of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone presented their respective national Ebola recovery plans. The World Bank announced it would provide \$650 million for Ebola recovery, in addition to earlier pledges of debt relief. The World Health Organization declared Liberia Ebola-free on 9 May.

### Developments in Country-Specific Configurations

#### Burundi

The configuration chair, Ambassador Paul Seger (Switzerland), visited Burundi from 31 March to 3 April. The visit focused on the tensions and concerns about potential violence over the possibility that President Pierre Nkurunziza would seek a third term. In his meetings, including with the president, Seger stressed the need to avoid violence and to preserve national unity. He warned authorities that violence could lead to international sanctions.

Following the outbreak of protests in late April against Nkurunziza's candidacy, the configuration held three meetings (29 April, 11 May and 15 May). After its 15 May

meeting, held two days after a coup attempt, the configuration issued a press statement expressing full support for regional engagement by the East African Community, the AU and the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region to resolve the crisis, as well as commending efforts by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region, Said Djinnit, and the UN Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi.

#### Central African Republic

The configuration chair, Ambassador Omar Hilale (Morocco), visited the Central African Republic from 2 to 5 May and attended the start of the Bangui Forum on reconciliation. During his four-day visit, he met with a range of interlocutors, including the transitional president, Catherine Samba-Panza. Among the issues raised was the funding gap for holding this year's elections. At press time, the configuration was organising a high-level event on 5 June with UNDP to raise awareness about the issue.

#### Guinea

The Guinea configuration issued a press statement on 17 April appealing to all parties to exercise restraint following violence at demonstrations on 13 and 14 April. Protests in Guinea were triggered by the announcement that presidential elections would be held in October 2015 before local elections, which were further postponed to 2016.

On 21 May, the Department of Political Affairs briefed the configuration on the electoral needs assessment mission that visited Guinea from 11 to 22 April, reporting that

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON PEACEBUILDING** Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2015/2 (14 January 2015) highlighted the upcoming 2015 review of the UN's peacebuilding architecture. **Security Council Letter S/2015/282** (23 April 2015) transmitted a report of the PBC chair on his visit to West Africa. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7359** (14 January 2015) was a briefing on the Secretary-General's report on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict. **Peacebuilding Commission Document S/2015/174** (11 March 2015) was the PBC's eighth annual report.



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## Peacebuilding (con't)

the current environment is not conducive for free and fair elections. UNOWA's Cham-bas also briefed, noting more positively the resumption of dialogue between the president and Guinea's opposition leader. Configuration chair Ambassador Sylvie Lucas (Luxembourg) updated members about her planned visit to Guinea, scheduled from 31 May to 2 June, during which she would assess tensions around the elections as well as the impact of Ebola.

### *Guinea-Bissau*

At a 16 April configuration meeting, members emphasised that countries must fulfil their pledges made at the donors' conference on 25 March in Brussels, which raised 1.2 billion euros for Guinea-Bissau's ten-year national development plan. Discussion also focused on a recent UN-led security sector reform mission. Additionally, Patriota, who is the configuration chair, noted with concern the Council's emphasis on drug trafficking in its recent resolution renewing the mandate of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau. He said that emphasis was no longer warranted and unfairly stigmatised the country. Patriota visited Guinea-Bissau from 19 to 21 April.

### *Liberia*

Skoog, who is also chair of the country

configuration, visited Liberia from 5 to 7 April, during which he met President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to discuss the country's Ebola recovery process. Configuration meetings were held on 29 April and 5 May. The configuration reviewed peacebuilding priorities in Ebola recovery efforts and the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and received briefings from UNMIL head Karin Landgren and Liberia Minister of Justice Benedict Sannoh.

### *Sierra Leone*

The configuration, which is chaired by Canada, met on 21 May and received a briefing by UNDP on the economic outlook and recovery planning in the region and Sierra Leone. At the meeting, the configuration also discussed a work plan for the coming year.

### **Key Issues**

A key issue is improving the relationship between the PBC and the Council, including through more consistent engagement with the PBC and utilisation of the PBC as a tool for conflict prevention. A related issue is the quality of the PBC's advice to the Council.

### **Options**

The Council may hold the briefing and interactive dialogue without additional action.

While awaiting the findings of the peacebuilding review, the Council could more

consistently ensure that configuration chairs brief Council experts ahead of mandate renewals for missions in PBC-agenda countries or in crafting Council responses to crisis situations.

### **Council and Wider Dynamics**

Amidst the current heavy demands on the Council, the PBC could be poised to reduce the Council's burden, particularly during mission exits or transitions. However, this relationship continues to be seen as falling short, despite some improvements and positive feedback by Council members of different configuration chairs. In part, this is attributed to permanent members' unwillingness to more fully engage strategically with the configuration chairs, including not allowing their participation in consultations. The apparent low priority of the PBC for Council members was demonstrated at last year's interactive dialogue with configuration chairs, which few Council ambassadors attended.

Malaysia, following in Rwanda's footsteps, has become convenor of the stock-taking sessions—informal quarterly meetings between Council members, country-configuration chairs and PBC-agenda countries to review relations between the two bodies.

There is no penholder on peacebuilding.

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## Peacekeeping

### **Expected Council Action**

The Council expects a briefing on UN peacekeeping from Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous and force commanders Lieutenant-General Johannes Gebremeskel Tesfamariam (Ethiopia) of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Major General Michael Lollesgaard (Denmark) of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and Major General Michael Finn (Ireland), who is the chief of staff of the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). No outcome is expected following the briefing.

These briefings have been held annually

since 2010, with force commanders briefing on operational challenges related to the implementation of peacekeeping mandates.

### **Background**

The heads of military components will cover three different areas during their briefing to the Council.

### *Protection of Civilians*

Lt Gen Tesfamariam is expected to brief on the challenges faced by UNMISS in protecting civilians in South Sudan. OCHA estimated on 15 May that 1.5 million people have been internally displaced in South Sudan, with approximately 117,000 of the

internally displaced sheltering in UN bases. Lt Gen Tesfamariam is expected to describe the efforts by UNMISS's military contingents to maximise the impact of patrolling in rural areas to increase security, with a view to the eventual safe and voluntary return of internally displaced persons sheltered in UN bases. Another issue that might be covered is the ongoing operational cooperation with the South Sudanese police to ensure conditions for a safe return and the challenges posed by tensions on the ground between the army and the police of South Sudan. Lt Gen Tesfamariam might also raise the challenges faced by UNMISS in ensuring law and order in the camps until a sustainable solution is found.

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UN DOCUMENTS ON PEACEKEEPING Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7275 (9 October 2014) was the last briefing by force commanders.

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## Peacekeeping (con't)

Lt Gen Tesfamariam might also brief the Council on the impact of the recent violations of the Status of Forces Agreement by South Sudan in the implementation of the mission's protection of civilians' mandate. These violations have included episodes of staff harassment, delays in equipment delivery and restrictions to humanitarian access.

### *Operating in an Asymmetric Environment*

Asymmetrical attacks in Mali, an issue the Council is familiar with, will be the focus of Maj Gen Lollesgaard's briefing. As of 30 April, 33 peacekeepers have been killed since the establishment of MINUSMA in April 2013 as a result of hostile acts.

As MINUSMA and international actors (including NGOs) continue to be targeted by Al-Qaida affiliated terrorist groups, Maj Gen Lollesgaard is expected to cover the measures in place to enhance MINUSMA's equipment to counter asymmetrical attacks. On 2 January, Council members received a letter from the Secretary-General outlining some lessons learned following the re-hatting processes in Mali and the Central African Republic. The letter highlighted the need to enhance the capabilities of AU re-hatted contingents that were below UN standards.

Maj Gen Lollesgaard is also expected to explain to what extent the military personnel deployed in Mali are involved in the implementation of MINUSMA's protection of civilians' mandate in comparison to the overwhelming focus on force protection tasks given increased insecurity in the north. Ahead of the renewal of the mission's mandate in June, he may discuss how the signing of an agreement by only some of the parties affects the perception of the mission's impartiality and therefore has implications for the

safety and security of peacekeepers.

### *Caveats and Performance*

UNTSO military observers are attached to the peacekeeping forces in the Middle East, including the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Golan Heights and the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), in addition to a presence in the Sinai Peninsula. Of the 25 troop contributors to UNTSO, almost half now have caveats regarding the places where military experts can be deployed.

Due to the spillover of the Syrian civil war into UNDOF's area of operations, the mission has significantly altered how it carries out its mandate. UNDOF is a Syria-based mission but as of September 2014 the majority of its peacekeepers redeployed to the Israeli-controlled side of the ceasefire line due to the security situation, except for a contingent of Nepalese peacekeepers deployed to Mt. Hermon on the Syrian side. Maj Gen Michael Finn is expected to brief on the limitations in terms of performance and flexibility that caveats by troop contributors impose on heads of military components when having to react to changed security conditions on the ground.

### **Key Issues**

Issues arising from the situations to be covered include:

- UNMISS's capability and resources to carry out its protection of civilians mandate;
- addressing the risks to MINUSMA and the implementation of its mandate in a context of asymmetric attacks and absence of a commonly agreed political framework;
- mitigating the effect of caveats in the implementation of Council mandates and whether UNSTO's mandate and

composition need to be reconsidered following the changed security situation in the region.

### **Options**

Options for the Council include:

- taking advantage of the interactive format of the meeting to get a better understanding of the operational challenges to peacekeeping;
- agreeing to have relevant force commanders brief the Council, together with the heads of mission, as mission mandates come up for renewal; and
- increasing the interaction between the Council and the Secretariat in order to ensure military options being considered by the Council are grounded in reality.

### **Council Dynamics**

Council members have found this a particularly useful briefing because of the substance of the topics discussed and the interaction allowed by the format. The ability to ask questions of the force commanders has allowed members to obtain pertinent information about operational challenges in peacekeeping missions. The success of this format prompted then-Council member Australia to initiate a briefing on 20 November by the heads of police components. Resolution 2185, adopted on the same day, stated the Council's intention to consider holding an annual meeting with heads of UN police components.

These meetings are an opportunity to have substantial discussions to enhance the Council's understanding of the Secretariat's military planning processes as well as provide feedback on difficulties faced in implementing peacekeeping mandates.

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## International Criminal Tribunals

### **Expected Council Action**

In June, the Security Council will hold its semi-annual debate on the ad hoc international criminal tribunals. The Presidents and Prosecutors of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY)

and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) are expected to brief the Council. ICTY President Theodor Meron will also brief the Council as President of the Residual Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals, as will ICTR Prosecutor

Hassan Bubacar Jallow as the Residual Mechanism's Prosecutor.

The Informal Working Group on International Tribunals may meet with the Presidents and Prosecutors prior to their appearance at the Council.

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNALS** Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2194 and S/RES/2193 (18 December 2014) extended the judges' and Prosecutors' terms. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7332 (10 December 2014) was the most recent semi-annual briefing on the ICTY and ICTR.

## International Criminal Tribunals (con't)

### Key Recent Developments

The Residual Mechanism established in 2010, by resolution 1966, has been mandated to complete the work of the tribunals by assuming responsibility for their essential functions through two branches, the successor to ICTR in Arusha and the successor to ICTY in the Hague. The two branches were inaugurated in July 2012 and July 2013, respectively. Resolution 1966 stipulated that all remaining work by the tribunals should be completed no later than 31 December 2014, to prepare their closure and to ensure a smooth transition to the Residual Mechanism. On 18 December 2014, in light of the ongoing activity in both tribunals, the Council adopted resolutions 2193 and 2194 which extended the terms of several judges of both tribunals and reappointed the tribunals' respective Prosecutors for one year, urging the two bodies to intensify their efforts to complete their work. Russia abstained on resolution 2193 on the ICTY.

Since the start of the year, the ICTY has concluded proceedings against six individuals, bringing the total number of concluded proceedings to 147 of the 161 persons indicted. On 8 April, the Appeals Tribunal issued its judgment in the case of Zdravko Tolimir, a former assistant commander and chief of the sector for Intelligence and Security Affairs of the main staff of the Republika Srpska army, and upheld his sentence of life imprisonment for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in 1995 after the fall of Srebrenica and Žepa. On 30 January, in the largest-ever trial heard by the Tribunal (in terms of the number of accused), the Appeals Chamber issued its judgment in the Popović et al. case, concerning five senior Bosnian Serbian military officials convicted of genocide and other crimes perpetrated by Bosnian Serb forces in July 1995, following the takeover of Srebrenica and Žepa. The Appeals Chamber affirmed two sentences of life imprisonment, one sentence of 35 years imprisonment and one sentence of 13 years imprisonment. One sentence of 19 years imprisonment was reduced to 18 years. Based on current forecasts, judgments in one trial and two appeals are expected by the end of

2015, with one trial and one appeal, in the Mladić and Prlić et al. cases, set to be concluded in 2017.

The ICTR has completed cases at the trial level for all 93 accused that have been indicted. Only one case remains concerning the appeal of six individuals, Nyiramasuhuko et al. (“Butare”), in which oral arguments were heard by the Appeals Chamber from 14 to 22 April. Judgment is expected to be delivered in August 2015. In February, the ICTR's Office of the Prosecutor released a best-practices manual on the referral of international criminal cases to national jurisdictions for trial, which documents the Office's experience in securing the referral of ten genocide indictments to national jurisdictions for trial—two to France and eight to Rwanda.

Meanwhile, the Residual Mechanism delivered its first appeal judgment on 18 December 2014 in the case of Augustin Ndirabatware. The ICTR issued the trial judgment on 21 February 2013, and Ndirabatware filed an appeal challenging his convictions and sentence. The Residual Mechanism affirmed his convictions for direct and public incitement to commit genocide and for instigating, aiding and abetting genocide, and sentenced Ndirabatware to 30 years of imprisonment. The Residual Mechanism continues to face two long-standing challenges. The first is to ensure that nine people indicted by the ICTR, but not yet arrested, are apprehended (the three most senior individuals are to be tried by the Residual Mechanism and the other six by Rwanda). The second challenge involves the relocation of individuals the ICTR has acquitted or released, but who are unable or afraid to return to their country of citizenship. Since 2011, the Council has called on member states to assist with their relocation. The number of acquitted persons still in Arusha was recently reduced to eight after Belgium agreed to accept one person. As of 1 January, the Residual Mechanism took over the formal responsibility for relocation.

The Presidents and Prosecutors of the ICTY and ICTR last briefed the Council on 10 December 2014. The Informal Working Group on International Tribunals also last

met in December 2014 and may meet again before this month's Council debate.

### Key Issues

The main issue is the continuing review by the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals of the completion strategies of the ICTY and ICTR and following the work of the Residual Mechanism.

A key issue is the relocation of persons released or acquitted.

### Council Dynamics

The tribunals were expected to complete their caseload by 31 December 2014, as set out in resolution 1966 in 2010. Currently, the ICTY in particular expects completion as late as 2017, which has led to repeated criticism by Russia about its effectiveness. The most recent resolutions adopted in December 2014, extended judges' terms if the request was for one year less but the extensions to 2017 requested for eight ICTY judges and the ICTY Prosecutor were granted only to December 2015. As it did the previous year, Russia abstained from the resolution extending ICTY judges' terms, commenting that the situation regarding the tribunal's exit strategy had not improved and that costly trial delays continued. Russia is also critical of the ICTY's jurisprudence, claiming that it has not done justice on behalf of Serbian victims of the Yugoslav conflict. As no requests for extending judges' terms are expected in June, these differences should not have practical effect until the end of the year when there may be further extension requests.

During the debate, Council members are likely to focus on the respective tribunals' completion strategies, the handover of activities to the Residual Mechanism (including the process of transferring records and archives), the need to find a satisfactory solution to the relocation of persons released or acquitted by the ICTR and the need to ensure individuals indicted by the ICTR, but not yet arrested, are apprehended.

Chile is the penholder and chair of the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals.



## Notable Dates for June

REPORT DUE	REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION IN JUNE	REQUESTING DOCUMENT
11 March	Annual PBC report (S/2015/174)	S/RES/1645 S/RES/1646
14 May	SG report on UNOCA/LRA (Central Africa) (S/2015/339)	S/PRST/2014/25
15 May	SG report on UNOCI (Côte d'Ivoire) (S/2015/320)	S/RES/2162
Mid May	Residual Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals progress report (S/2015/340)	S/RES/1966
Mid May	ICTY's completion strategy report (S/2015/341)	S/RES/1966
Mid May	ICTR's completion strategy report (S/2015/342)	S/RES/1966
27 May	SG report on UNAMID (Darfur)	S/RES/2173
28 May	OPCW report on the implementation of resolution 2118 (Syrian chemical weapons)	S/RES/2118
8 June	SG annual report on children and armed conflict	S/RES/2068
9 June	Final report of the 1929 Iran Panel of Experts	S/RES/2159
11 June	SG report on UNDOF (Golan Heights)	S/RES/2192
11 June	SG report on UNAMA (Afghanistan)	S/RES/2210
12 June	SG report on MINUSMA (Mali)	S/RES/2164
23 June	SG report on the humanitarian situation in Syria	S/RES/2139

MANDATES EXPIRE	RELEVANT DOCUMENT
30 June	UNOCI (Côte d'Ivoire) S/RES/2162
30 June	Authorisation for French forces to operate in Côte d'Ivoire S/RES/2162
30 June	MINUSMA (Mali) S/RES/2164
30 June	UNAMID (Darfur) S/RES/2173
30 June	UNDOF (Golan Heights) S/RES/2192
9 July	1929 Iran Panel of Experts (mandate expires in July but will likely be renewed in June) S/RES/2159

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Security Council Report is a non-profit organisation supported by the Governments of Angola, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Uruguay, and Carnegie Corporation, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Design Point Five, NY

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