

Monthly Forecast

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Overview

Nigeria will hold the Council's presidency in August. An open debate on [regional organisations and contemporary challenges for maintaining international peace and security](#) is planned, with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expected among the speakers. Nigeria has also planned a briefing by Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Dmitri Titov on [security sector reform \(SSR\)](#), an issue it made a centerpiece during its previous presidencies in October 2011 and April 2014. (The 2014 open debate resulted in resolution 2151, the Council's first ever stand-alone resolution on SSR.)

Briefings are expected on:

- [lessons learned from the Ebola](#) epidemic, by the Director-General of the World Health Organization, Margaret Chan, and the Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Ebola, David Nabarro; and
- the situation in [Kosovo](#), by Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, Farid Zarif.

Briefings, followed by consultations, are expected on:

- developments in the [Central African Republic](#) by Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, Babacar Gaye;
- the [humanitarian situation in Syria](#), by OCHA's head, Stephen O'Brien;
- the situation in [Libya](#), by Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Support Mission in Libya, Bernardino León;
- developments in [Guinea-Bissau](#), by Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding

Office in Guinea-Bissau, Miguel Trovoadá, and most likely also Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota (Brazil), chair of the Guinea-Bissau country configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission;

- the [Middle East](#), by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman;
- the situation in [South Sudan](#), by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous and the work of the [2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee](#), by its chair, Ambassador Cristián Barros (Chile); and
- possibly on the work of the [1521 Liberia Sanctions Committee](#), by its chair, Ambassador Dina Kavar (Jordan).

Briefings in consultations are planned on:

- the situation in [Yemen](#), by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed;
- [chemical weapons in Syria](#), by the acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Kim Won-soo;
- the work of the [1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee](#), by its chair, Ambassador Román Oyarzun (Spain); and
- the work of the [1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee](#), by its chair, Ambassador Rafael Ramírez (Venezuela).

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

Nigeria is also planning to hold a public [wrap-up session](#) at the end of its presidency.

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

31 July 2015
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Status Update since the July Forecast

Mali

On 2 July, Council members condemned the terrorist attack against a MINUSMA convoy in the region of Timbuktu, which killed six Burkinabe peacekeepers (S/11959).

Burundi

On 2 July, Assistant Secretary-General Ivan Šimonović briefed Council members in consultations under “any other business”, at the request of France, on the human rights situation in Burundi following the controversial parliamentary and municipal elections. On 9 July, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Tayé-Brook Zerihoun and High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein briefed the Council (S/PV.7482), followed by consultations. Following the presidential elections of 21 July, Council members were briefed by Zerihoun and the Deputy Head of the UN Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUMB), Issaka Souana, in consultations on 28 July. A report by MENUMB had previously been circulated to the Council earlier in the month (S/2015/510).

UNOWA (West Africa)

On 7 July, Mohammed Ibn Chambas, the head of UNOWA, briefed the Council (S/PV.7480) on developments in West Africa and the latest Secretary-General’s report on the activities of UNOWA (S/2015/472). The briefing was followed by consultations. A draft press statement was prepared by Nigeria, but Council members were unable to agree on the statement due to proposals by Chad to include references to the Multinational Joint Force being created to combat Boko Haram. It was never issued.

Sudan/South Sudan

On 8 July, Council members were briefed in consultations on UNISFA activities by the head of the mission, Haile Tilahun Gebremariam, and on Sudan and South Sudan issues by Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan Haile Menkerios (via video teleconference from Addis Ababa). The discussion on UNISFA addressed the Secretary-General’s report (S/2015/439) on the situation in Abyei and the recent work of the mission. On 14 July, the Council adopted resolution 2230, renewing the mandate of UNISFA for an additional five months until 15 December (S/PV.7483).

Srebrenica

On 8 July, the Council held a briefing by Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein on the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide (S/PV.7481). The Council voted on a draft resolution (S/2015/508) to commemorate the anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, but it was vetoed by Russia, with Angola, China, Nigeria and Venezuela abstaining (S/PV.7481). The briefing and vote had been scheduled for 7 July but was postponed by a day in an effort to avert a veto.

Afghanistan

On 10 July, Council members adopted a press statement in which they “welcomed the direct talks held on 7 July in Muree, Pakistan, between the government of Afghanistan and Taliban representatives, as a step towards peace and reconciliation” (S/11967).

DRC

On 14 July, the Council was briefed by Special Representative and head of MONUSCO Martin Kobler on the latest MONUSCO report (S/2015/486). The Council was also briefed by Ambassador Dina Kavar (Jordan), chair of the 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee, following her visit to the country (S/PV.7484). The meeting was followed by consultations.

Libya

On 15 July, the Council received a briefing (S/PV.7485) from Bernardino León, the Special Representative and head of UNSMIL, and from Ambassador Ramlan Ibrahim (Malaysia), the chair of the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee. León focused on the 11 July initialing of the peace agreement by some parties to the conflict in the Moroccan city of Skhirat. On 16 July, Council members welcomed the initialing of the agreement and called on all parties to engage with the Libyan Political Dialogue and unite in support of the agreement (SC/11973). Earlier in the month, on 1 July, Council members had welcomed the meeting of the participants in the Libyan political dialogue in Morocco in late June (SC/11957).

Somalia and Eritrea

On 16 July, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet briefed the Council regarding the

Secretary-General’s 2 July letter transmitting the 30 June joint AU-UN report regarding benchmarks for AMISOM and security strategy (S/PV.7487). Ambassador Awale Ali Kulane (Somalia) also participated. The briefing was followed by consultations with Mulet and Ambassador Rafael Ramirez (Venezuela), chair of the 751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Sanctions Committee. On 27 July, Council members issued a press statement condemning Al-Shabaab’s attack on the Jazeera Hotel in Mogadishu (SC/11981). On 28 July, the Council adopted resolution 2232 extending the mandate of UNSOM until 30 March 2016 and reauthorising AMISOM through 30 May 2016.

Ukraine

On 20 July, at the request of Russia, Council members held consultations on the flight MH17 investigation and follow-up on resolution 2166. During the consultations, Russia presented a draft resolution calling for a greater role for the Secretary-General as well as International Civil Aviation Organization in the investigation of the crash. This was a draft competing with what Malaysia had already raised on 2 July, under “any other business”, for the Council to establish a tribunal for prosecution of those responsible for the downing of flight MH17. On 29 July, the Council held a vote on the draft resolution (S/2015/562) presented by Malaysia. Russia vetoed the draft resolution, preventing the creation of the tribunal (S/PV.7498). Angola, China and Venezuela abstained.

Iran

On 20 July, the Council adopted resolution 2231, endorsing the recently concluded Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, agreed to on 14 July among the P5, Iran, Germany and the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (S/PV.7488). The resolution includes a trigger for the deal to come into effect within 90 days of its adoption and a process for lifting sanctions, while establishing a strong monitoring system of Iran’s nuclear programme.

Israel/Palestine

On 20 July, Security Council members Jordan and Malaysia convened an Arrria-formula meeting on Gaza intended to draw attention to the fact that since the 51-day Israeli offensive “Operation Protective Edge” against

Status Update since our July Forecast (con't)

Gaza one year ago, little or no recovery or reconstruction has taken place, and that the situation of civilians in Gaza is unsustainable. The speakers were Vance Culbert (in person) and Wafaa Karfana (via a pre-recorded video message) of the Norwegian Refugee Council, an organisation that works on community protection in Gaza; Tania Hary from Gisha, an Israeli organisation focused on protecting the freedom of movement of Palestinians, especially Gaza residents; Sara Roy from the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University; and Ardi Imseis (via pre-recorded video message) who spoke as an independent expert on accountability issues and was formerly a legal officer for UNRWA—the UN agency for Palestinian refugees. On 23 July, New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs Murray McCully presided over the Council's quarterly open debate on the Middle East (S/PV.7490). Special Coordinator Nickolay Mladenov reported that the current situation on the ground was not sustainable and the two-state solution remained under threat, including from settlement construction, security incidents, occupation-related violence and lack of Palestinian unity, he said. In the absence of a political process, the rise of violent extremist and terrorism in the region presented further danger. Mladenov also stressed the need to end unilateral activities in the West Bank, including settlement construction, so-called legalisation of outposts, demolitions and evictions.

Cyprus

On 22 July, Council members were briefed

by Special Representative Lisa Bутtenheim on the latest Secretary-General's UNFICYP report (S/2015/517) and by Special Adviser Espen Barth Eide on the status of unification talks. On 29 July, the Council adopted resolution 2234, extending the mission's mandate for another six months.

Secretary-General Selection Process

On 22 July, at the initiative of New Zealand, Council members held a discussion on the selection process for a new Secretary-General under "any other business." This issue has in recent months been the focus of discussions in the General Assembly within the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalisation of the Work of the General Assembly. The Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, made up of 27 UN member states, has also taken up this issue. On 1 June, it sent a letter to the president of the Council, as well as to the president of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, with the group's proposals for the selection and appointment of the next Secretary-General. While there was no formal product to the meeting on 22 July, a number of members called for a more transparent selection process. Ban Ki-moon's term ends on 31 December 2016.

Iraq

On 22 July, Special Representative Ján Kubiš briefed the Council (S/PV.7489) and presented the Secretary-General's reports on UNAMI (S/2015/530) and on Iraq/Kuwait missing persons and property (S/2015/518). On 29 July, the Council adopted resolution

2233 renewing UNAMI for a year and requesting the Secretary-General to report back to the Council in 90 days with a full set of recommendations emanating from the Secretariat's strategic assessment mission that was carried out in April.

Boko Haram

On 28 July, the Council adopted a presidential statement commending Lake Chad Basin Commission members and Benin for their efforts to operationalise the MNJTF (S/PRST/2015/14). The statement called upon the international community and donors to support the MNJTF, welcomed AU plans to organise a donors' conference in support of the force and requested member states to contribute generously to an AU Trust Fund. In this regard, the presidential statement invited the Secretary-General to support the planned donors' conference and requested him to advocate strongly with the international community and donors in support of these efforts.

Security Challenges for Small Island Developing States

At press time, the Council was expected to hold an open debate on 30 July on the peace and security challenges facing small island developing states (S/PV.7499). New Zealand's Foreign Minister, Murray McCully, was expected to preside and a concept note was circulated to member states in preparation for the debate (S/2015/543). Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the prime ministers of Samoa and Jamaica and the finance minister of the Seychelles were expected to brief.

Yemen

Expected Council Action

In August, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen, is expected to brief Council members. As has been recent practice during Yemen meetings, a representative of OCHA may also brief. No outcome is currently planned.

Key Recent Developments

Yemen has remained engulfed in full-scale war four months after a Saudi Arabia-led coalition began airstrikes against the Houthis (a Zaydi Shiite rebel group) in an effort to restore transition President Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi to power. The conflict continues to pit

the Houthis and military units loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh against forces supporting Hadi, southern separatists, Sunni tribes, Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the Saudi-led coalition. A five-day humanitarian pause from 12 to 17 May led to a brief reduction in the fighting.

UN DOCUMENTS ON YEMEN Security Council Resolution S/RES/2216 (14 April 2015) established an arms embargo on the Houthis and forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh. Security Council Press Statements SC/11966 (10 July 2015) supported the implementation of an unconditional humanitarian pause by all parties to start at midnight on 10 July until the end of Ramadan. SC/11944 (25 June 2015) positively took note of the Special Envoy's "principles" to advance UN-brokered consultations and reaffirmed its call on Yemeni parties to engage in talks without preconditions. SC/11935 (18 June 2015) condemned the 17 June terrorist attacks in Sana'a, including at three mosques. SC/11915 (2 June 2015) expressed deep disappointment that consultations in Geneva, scheduled for 28 May, did not take place and urged Yemeni stakeholders to participate in inclusive negotiations as soon as possible in good faith and without preconditions. SC/11888 (12 May 2015) expressed grave concern about the humanitarian situation in Yemen and welcomed the humanitarian pause from 12 to 17 May. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7494 (28 July 2015) was a briefing by OCHA head Stephen O'Brien on the humanitarian situation.

Yemen (con't)

After several delays, UN-brokered consultations in Geneva between the Yemeni parties began on 15 June. The meeting opened, however, without the Houthis, who did not arrive in Geneva until the following day after what the UN characterised as logistical problems with their flight. The consultations concluded on 19 June without any new agreements. In the lead-up to the meeting, Yemeni government officials said that they were not going to Geneva to negotiate but to implement resolution 2216 and its requirement that the Houthis withdraw from the territory they had seized. Still, the consultations represented the first time that the sides held talks since March, which Ould Cheikh Ahmed stressed was a significant achievement.

Following the consultations, the UN continued to pursue a new humanitarian pause. Hadi sent a letter to the Secretary-General on 8 July outlining a list of requirements for announcing a pause, including that the Houthis first withdraw from the governorates of Aden, Taiz, Marib and Shabwa. On 9 July, the UN announced it had received Houthi assurances to respect a pause, noted Hadi's recent letter and said that it was looking forward to an "unconditional humanitarian pause" to start on 10 July at 23:59 (GMT+3) until the end of Ramadan on 17 July. The pause never materialised as Saudi Arabia said that the coalition did not receive instructions from Hadi to implement it.

Shortly after, southern resistance fighters trained abroad with military advisers from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates joined in an offensive against the Houthis in Aden. On 14 July, they captured the airport, and over the next few days the Houthis were driven from the city. Members of the Yemen government reportedly returned to Aden. Following the victory, Saudi Arabia unilaterally announced a five-day humanitarian pause to start on 26 July at 23:59 (GMT+3). Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, the Houthi-declared acting president, said that the Houthis had not been informed about the pause by the UN and would not take a positive or negative position on it until then. Shortly after its start, both sides had failed to respect the pause.

As fighting raged, Yemen's humanitarian crisis deepened. On 1 July, OCHA and UN agencies declared the situation a "Level 3" emergency, the UN's most severe ranking of

a humanitarian crisis. According to OCHA, 21.1 million people were in need of assistance and nearly 1.3 million people had been displaced. As of 24 July, more than 4,000 deaths had been recorded by medical facilities since fighting escalated in late March, and over 19,800 injured. Actual figures are believed to be much higher. On 24 July, the day before Saudi Arabia announced the latest humanitarian pause, coalition airstrikes struck residential compounds for workers at an electricity plant in the coastal city of Mokha, reportedly killing at least 100 civilians. Furthermore, the World Health Organisation has confirmed outbreaks of dengue fever and malaria, due to a collapse in water and sanitation systems.

OCHA's humanitarian response plan, requiring \$1.6 billion, was only 15 percent funded as of 18 July. Saudi Arabia's pledge that it made in April to provide in full OCHA's emergency appeal issued for \$274 million has yet to materialise. To distribute the money, Saudi Arabia created the King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Works with which UN agencies are currently in negotiations on memoranda of understanding for using this money.

The UN has been negotiating with the coalition the creation of a verification and inspection mechanism to facilitate the increased delivery to Yemen of commercial imports such as food and fuel, which declined to a fraction of pre-crisis levels. The Yemen government sent a letter to the Secretary-General on 14 July stating that the coalition should continue to monitor and inspect all ships, claiming this authority was given to it in resolution 2216.

Council members were briefed in consultations on 24 June by Ould Cheikh Ahmed on the Geneva talks, while OCHA's Operations Director, John Ging, updated members on the humanitarian situation. The next day, Council members issued a press statement welcoming the Geneva talks and "positively took note" of his briefing on a set of negotiating "principles" to which Ould Cheikh Ahmed said he was seeking the agreement of both sides. While speaking to reporters after the meeting, Ould Cheikh Ahmed said that a ceasefire agreement should involve international monitors to observe the parties' adherence to a ceasefire. On 10 July, Council members issued a press statement supporting the

implementation of an unconditional humanitarian pause by all parties, announced by the Secretary-General but which never materialised.

The Council last met on Yemen on 28 July, when OCHA chief Stephen O'Brien briefed on the humanitarian situation, followed by consultations. O'Brien updated members on efforts to alleviate the conflict's toll on civilians, which he described as catastrophic, while highlighting that parties to the conflict were failing to meet their responsibilities under international humanitarian and human rights law.

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 14 July, the spokesperson for High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Al Hussein noted that between 3 and 13 July at least 142 civilians, including 36 children and 27 women, were killed and 224 others injured. On one particularly deadly day, 6 July, two markets in different provinces were hit by airstrikes, killing 76 civilians, including 21 children and 15 women, and injuring 38 others, including five children.

Key Issues

A key issue will be how the Council can support brokering a ceasefire and more comprehensive peace negotiations.

An immediate issue is finding means to obtain pauses in the fighting to address the catastrophic humanitarian situation.

Other issues include the growing risk of the country's partition, with the prospect for southern independence, competing governing authorities and AQAP's expansion, in addition to the emerging presence of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham.

Options

The Council could decide to become more directly engaged. As a first step, it could adopt a resolution:

- calling on all sides to engage in UN-brokered negotiations in good faith and without preconditions;
- requesting an immediate cessation of hostilities;
- expressing grave concern over the humanitarian situation and the need for all sides to enable humanitarian access and commercial goods deliveries, including food and fuel;
- reaffirming that states must report to the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee

Yemen (con't)

inspections of cargo to Yemen and that inspections should be conducted only when there is information providing reasonable grounds a cargo contains prohibited items; and

- re-stating its resolve to impose sanctions on those who impede humanitarian access.

Another option is to hold an Arria-formula meeting on civilian casualties and the humanitarian situation in the context of states' responsibility to protect, examining the causes of and proposals for addressing the war's toll on civilians.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Not long ago, Yemen was viewed by the Council as a success story and promising example of its cooperating with a regional organisation—the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)—in conflict prevention. As the situation worsened during the second half of 2014 and early 2015, the Council relied on the mediation efforts of the then-UN Special Adviser on Yemen, Jamal Benomar. Additionally, the 2140 Sanctions Committee imposed targeted sanctions on Saleh and two Houthi military leaders in November. By February and March, perhaps frustrated by the failure to impact the parties' calculations, most members seemed to defer to the preferences of Saudi Arabia for addressing the problems of its neighbour. The UK, the penholder on Yemen, essentially ceded the role to Jordan

and the GCC, which drafted the initial texts of resolution 2201 adopted in February, a 22 March presidential statement and the 14 April resolution 2216.

Council dynamics have since evolved. With resolution 2216, Russia had been the main dissenting voice. By May other members' support of Jordan and of GCC states' positions had dissipated, apparently because of concerns over the conflict's humanitarian impact and open-endedness of the Saudi-led military intervention. In hindsight, some members felt that the Council had adopted a resolution that had been largely drafted by a party to the conflict and some have privately expressed regret over its adoption.

The Saudi-led coalition has referred to resolution 2216 as a justification for its military intervention. While the resolution explicitly reaffirmed Hadi's legitimacy as Yemen's president, which has implications for his decisions on humanitarian access or the embargo, the resolution did not authorise any specific enforcement measures, other than member states' obligations vis-à-vis the sanctions regime.

As of May, the UK, reasserted itself as penholder. The Council's more recent press statements and "press elements" did not take on various proposals made by Jordan and GCC members, such as emphasising that the Houthis must implement resolution 2216. The Council in its statements has repeatedly

urged the parties to negotiate without pre-conditions and has endorsed the Secretary-General's calls for unconditional humanitarian pauses.

However, there does not appear to be much appetite among members for a new resolution. The Council's current approach seems to be issuing statements in support of the UN's good offices role. Notably, the Council has yet to request a ceasefire, in part because the sides have had such difficulty agreeing to short-term humanitarian pauses, considered a first step for a broader cessation of hostilities. Additionally for members close to Saudi Arabia, there may be a reluctance to call for a ceasefire, which Saudi Arabia opposed when Russia first proposed it. Following the UN's unsuccessful attempt to get a humanitarian pause during Ramadan, the P5 told GCC members and Jordan that they needed to implement a humanitarian pause.

Some Council members have also engaged in bi-lateral pressure rather than resorting to the Council to gain parties' cooperation. However, the recent nuclear negotiations with Iran, culminating in an agreement which has worried Saudi Arabia, may have affected the US and UK's ability to pressure too strongly their long-time ally. Russia and Iran are the only two states whose embassies remain open in Sana'a.

Central African Republic

Expected Council Action

In August, Special Representative Babacar Gaye will brief the Council on the latest report concerning the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

MINUSCA's mandate expires on 30 April 2016.

Key Recent Developments

The situation in the Central African

Republic (CAR) remains fragile. After several postponements, the Bangui Forum for national reconciliation was held between 4 and 11 May, bringing together nearly 700 attendees from the transitional government, political parties, factions of the armed groups (the Muslim ex-Séléka and Christian anti-balaka), the private sector, civil society, traditional chiefs and religious leaders. The armed groups signed a disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and repatriation

(DDRR) agreement, which called for all combatants to give up their weapons by the time of the national elections. According to the agreement, former combatants who have not committed international crimes will either be integrated into the CAR security forces or be given other financial opportunities through development projects. Foreign fighters are to be repatriated to their countries of origin. Rebel groups also agreed to release all child soldiers.

UN DOCUMENTS ON THE CAR [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2217](#) (28 April 2015) was a resolution renewing MINUSCA's mandate at current authorised troop levels until 30 April 2016. [S/RES/2212](#) (26 March 2015) authorised an increase to MINUSCA's troop ceiling. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7427](#) (14 April 2015) was a briefing by Special Representative Babacar Gaye on the MINUSCA report. [Secretary-General's Report S/2015/227](#) (1 April 2015) was on the situation in the CAR. [Security Council Letter S/2015/85](#) (29 January 2015) was from the Secretary-General requesting a troop increase for MINUSCA.

OTHER RELEVANT FACTS [Special Representative and Head of MINUSCA Babacar Gaye](#) (Senegal) [MINUSCA Force Commander Major General Martin Chomu Tumenta](#) (Cameroon) [MINUSCA Size, Composition and Cost of Mission](#) *Strength as of 30 April 2015* 8,566 military personnel, 142 military observers, 1,490 police, 348 international civilian personnel, 167 local civilian staff and 64 UN volunteers. *Mission Duration* 10 April 2014 to present *Approved budget* (1 July 2014 – 1 June 2015): \$628.7 million

Central African Republic (con't)

The agreement has been accompanied by a noticeable decline in rebel group activities and improved security. However, many areas of the country remain in the de-facto control of the ex-Séléka or the anti-balaka, and with the fighting officially over, some rebels have resorted to criminal activities and violence endangering civilians, thus demonstrating the limited control of rebel leaders over some of the fighters within their ranks. Funding for the DDR process is also currently lacking.

Many violent attacks continue to occur on the road to Cameroon, which is used to bring most supplies into the country. A driver of a UN food truck was killed on 18 July, and the deputy prefect and the mayor of the western town of Baboua were kidnapped on 19 July. Cameroonian truck drivers have voiced their unwillingness to drive trucks into the CAR out of fear for their lives. MINUSCA has blamed the Democratic Front of the Central African People, a splinter group of the ex-Seleka, for the recent surge in attacks in the area.

After originally being scheduled for February and postponed until August, presidential and legislative elections in the CAR are now scheduled for 18 October, with a second round (if necessary) set for 22 November. On 21 July, the CAR constitutional court overruled a parliamentary decision that barred the roughly 460,000 CAR refugees from voting in the elections. The court said that logistical difficulties should not prevent the refugees from fulfilling their constitutional right to vote.

On 28 April, the Council adopted resolution 2217, renewing MINUSCA's mandate at current authorised troop levels (10,750 military personnel and 2,080 police personnel), which includes the additional troops recently authorised by the Council in resolution 2212 of 26 March. Resolution 2217 retains MINUSCA's mandate to provide electoral support and calls on the CAR authorities to accelerate preparations, "as a matter of urgency", for the conduct of free, fair and transparent elections. The resolution renews MINUSCA's authorisation to adopt urgent temporary measures, "on an exceptional basis" and at the formal request of the CAR, to arrest and detain individuals in order to fight impunity and maintain law and order.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Secretary-General in his latest MINUSCA report, the resolution includes

a specific provision mandating MINUSCA to assist the CAR in establishing a national Special Criminal Court (SCC). A law establishing the SCC was passed by the National Transitional Council on 22 April and promulgated by Transition President Katherine Samba-Panza on 3 June. The SCC is intended to try those accountable for war crimes and crimes against humanity in the CAR since 2003 and is to be composed of both local and international judges and staff. Accordingly, the resolution calls on the CAR to swiftly implement the law.

A new case of sexual misconduct by foreign troops and UN peacekeepers in the CAR surfaced when UN spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric announced on 23 June that MINUSCA was investigating the suspected sexual abuse of two girls under the age of 16 in Bangui by the troops of an African contingent of MINUSCA (this follows an incident involving the alleged rape of a girl under the age of 16 by a Moroccan peacekeeper). Previously, the UK-based newspaper *The Guardian* revealed that an internal UN investigation recorded detailed testimony from children in the CAR who said they were sexually abused by French troops and soldiers from the Chad and Equatorial Guinea contingents of the AU peacekeeping mission. The sexual abuse allegedly took place from December 2013 to June 2014, a few months before the AU force was re-hatted into MINUSCA. A French investigation into the misconduct of its troops is ongoing, and the Secretary-General has appointed a three-member panel to review how the UN handled the sexual abuse reports, following allegations that senior UN officials failed to adequately respond to the report.

In an unrelated matter, MINUSCA sent 20 peacekeepers back to their country of origin after a 10 June incident in which the apparent use of excessive force resulted in the death of two people. MINUSCA stated that the troops' alleged conduct should be investigated by their home countries.

Sanctions-Related Developments

In August, the 2127 CAR Sanctions Committee will meet to discuss a CAR request to lift the arms embargo on the country. Gaye is expected to participate via video teleconference, as is a representative of the CAR transitional government. Several Council members are of the view that the appropriate procedure for ensuring that the CAR security forces can acquire arms and equipment

is through the exemption procedure for arms sales provided for in resolution 2196.

The Committee is also expected to meet with the Panel of Experts assisting the Committee in August to discuss the midterm update due by 30 July.

Also in August, the chair of the Committee, Raimonda Murnokaitė (Lithuania), is scheduled to pay a visit to the CAR and Cameroon.

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 5 June, the spokesperson for the High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein noted that several incidents that occurred in 2014 involving foreign troops from a number of states operating in the CAR have still not been resolved and require further investigation. The spokesperson expressed concern about one such incident that has yet to be investigated involving the enforced disappearance 15 months ago of at least 11 people, including five women and one child, by troops from the Republic of Congo that were part of MISCA, the AU-led peacekeeping force at the time. The spokesperson announced that the High Commissioner is sending a team from Geneva to the CAR to look into possible further measures to address human rights violations by foreign troops and that the High Commissioner has also been engaging directly with states that provided troops that are the subject of serious allegations, requesting more information about the steps those states have taken to investigate the allegations and urging the prosecution of anyone found to have committed crimes.

The independent expert on the human rights situation in the CAR, Marie-Thérèse Keita Bocoum, released a statement on 26 June after visiting the country from 16 to 23 June, calling on the international community to redouble its efforts to help the country to fully realise its transition to peace, national reconciliation, reconstruction and the end of impunity. The statement noted that an electoral calendar has been set but warned that many challenges remain. It expressed concern at ongoing acts of violence against civilians perpetrated by armed elements, which continue to threaten civilians despite recent agreements on the cessation of hostilities and a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration program. The statement stressed the importance of taking all necessary measures to protect children against violence and abuse, especially those who are vulnerable, such as children in the displacement camp of Mpoko, which the independent expert visited.

Key Issues

Monitoring the political developments closely and how they might affect MINUSCA's operations and priorities will be an ongoing issue.

Ensuring the implementation of the DDR agreement, electoral preparations

Central African Republic (con't)

and the expansion of state authority to the entirety of the CAR will remain issues.

Also a key issue is ensuring accountability for human rights and international humanitarian law violations.

Options

Options for the Council include adopting a statement:

- emphasising the importance of holding fair and free elections in a timely manner;
- calling on member states to contribute funds to DDRR efforts and the elections;
- condemning incidents of sexual violence by peacekeepers and calling for accountability measures by troop-contributing countries for such acts; and
- stressing the Council's long-term

commitment to the CAR's stabilisation and rebuilding.

An option for the Sanctions Committee is listing further individuals and entities whose names were given to the Committee by the Panel of Experts. (The designations of 12 individuals and three entities suggested for sanctioning by the Panel are still pending in the Committee.)

Council and Wider Dynamics

With the conclusion of the Bangui Forum and agreement on DDRR, Council members will be interested in seeing if MINUSCA's operations require any adjustments and, in particular, how MINUSCA can assist in ensuring that the elections will finally be held in October in order to end the transitional

period, allow the CAR to move forward on DDRR and establish state presence and institutions throughout the country.

The issue of sanctions continues to divide the Council. Countries such as France and the US view sanctions as counterproductive to the political process at this point, and as antagonising to some of the political actors, including the former rebels. Other Council members, such as Russia and China, are reluctant to apply sanctions as a matter of general policy. Some elected members, such as Lithuania, while aware of the above concerns, have been calling for increased use of sanctions against individuals who are involved in criminal activities and not involved in the political process.

France is the penholder on the CAR.

Syria

Expected Council Action

In August, Council members expect to receive their regular monthly briefings on the chemical weapons and humanitarian tracks in Syria.

Key Recent Developments

On 9 July, Acting UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo briefed Council members on the chemical weapons track. During the consultations, the US introduced a draft resolution to set up a UN-OPCW "Joint Investigative Mechanism" to determine responsibility for the use of chemical weapons in Syria. The draft had been negotiated by the P5 for months before it was introduced to the full membership. After two rounds of expert-level negotiations, the draft reverted to bilateral negotiations between Russia and the US. At press time, the US was optimistic it would soon be adopted.

Regarding the military situation, the Syrian government and the Iran-backed Lebanese militia Hezbollah launched a joint operation in mid-July to take control of the rebel-held town of Zabadani—a key supply route between Damascus and the Lebanese

border. According to media reports, the government has dropped barrel bombs on civilian areas in this border town at the rate of 30 per day. On 22 July, UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura asserted that the bombs had caused "unprecedented levels of destruction and many deaths among the civilian population". He called on the government "to halt the use of crude and indiscriminate weapons, such as barrel bombs, on its own cities".

Meanwhile, a coalition of Islamist rebel forces, supported by the Al Qaida-affiliated Al Nusra Front, began a new offensive on 3 July to expel government forces from Aleppo. The Southern Front of the moderate rebel Free Syrian Army continued its offensive against the remaining government positions in Dera'a province.

US President Barack Obama has pledged to do more to help Syria's moderate opposition. However, the US train-and-equip programme is designed to aid opposition forces in fighting the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and not in fighting the regime. As a result, only 60 Syrian fighters have volunteered for training.

In early July, US-led airstrikes pounded

ISIS targets in Raqqa after a Kurdish offensive in mid-June caused ISIS to retreat and lose control of almost a third of its stronghold in Raqqa province. On 6 July, Obama said, in reference to Kurdish forces, that ISIS could be countered with effective partners on the ground.

On 7 and 8 July, a US delegation to Turkey pressed for access to Incirlik airbase. In the past, Ankara has insisted the use of Incirlik would be conditioned on a US commitment to increase its military engagement in Syria beyond anti-ISIS strikes—in particular to help enforce a "safe zone" in Syria. Ankara has further concerns that the US air support for Kurdish forces that has enabled their territorial gains in Syria could ignite Kurdish separatist sentiment in Turkey.

An ISIS-linked terrorist attack on 20 July that killed 32 people in Suruc, a Turkish town near the Syrian border, altered these calculations. A majority of the Suruc victims were Kurdish. In retaliation, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) claimed responsibility for a series of attacks against Turkish security forces in the week following the Suruc bombing, further escalating tensions. In response, the Turkish government has claimed over 1,000

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/2191](#) (17 December 2014), [S/RES/2165](#) (14 July 2014) and [S/RES/2139](#) (22 February 2014) were on the humanitarian situation. [Security Council Press Statement SC/11979](#) (22 July 2015) condemned the terrorist attack in Turkey. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7497](#) (29 July 2015) was on the political situation. [S/PV.7493](#) (28 July 2015) was on the humanitarian situation. [Security Council Letter S/2015/563](#) (24 July 2015) was from Turkey, reporting that it was taking military action against ISIS in Syria, citing Article 51 of the UN Charter—the right of self-defence under Chapter VII. [Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/561](#) (23 July 2015) was on the humanitarian situation. [S/2015/485](#) (26 June 2015) was on chemical weapons.

Syria (con't)

people have been detained who are suspected of belonging to the PKK or ISIS. Ankara has also begun to carry out air-strikes against ISIS in Syria and the PKK in northern Iraq and has agreed to allow the US to use Incirlik airbase. In exchange, Turkey and the US have agreed on an “ISIS-free zone” in northern Syria that Ankara has interpreted as a de-facto “safe zone”. However, there is no confirmation that the US will widen its military objectives in Syria beyond ISIS. Kurdish fighters in Syria view the “safe zone” as Turkey’s attempt to prevent a contiguous area under Kurdish control.

On 24 July, Turkey sent a letter to the Security Council reporting that it was taking military action against ISIS in Syria, citing Article 51 of the UN Charter—the right of self-defence under Chapter VII. It made no reference to its military strikes in northern Iraq.

Media reports indicate that Turkey is prioritising its operations against the PKK over its anti-ISIS strikes in Syria. Analysts note that there is certain level of confusion around the relative US silence on Turkey’s strikes against the PKK—whose Kurdish affiliates have been effective in cooperating with the anti-ISIS coalition in both Iraq and Syria.

On 28 July, NATO condemned terrorist attacks against Turkey after Turkey called for a meeting of the body under article 4 (a request for consultations). Turkey did not invoke article 5 which would set in motion the possibility of collective self-defence and requires reporting to the Security Council. It seems that behind closed doors NATO ambassadors urged Turkey to temper its use of force against the Kurds.

The adoption by the Security Council on 20 July of resolution 2231, which establishes a monitoring system of Iran’s nuclear programme in exchange for the lifting of UN sanctions, is seen as having implications for Syria. The US has argued that sanctions relief will empower Iran’s moderates and lead to greater regional cooperation, but the Gulf allies of the US have expressed concern that Iran will use this economic boost to continue to support the regime of President Bashar al Assad in Damascus. (On 22 July, a new \$1 billion credit line from Tehran to Damascus went into effect, in addition to the \$3.6 billion from July 2013.)

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Stephen O’Brien briefed the

Council on 28 July presenting the Secretary-General’s report that said the devastating humanitarian situation in Syria “bears unflinching witness to the urgent need to find a political settlement to this ruinous conflict.”

On the political track, de Mistura met with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in July to present the results of the UN-facilitated consultations he launched in Geneva on 5 May. These consultations were convened 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 Assad and has been complicated by the presence of ISIS in Syria. On 30 June, the third anniversary of the Geneva Communiqué, Ban said the Security Council could not afford to waste further time in ending the cycle of violence, and the cost of further delay is unacceptable to all—strategically, politically and morally.

However, the recent Geneva consultations were not convened in order to achieve an immediate and concrete political solution. Rather, they were undertaken to keep a mediation process alive despite the prevailing climate of insufficient political will among the major domestic, regional and international actors 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.

When de Mistura briefed the Council on 29 July, he announced that his office would facilitate intra-Syrian working groups on ways to implement key elements of the Geneva Communiqué. Such working groups would get underway in September and hold parallel discussions on political and constitutional issues; military and security issues (including counter-terrorism); public institutions; and reconstruction and development. He said that the results emanating from such intra-Syrian working groups could generate a “Syrian-owned framework document” on the implementation of the Geneva Communiqué. Such a framework could also provide for a transitional governing body, procedures for a national dialogue, the constitution drafting process and transitional justice issues. He stressed that the support of the Security Council would be critical to convince all Syrian and regional players to get involved.

Human Rights-Related Developments

By a vote of 29 in favour, six against (including Security Council members China, Russia and Venezuela) and 12 abstentions, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on 2 July condemning the widespread use of sexual violence and torture in detention centres; the continued use of chemical weapons, including chlorine gas; use by the Syrian authorities of heavy weapons, cluster munitions and aerial bombardments, including any indiscriminate use of ballistic missiles and barrel bombs and the shelling of medical facilities; and demanding access of UN and humanitarian actors, including to besieged areas, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions (A/HRC/29/L.4).

Key Issues

The main issue for the Council—in the fifth year of a war that has exacted a death toll of 250,000, injured one million and displaced half of the Syrian population—is to find ways to provide 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.

Options

While the Council has many tools at its disposal—such as imposing an arms embargo or targeted sanctions, referring Syria to the ICC or 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.

Although unlikely, the Council could vote to refer Syria to the General Assembly under the “Uniting for Peace” procedure, so that the General Assembly might recommend collective action, including sanctions and the use of force. This would be a procedural vote and therefore could not be vetoed by any of the P5, requiring only nine affirmative votes. A “Uniting for Peace” resolution by the General Assembly can confer legitimacy on international collective action, but it would carry no binding obligation for such action. (Alternatively, the General Assembly does not require a Security Council referral to adopt a “Uniting for Peace” resolution.)

At press time, it seemed that the potential

Syria (con't)

adoption of a resolution establishing an attribution mechanism on the use of chemical weapons in Syria, in tandem with the successful conclusion of the Iran nuclear deal, may open space for Council members to move forward on a range of initiatives. These include:

- a resolution drafted by France on indiscriminate attacks, including the government's use of barrel bombs;
- a resolution drafted by the humanitarian leads—Jordan, New Zealand and Spain—to set up an assessment of conditions in besieged communities; and
- the US draft presidential statement on violations of medical neutrality.

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 such action specific to the government remains a deterrent.

Council members uniformly support de Mistura's efforts but acknowledge that his newest proposal may be little more than a place holder until there is a major shift on the part of external actors to tilt the balance toward a political solution.

The great majority of Council members think that a UN-OPCW "Joint Investigative Mechanism", if established, would have the potential to allow the Council to receive explicit information about the actors responsible for the use of chemical weapons in Syria. However, none believe that this would be

sufficient to bridge divisive Council dynamics in order to adopt the "further measures" which have been persistently threatened for non-compliance with Security Council resolutions, such as targeted sanctions or an arms embargo.

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 seeking agreement by the broader Council.

Council members France, Jordan, Lithuania, New Zealand, Spain, the UK and the US are part of the anti-ISIS coalition. Though not all directly participate in air strikes, British pilots have been embedded with the US-led coalition.

Regional Organisations

Expected Council Action

In August, at Nigeria's initiative, the Council is scheduled to have an open debate on regional organisations and contemporary challenges for maintaining international peace and security. An outcome is not expected.

Background

Improving partnerships and cooperation with regional organisations has been a recurring theme for the Council and other parts of the UN system. Within the last year, the Council has held two open debates specifically focused on cooperation with regional and subregional organisations. On 28 July 2014, the Council held an open debate on regional partnerships in peacekeeping and adopted resolution 2167, and on 16 December 2014, the Council held an open debate on AU-UN partnership in peace operations and issued a presidential statement. On an annual basis, Council members have held joint consultative meetings with members of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC)

and more recently, informal meetings with members of the EU Political and Security Committee. The Secretary-General has also issued biannual reports regarding cooperation with regional and other organisations. Lastly, both the report on peace operations of the High-Level Independent Panel and the report on peacebuilding of the Advisory Group of Experts emphasise the need for strengthening UN partnerships with regional and subregional organisations.

There has also been an increasing realisation among Council members that responding effectively to contemporary regional and transnational threats—such as piracy, health crises, organised crime, terrorism and human trafficking—requires improved cooperation among subregional, regional and international organisations. On 14 August 2013, the Council issued a presidential statement stressing the importance of regional coordination for counter-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Guinea; on 18 September 2014, the Council held

an open debate on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and adopted resolution 2177 declaring it a threat to international peace and security and calling on regional and subregional organisations to mobilise and cooperate closely with the UN on response efforts; on 19 December 2014, the Council held an open debate and adopted resolution 2195 regarding linkages between transnational organised crime and terrorism, which also commended existing subregional and regional security mechanisms in Africa; and on 11 May, representatives of the AU, EU and UN emphasised the need for inter-regional cooperation when they briefed the Council regarding migration, smuggling and the Mediterranean Sea crisis.

Council and Wider Dynamics

The open debate in August comes at a time when threats to international peace and security increasingly appear to have transborder and regional dimensions. The Council, in turn, has become more flexible in terms of

UN DOCUMENTS ON REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS **Security Council Resolutions** S/RES/2195 (19 December 2014) concerned linkages between transnational organised crime and terrorism. S/RES/2177 (18 September 2014) declared the Ebola outbreak in West Africa a threat to international peace and security. S/RES/2167 (28 July 2014) concerned partnership with regional and subregional organisations for peacekeeping operations. **Security Council Presidential Statements** S/PRST/2014/27 (16 December 2014) was on cooperation between the AU and UN. S/PRST/2014/4 (14 February 2014) was on cooperation between the EU and UN. S/PRST/2013/13 (14 August 2013) was on piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. **Security Council Meeting Record** S/PV.7439 (11 May 2015) was a briefing concerning the smuggling of migrants on the Mediterranean Sea. **Security Council Letter** S/2015/212 (20 March 2015) transmitted the communiqué from the ninth annual joint consultative meeting between members of the AU Peace and Security Council and the UN Security Council. **Secretary-General's Report** S/2014/560 (4 August 2014) was on cooperation with regional and other organisations.

Regional Organisations (con't)

how it interacts with regional organisations and in terms of what it determines to be a threat. Institutionally, the UN system has also shown flexibility, such as with the creation of the UN Regional Office for Central Africa

and the UN Office for West Africa. However, both policymaking and operational obstacles to greater cooperation in peace operations also remain, such as competing mandates, differences regarding UN financing for AU

peace support operations, re-hatting processes and coordination difficulties. The upcoming open debate is an opportunity to further discuss these challenges.

DPRK (North Korea)

Expected Council Action

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

Key Recent Developments

The DPRK continues to try to develop its nuclear and ballistic missile programme in defiance of Council resolutions. On 8 May, the DPRK claimed it test-fired a newly developed ballistic missile from a submarine, which would represent a significant step toward developing its sea-based launch capabilities. On 20 May, the DPRK's National Defense Commission claimed it had developed the ability to miniaturise nuclear weapons, which is necessary to fit a nuclear bomb on a ballistic missile. Analysts have expressed doubt over this latter claim.

Also in May, according to a Republic of Korea (ROK) intelligence report, DPRK leader Kim Jong-un had Defense Minister Hyon Yong Chol publicly executed with an anti-aircraft gun for insubordination. In June, an article by the DPRK state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) named General Pak Yong Sik as Defense Minister, which has been viewed as a confirmation of Hyon's purging. The ROK's National Intelligence Service estimates that since Kim came to power in 2011 the DPRK has executed 70 officials.

At a press conference during a visit to the ROK on 18 May, US Secretary of State John Kerry recalled the Council's consideration last December of the human rights situation in the DPRK. He noted the need for "the global community to continue to shed light on North Korea's atrocities against its

own people". Kerry further stressed that the human rights violations in the country and Kim's behaviour in particular were worthy of referral to the ICC.

On 21 July, a week after the agreement on an Iran nuclear deal, a spokesperson for the Foreign Ministry said that the DPRK was "not interested at all in the dialogue to discuss the issue of making it freeze or dismantle its nukes unilaterally," according to KCNA. The spokesperson added that the two situations were "quite different" and that the DPRK's "nuclear deterrence... is not a play-thing to be put on the negotiating table, as it is the essential means to protect its sovereignty and vital rights from the US nuclear threat and hostile policy".

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 6 May, the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee sent a letter to Mexico in response to Mexico's request for Committee guidance, clarifying its asset freeze obligations in the case of the *Mu Du Bong*, a ship that Mexico seized in July 2014 after it ran aground in the Gulf of Mexico. The Committee informed Mexico that since the *Mu Du Bong* belonged to Ocean Maritime Management Company (OMM), which is subject to the Council's asset-freeze measures, Mexico was obligated to continue to hold the ship. (OMM was designated by the Sanctions Committee on 28 July 2014 for its involvement in the Chong Chon Gang case, in which Panama intercepted a ship in July 2013 on its way from Cuba to the DPRK with weapons concealed in a cargo of sugar.) The Committee's letter may serve as a precedent in further considering the Panel's recommendation to create an implementation assistance notice on the Chong Chon Gang incident that would, inter alia, clarify that vessels are included among the "assets" and "resources" of designated entities and individuals which states are required by resolutions 1718 and 1894 to freeze.

The Committee received from the DPRK Panel of Experts an addendum, dated 13 May, to the Panel's incident report regarding launches of ballistic missiles by the DPRK. This confirmed that

missile launches by DPRK on 2 March constituted a sanctions violation. Several member states sent letters to the Committee regarding the DPRK's 8 May submarine missile test, which the Panel has proceeded to investigate.

The Committee has not met since Oyarzun last briefed the Council in consultations on 28 May. It has also not reached agreement on the Panel's recommendations from its 23 February Final Report.

Human Rights-Related Developments

High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein conducted an official three-day visit to Seoul, Republic of Korea (ROK), where he attended the opening on 25 June of a new UN Human Rights Office to work on the human rights situation in the DPRK. The establishment of the office was recommended in the report of the Commission of Inquiry on the human rights situation in the DPRK (S/2014/276) and requested by the Human Rights Council in a resolution adopted on 27 March (A/HRC/28/22). The office's mandate includes strengthening the monitoring and documentation of the human rights situation in the DPRK towards establishing accountability; enhancing engagement and capacity-building with the governments of all states concerned, civil society and other stakeholders; and advocacy and outreach initiatives. During his visit to Seoul, the High Commissioner also met President Park Geun-hye, the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission and civil society organisations to discuss the human rights situation in the DPRK and the ROK.

Key Issues

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

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

At the Sanctions Committee level, a

UN DOCUMENTS ON THE DPRK Security Council Letter S/2015/365 (21 May 2015) was from the DPRK transmitting the National Defense Commission statement on the test fire of a ballistic missile from a submarine and a DPRK foreign ministry statement in response to US Secretary of State John Kerry's 18 May comments. [Sanctions Committee Document S/2015/131](#) (23 February 2015) was the final report of the DPRK Panel of Experts.

DPRK (North Korea) (con't)

key issue remains agreeing on the Panel of Experts' recommendations.

Options

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

On the human rights situation in the DPRK, an option is to organise a briefing by the High Commissioner for Human Rights on his recent visit to the ROK and to receive an update on the work of the newly established office. (The Council last discussed the human rights situation in DPRK in December 2014.)

Council Dynamics

The lack of Committee activity since the end of

May has been attributed to the Council's busy schedule and not due to an inability to agree on the recommendations of the Panel of Experts. Although China has made clear it will not support designating entities or individuals that are close to the government and has reservations about the number of entities (34) linked to the OMM that the Panel has proposed be added to the sanctions list, it has expressed willingness to continue discussions on implementation of the Panel's recommendations.

On the human rights situation, there have been discussions among some members on how this issue can be advanced in the Council. It seems these members would like to see the Council return to the issue this fall or by the end of the year. Spain has the Council presidency in October, and while supportive of the Council's considering the matter, it does not want to take the lead on the human rights aspect due to its chairmanship of the DPRK Sanctions Committee. The UK and the US have the presidencies in November and December, respectively, which are seen as other possible months for Council

consideration of the agenda item. Based on Kerry's strong remarks, the US would appear likely to seek the Council's consideration of the subject during its presidency. Some members believe that since the issue is now on the Council's agenda, it should be considered in either a public meeting or consultations, as opposed to an Arria-formula format. In such a case, as when a procedural vote was necessary for the Council to discuss the DPRK's human rights situation last December due to China's opposition, another consideration is ensuring that a minimum of nine Council members would support such a vote. The Council would likely be divided on any substantive action, such as an ICC referral, but its meeting on the issue is seen as an important way to bring attention to human rights conditions in the DPRK.

The US is the penholder on the DPRK while Spain chairs the 1718 Sanctions Committee.

Sudan (Darfur)

Expected Council Action

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

Key Recent Developments

The humanitarian and security situation in Darfur remains grim, with little progress on the political front. According to OCHA, there are now 2.6 million internally displaced persons in the region in the context of ongoing inter-communal violence. On 14 July, clashes between the Reizegat and Habaniya communities in South Darfur, sparked by a cattle-raiding incident, reportedly left dozens dead. Inter-communal clashes in Mellit, North Darfur, on 7 July between the Barti and Zayadia communities resulted in the displacement of approximately 2,500 people, and the burning down of several villages, according to the Sudanese

government's Humanitarian Aid Commission.

The "national dialogue process"—announced in early April 2014 to "stop war and bring peace, free political society, fight against poverty and revitalise national identity" in the words of President Omar al-Bashir—has shown no results. A preparatory meeting for the dialogue, scheduled for 29-30 March in Addis Ababa and organised by the AU High-Level Implementation Panel, was cancelled after the ruling National Congress Party refused to attend, objecting to holding the meeting just prior to the April national elections. The NCP recently expressed willingness to reinstate the dialogue; it is questionable, however, whether key opposition actors will engage in a dialogue process that to date has been marred by government repression.

On 29 June, the Council adopted resolution 2228 renewing the mandate of UNAMID for an additional year with the same force structure and the same core mandate

focusing on, among other things, protection of civilians, humanitarian access and support for the political process. The resolution stresses that any refinement of the mission should "be based on progress against... [its]...benchmarks and the conditions on the ground" while being "implemented in a gradual, phased, flexible and reversible manner". It further "looks forward to the Secretary-General's recommendations" on an exit strategy, which the Council will consider "in due course". The AU and the UN continue to consult with the government of Sudan on a way forward with regard to an exit strategy for the mission.

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 28 May, Ambassador Ramírez provided the quarterly briefing in consultations on the work of the 1591 Sanctions Committee and its Panel of Experts. He advocated for the Committee and the Panel to play a role in the political process in Darfur (i.e., by supporting the Doha process and

UN DOCUMENTS ON DARFUR Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2228 (29 June 2015) renewed the mandate of UNAMID for one year. S/RES/2200 (12 February 2015) was on the Panel of Experts.

Sudan (Darfur) (con't)

the efforts of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel to mediate the national dialogue among stakeholders in Sudan). He suggested that the Committee and the Panel participate in the deliberations of the tripartite working group of the UN, the AU and the government of Sudan, which has been tasked with developing suggestions for an exit strategy for UNAMID.

The first quarterly report of the Panel of Experts was transmitted to the Sanctions Committee in early June. It reportedly noted that the issuance of visas to Panel members had taken six weeks, which negatively affected their work. The report apparently referred to violations of the arms embargo by the government of Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement rebels.

According to the Sudan Tribune, former Janjaweed commander Musa Hilal, who is subject to a travel ban and assets freeze under the 1591 Sanctions regime, recently travelled to Egypt in violation of the sanctions.

Key Issues

The underlying issue is the apparent ineffectiveness of the sanctions regime, reflected in ongoing violations of the arms embargo and the travel ban against designated individuals.

A broader concern for the Council is the continuing instability in the security and humanitarian environment in Darfur, with no progress on the political front.

Options

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

The Council might consider extending the arms embargo to all of Sudan, rather than just Darfur.

In terms of format, another option would be to hold the upcoming quarterly briefing in public, rather than in consultations. In November 2014, the then-Sanctions Committee chair, Argentina, briefed on the work on the committee in public, followed by consultations. Since then, all the briefings on the Committee's work have been held in a closed

session (i.e., consultations).

Council Dynamics

Venezuela believes that resolution 2200, which extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 12 February 2016, provides the Panel with the flexibility to engage in the mediation process in Darfur. Most Council members—including all of the permanent members—do not share this interpretation of the mandate.

There are divergent perceptions of the government's level of cooperation with the Committee and the Panel. The P3 and countries such as Chile, New Zealand and Spain tend to be critical of Sudan for administrative obstacles—e.g., delays in issuing visas to Panel members—while Chad, China, Malaysia and Russia are more sympathetic toward the government.

While Venezuela chairs the Sudan Sanctions Committee, the UK is the penholder on Darfur.

Lebanon (UNIFIL)

Expected Council Action

In August, the Security Council is expected to extend the mandate of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for another year, ahead of its expiry on 31 August. This will be the ninth UNIFIL renewal since the cessation of hostilities between Israel and Lebanon in 2006. The resolution authorising the renewal is likely to contain no significant operational changes to the UNIFIL mandate.

Key Recent Developments

Lebanon continues to face numerous domestic challenges as well as mounting external threats. The ongoing presidential vacuum continues to impair Lebanon's ability to address security and socio-economic challenges facing the country. The unstable regional environment caused by the Syrian crisis, fighting along Lebanon's north-eastern border with Syria and tensions on the Lebanon-Israel border continue to undermine the

overall stability of the country.

Council members last received an update on the situation in Lebanon during a briefing in consultations on 8 July. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous and UN Special Coordinator Sigrid Kaag briefed on the latest Secretary-General's report. Although the report welcomed the period of relative calm in the UNIFIL area of operations, it expressed concern over increasingly inflammatory rhetoric by both Israel and Hezbollah, which contributes to increased tension in the area. The report also notes the growing threat posed by the extremist groups present in Lebanon near the Syrian border and the importance of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) in maintaining stability and control over Lebanese territory.

Despite relative calm along the Blue Line and in the UNIFIL area of operations, Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace continue on a regular basis. On 21 June, the media reported

an Israeli airstrike carried out in the Bekaa region in eastern Lebanon aimed at destroying a downed Israeli drone. Just weeks later, on 11 July, an Israeli drone crashed in the Lebanese port city of Tripoli. Following the incident, the LAF published photographs of the downed drone and issued a statement claiming that the drone belonged to Israel Defence Force (IDF).

On 7 July, the head of mission and force commander of UNIFIL, Major General Luciano Portolano, chaired a regular tripartite meeting with senior officers from the LAF and the IDF. After the meeting, Portolano noted that despite negative public rhetoric in the past few months, both parties were focusing on the real issues on the ground and on cooperation with UNIFIL. Earlier in June, senior Israeli military officials said that they had identified various Hezbollah military sites among civilian populated areas in southern Lebanon and that they would try to

UN DOCUMENTS ON LEBANON Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2172 (26 August 2014) extended the mandate of UNIFIL for one year. **S/RES/1559** (2 September 2004) urged withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and extension of the Lebanese government's control over all Lebanese territory. **Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2015/7** (19 March 2015) addressed several issues, including the vacancy in the presidential office and the effects of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon. **Secretary-General's Report S/2015/475** (25 June 2015) was the most recent report on the implementation of resolution 1701.

Lebanon (UNIFIL) (con't)

limit civilian casualties in case of a confrontation with Hezbollah by giving notice to civilians prior to launching an attack. For its part, Hezbollah has threatened to displace millions of Israelis should Israel launch an offensive on Lebanon.

Regarding the political situation, the ongoing presidential vacuum continues to have destabilising effects on Lebanon. The office of the executive has been vacant since former President Michel Sleiman's term expired on 25 May 2014. On 7 July, Lebanon exceeded 409 days without a president which is so far the longest period the country has been without the executive. Previously, the longest presidential vacuum lasted 408 days after then president Amine Gemayel's term ended in September 1988.

On 9 July, numerous supporters of the Free Patriotic Movement, a Christian party led by Michael Aoun, gathered in Beirut to demonstrate against Sunni Prime Minister Tammam Salam. Aoun's supporters accused Salam of diminishing Christian influence and rousing tensions in the country. Furthermore, Aoun accused Salman of unilateral decision-making and assuming powers granted to the president.

In its 26th attempt, the parliament failed on 15 July to elect a president because it lacked the necessary number of representatives for a quorum, which requires the presence of at least 86 out of a total of 128 representatives. For more than a year now, the parliament has been unable to reach an agreement because Hezbollah together with

parliamentarians allied with Aoun's Change and Reform bloc continue to boycott the parliamentary sessions. The next session is scheduled to take place on 12 August.

The Syrian crisis continues to affect the political, security and humanitarian situations in Lebanon. There are an estimated 1.2 million registered refugees in Lebanon, which represents close to one-quarter of the total population of the country. This is putting an enormous burden on Lebanon's ability to secure the country and maintain its stability.

In addition, Hezbollah and the Syrian army have been engaged in heavy battles against the Al-Nusra Front in the Qalamoun region in Syria along the border with Lebanon. At the beginning of July, Hezbollah and the Syrian army launched an offensive to retake Zabadani, a key strategic town in Qalamoun. At press time, fierce fighting for control of Zabadani was continuing, with the Syrian army and Hezbollah taking control of Zabadani's suburbs and making advances towards the centre of the town.

Key Issues

A main issue for the Council remains the need to prevent an escalation or return to hostilities between Israel and Lebanon.

The conflict in Syria poses several concerns arising from the engagement of Lebanese elements in the conflict, continued fighting in Syria-Lebanon border areas and the growing number of Syrian refugees, all of which have adverse social, political and economic effects on Lebanon.

Another important issue continues to be the possession of weapons by Hezbollah and other non-state actors, which restricts the ability of the state to exercise full authority over its territory, poses a threat to Lebanon's sovereignty and stability and contravenes its obligations under resolutions 1559 and 1701.

Lebanon's inability to elect a president and the deadlock in the country's parliament have become other worrying issues for the Council.

Options

The most likely option for the Council is to renew the UNIFIL mandate in its current configuration for another year.

Council Dynamics

The Council stands united in its position that UNIFIL contributes to stability between Israel and Lebanon, even more so in light of the ongoing Syrian crisis. A comprehensive presidential statement issued on 19 March outlined the main issues on which the Council is united in support of Lebanon. Primarily, the Council continues to support Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity and security while it condemns acts of terrorism on Lebanese territory. Also, the Council recognises the crucial role played by the LAF in responding to the security challenges. The Council is also united in its concern about the continued vacancy in the presidency, particularly given the extreme challenges facing Lebanon at this time.

France is the penholder on Lebanon in the Council.

Kosovo

Expected Council Action

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

Key Recent Developments

The main development leading up to the last

debate on Kosovo was the resumption of the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, which had been suspended for ten months. Since the Council last met on Kosovo on 26 May, two high-level meetings between Serbia and Kosovo were held under the auspices of the EU. Though some progress was made on the most contentious issue of the Association/Community of Serb Municipalities (ASM/CSM), at press time no final political agreement had been reached.

The Association/Community is supposed

to ensure the cooperation of participating municipalities and to have full overview of the areas of economic development, education, health and urban and rural planning. In addition to the ongoing Belgrade-Pristina dialogue, the establishment of the special court for the prosecution of war crimes committed by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) during the Kosovo war is another issue dominating the political agenda in Kosovo and getting significant attention within the international community. During the last debate,

UN DOCUMENTS ON KOSOVO Security Council Resolution S/RES/1244 (10 June 1999) authorised NATO to secure and enforce the withdrawal of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia forces from Kosovo and established UNMIK. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7448** (26 May 2015) was the most recent quarterly debate on UNMIK.

Kosovo (con't)

the majority of Council members joined Zarif in calling on Kosovo authorities to ensure the establishment of the special court.

On 23 June, EU High Representative Federica Mogherini hosted a meeting between prime ministers Aleksandar Vučić of Serbia and Isa Mustafa of Kosovo. The agenda for this meeting included four outstanding issues between Belgrade and Pristina: the establishment of the ASM/CSM, energy, telecommunications and freedom of movement on the bridge between North and South Mitrovica. No agreement was reached during this round of talks.

The EU-facilitated dialogue continued in Brussels on 29 June. After 16 hours of negotiations, both sides reported making notable progress, especially on the issues of ASM/CSM and telecommunications. However, according to Mogherini, final political agreement was still not reached on these issues. The main point of contention in negotiations seems to be the issue of the ASM/CSM. The Serbian side advocates an agreement that would give the Association/Community executive powers and greater autonomy from the central Kosovar government. Kosovo takes the position that competencies of ASM/CSM need to comply with Kosovo law. This implies that Kosovo leaders oppose any attempt to form another tier of government, in addition to the central and local levels.

The establishment of the ASM/CSM is one of the key points of the 19 April 2013 First Agreement on Principles Governing the Normalisation of Relations between Belgrade and Pristina. The implementation of the agreement stands as one of the key prerequisites for Serbia's further accession talks with the EU, the main foreign policy objective of Serbia.

On the domestic front, formation of the special court that is supposed to investigate cases of alleged war crimes committed by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) during the conflict in Kosovo is still pending. In April 2014, the Kosovo Assembly voted to transfer the functions of the EU Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) Special Investigative Task Force to a special court. However, the establishment of the court requires amending the Kosovo Constitution, which has to be approved by

two-thirds of the representatives in the Kosovo Assembly. The US and the EU, in particular have exerted significant pressure on Kosovo leaders to establish the court.

After it was postponed several times, the vote on the constitutional amendment paving the way for the establishment of the court was held on 26 June. Out of 120 representatives in the Assembly, 75 voted in favour of the amendments, seven voted no, two abstained and the rest did not participate in the vote. The legislation was thus not adopted because it did not obtain the necessary two-thirds majority. At press time, it was still unknown when the next vote would take place. However, it seems that the government of Kosovo will not call for a vote on the special court unless it can be confident that the amendments have the support of two-thirds of the Assembly.

On 27 May, a judicial panel at Mitrovica Basic Court indicted 11 out of 15 members of the so-called "Drenica group" for various war crimes committed in the late 1990s. All members of the Drenica group were former KLA members who fought in the Kosovo war and were based in the Drenica region of Kosovo. The Drenica group indictments and the attempts to create a special court drew strong opposition from KLA veterans organisations in Kosovo.

On 17 June, former prime minister and current leader of the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo political party, Ramush Haradinaj, was detained in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on war-crimes charges. The Slovenian authorities were acting on a 2006 Interpol arrest warrant issued by Serbia regarding Haradinaj's role in the Kosovo war in the late 1990s. Haradinaj surrendered to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in 2005 and was acquitted of war-crimes charges in 2012. On 19 June, Slovenia released Haradinaj, concluding that the ICTY had already addressed all of the charges in the arrest warrant.

Key Issues

Maintaining stability remains the main issue for the Council.

A related issue will be the implementation of existing agreements between Belgrade

and Pristina and more specifically what role UNMIK could play to that end.

An increasingly important issue for the Council is the establishment of the special court for investigating alleged war crimes committed by the KLA, especially in light of current delays. The Council could play a crucial role in establishing the court, should Kosovo authorities fail to do so.

Options

The Council could consider reconfiguring UNMIK's mandate and decreasing its presence on the ground, considering the relative stability in Kosovo.

Given the overall progress made in normalising relations between Belgrade and Pristina and the overall stability in Kosovo, the Council could consider modifying the Secretary-General's reporting cycle, currently set at three-month intervals.

The Council could consider setting up an ad hoc accountability mechanism for alleged KLA crimes, should Kosovo authorities fail to do so.

Or the Council could choose to take no action, as was the case in previous years.

Council Dynamics

Kosovo remains an issue of relatively low intensity for the Council, with other regional organisations, mainly the EU, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, playing more active roles.

The Council's dynamics on Kosovo remain unchanged, with a clear division between permanent members. France, the UK and the US recognise Kosovo, while China and Russia do not and are supportive of Serbia's position. The rift between Russia and the P3 is even more evident now after the recent vote on the resolution on the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre, which Russia vetoed, in addition to the already strained relations over the crisis in Ukraine.

Though several Council members, most notably the UK, the US and Lithuania, have recommended lengthening the reporting cycle for Secretary-General's reports on Kosovo, Russia remains strongly opposed to any alteration of the reporting cycle or of UNMIK's mandate.

South Sudan

Expected Council Action

In late August, the Council is expected to hold a briefing, followed by consultations, on the Secretary-General's report on the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and on the work of the South Sudan Sanctions Committee. A representative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and Ambassador Cristián Barros (Chile), chair of the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee, will brief. (At press time, the mid-term report of the Panel of Experts was expected on 28 July, and the UNMISS report was expected by 17 August.)

The mandate of UNMISS expires on 30 November.

Key Recent Developments

A security, human rights and humanitarian catastrophe continues to unfold in South Sudan. In recent months, there has been heavy fighting between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) and the SPLM/A in Opposition, concentrated in oil-producing Unity and Upper Nile states. In addition to continuing reports of atrocities against civilians, there is evidence of recruitment of child soldiers by both sides. There are now more than 1.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the country, as well as more than 600,000 refugees who have fled to neighbouring countries. According to OCHA, more than 166,000 IDPs are currently protected in six UNMISS bases across South Sudan. Severe food insecurity confronts 4.6 million South Sudanese.

One civilian died and six others were wounded at UNMISS's Malakal base on 1 July when they were fired upon by either General Johnson Olonyi's militia or other SPLM/A in Opposition forces. Later that day, in a statement attributable to his spokesperson, the Secretary-General condemned the attack and called on Riek Machar, leader of the SPLM/A in Opposition, and Olonyi to investigate the incident and hold the perpetrators accountable. (Olonyi is the head of a Shilluk militia that had been aligned with the government but recently joined Machar's forces.)

On the political front, representatives of the Intergovernmental Authority on

Development (IGAD)-Plus—which is composed of IGAD, the UN, the AU, several non-IGAD African member states (Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa), China, the Troika (Norway, the US and the UK) and the EU—convened in Addis Ababa on 21 July to prepare for a new round of negotiations between the parties, scheduled to commence on 5 August. A draft agreement was presented to the parties which calls for an interim period of 30 months during which Kiir will remain president and the SPLM in Opposition will select a first vice president in a transitional government of national unity. According to the draft, the interim period would culminate in national elections. The expectation is that a final agreement will be signed on 17 August.

On 27 July, US President Barack Obama met in Addis Ababa with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn (Ethiopia), President Uhuru Kenyatta (Kenya), President Yoweri Museveni (Uganda), Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour (Sudan) and AU Commission Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma to discuss the situation in South Sudan. Media reports indicate that the meeting dealt with the current peace process and potential measures that could be taken against the parties if they do not reach a deal in the coming weeks.

On 23 June, Pagan Amum—one of the 11 high-ranking officials detained by South Sudanese President Salva Kiir at the onset of the South Sudan civil war but subsequently released—was reinstated as Secretary-General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). Kiir's reconciliation with Amum—as well as with other former SPLM/A detainees—occurred amidst ongoing fighting between government and SPLA in Opposition forces.

The AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) adopted a communiqué on South Sudan on 13 June during its summit in Johannesburg, South Africa [PSC/AHG/COMM.1 (DXV)], calling for “urgent steps by the [South Sudan] Sanctions Committee...to designate individuals and entities” that fail to honour their commitments and continue to undermine efforts to find a negotiated solution to the conflict.

On 24 June, the South Sudan Sanctions Committee met with representatives of

South Sudan and neighbouring states (i.e., the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda). While it has publicly expressed its disapproval of the sanctions regime, South Sudan expressed its willingness to cooperate with the Committee and its Panel of Experts. None of the regional states explicitly opposed the use of targeted sanctions in South Sudan during this meeting, although some of them have reportedly been ambivalent about the measures.

On 1 July, the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee imposed sanctions (travel bans and assets freezes) on six military figures, including three affiliated with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and three affiliated with the SPLA in Opposition. The designated individuals are Gabriel Jok Riak (SPLA Lieutenant General); Simon Gatwech Dual (SPLA in Opposition Major General); James Kuong Chuol (SPLA in Opposition Major General); Santino Deng Wol (SPLA Major General); Marial Chanu-ong Yol Mangok (SPLA Major General and commander of President Salva Kiir's special guard); and Peter Gadet (SPLA in Opposition Major General). The designations—proposed by the US and jointly sponsored by France and the UK—are the first ones made under the sanctions regime established in resolution 2206 of 3 March.

On 8 July, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous and UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Yoka Brandt briefed Council members under “any other business” on the human rights situation in South Sudan. Brandt reiterated the horrific crimes described in a 17 June UNICEF press statement, which detailed reports of boys being “castrated and left to bleed to death”, children being bound together before having their throats slit and “others [being]...thrown into burning buildings” during the May fighting in Unity state. Ladsous made an urgent appeal to Council members to send a letter to IGAD and the AU expressing concern about the situation and calling for the public release of the report of the AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan (AUCISS); to adopt a presidential statement that threatens targeted sanctions against senior military and political

UN DOCUMENTS ON SOUTH SUDAN Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2223 (28 May 2015) renewed the mandate of UNMISS until 30 November. S/RES/2206 (3 March 2015) established a sanctions regime on South Sudan. Secretary-General's Report S/2015/296 (29 April 2015) was on UNMISS. Security Council Press Statements SC/11964 (9 July 2015) condemned human rights violations in South Sudan. SC/11916 (3 June 2015) expressed concern over the expulsion of Humanitarian Coordinator Toby Lanzar. SC/11897 (17 May 2015) condemned the renewed violence in Unity state. Sanctions Committee Document SC/11958 (1 July 2015) detailed the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee's imposition of sanctions (travel bans and assets freezes) on six military figures.

South Sudan (con't)

leaders within a week; to implement an arms embargo on South Sudan; and to authorise an independent commission of inquiry that would build on the work of the AUCISS and review allegations of crimes committed since September 2014 (i.e., when the AUCISS concluded its work).

At press time, the Council had not acted on the measures suggested by Ladsous in the 8 July consultations, with the partial exception of the request for a statement about targeted sanctions. On 9 July, Council members issued a press statement on South Sudan in which they condemned violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed in Unity and Upper Nile states in April and May. The statement expressed determination to support efforts to hold accountable those responsible for these violations. Council members “recognized the need for an urgent assessment and reinvigoration of the political process to develop and implement a comprehensive solution to end the crisis”. The statement further reiterated Council members’ commitment to designate for sanctions political and military leaders threatening the peace, security and stability of the country, in addition to the six military leaders sanctioned on 1 July.

On 24 July, the AU PSC held a meeting at ministerial-level in Addis Ababa during which it discussed the AUCISS report. While it did not publicly release the report, it adopted a communiqué [(PSC/MIN/COMM.(DXX-VI)] stating that it was creating an ad-hoc sub-committee consisting of Algeria, Chad, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda “to consider the report of the AUCISS and the Separate Opinion.” The sub-committee is expected to make recommendations on the way forward that will be considered at a summit level meeting of the AU PSC by the end of August.

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Stephen O’Brien visited South Sudan from 22-25 July. In remarks to the press in Juba at the conclusion of his trip, he stated that he had urged Kiir “to help ensure the restrictions on barges transporting vital life-saving supplies on the River Nile be lifted without delay.” He described the plight of civilians whom he had met, and warned that more would suffer if the conflict did not end. He praised the efforts of aid workers in South Sudan, expressing concern that “aid workers

are being harassed... [and]...targeted” and that 27 of them had lost their lives during the conflict, which started in December 2013.

Human Rights-Related Developments

The UNMISS Human Rights Division released a report on 29 June on the escalation of fighting in Greater Upper Nile. The report, which covers events from April to early June, emphasises that the recent escalation of fighting has been marked not only by allegations of rampant killing, rape, abduction, looting, arson and displacement, but also by a new brutality and intensity, including civilians being burned alive in their homes, gang rapes and the abduction of boys for possible participation in the fighting. According to testimonies referred to in the report, at least 172 women and girls were abducted in Unity state, while at least an additional 79 were subjected to sexual violence including gang rape by government forces and affiliated armed groups. Also in Unity, at least 67 civilians were killed and 40 were missing. Due to the surge in fighting, an additional 28,000 IDPs have sought refuge in UNMISS protection of civilians sites in Unity, according to the report.

During its 29th session, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution without a vote on 2 July on the fact-finding mission to improve human rights, accountability and reconciliation for South Sudan (A/HRC/29/L.8). The resolution expresses grave concern at the ongoing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by all parties, including extrajudicial killings, targeted violence on the basis of tribal or ethnic affiliation, rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence, the recruitment and use of children, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detention, arbitrary denial of humanitarian access and attacks on schools and hospitals and UN and associated peacekeeping personnel. It strongly urges the government of South Sudan to implement its revised action plan to end and prevent violations committed against children, and for the SPLA in Opposition to immediately end violations and abuses against children. It also requests the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to undertake a fact-finding mission and comprehensive investigation into alleged serious violations and abuses of human rights, and to assess the effectiveness of steps taken by the government of South Sudan to ensure accountability for human rights violations and abuses.

Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is how it can support the current political process, especially in light of the IGAD-Plus efforts currently underway to have the parties sign an agreement by 17 August.

Related to this is linking the targeted sanctions to an overall political strategy, including how to tie the threat of future measures to

developments in the political process, how to encourage countries in the region and other influential states to support these measures and how to convince the South Sudanese people that targeted sanctions are not a form of collective punishment.

A number of key issues face the Council in regard to its oversight of UNMISS, such as:

- addressing ongoing restrictions on access imposed by the government and the opposition in the midst of the deteriorating humanitarian situation;
- maintaining security and ensuring basic living necessities in the overcrowded protection of civilians sites; and
- determining when and how IDPs can be safely escorted from UNMISS sites to their places of origin and ensuring their safety and security once they return, given the high levels of violence.

Underlying Problems

Several challenges confront the mediation. Ensuring that the actors in the unwieldy IGAD-Plus collaborate effectively and develop synergies in the mediation process is proving difficult. Another concern is the apparent fragmentation of the opposition. On 21 July, Machar relieved two of his leading commanders, Major Generals Peter Gadet and Gathoth Gatkuoth, from their duties. A number of opposition generals are reportedly growing disillusioned with Machar and are acting with some independence, which could mean that key powerful actors are not represented at the negotiating table. The inclusivity of any transitional arrangement, the quality of the reconciliation process and the manner in which justice and accountability issues are handled will be critical in determining the future of South Sudan. Given that Kiir and Machar are likely to play a key role in the transitional government, they will need to compromise and overcome their grievances for the political process to have a chance to work. To date, they have not demonstrated this type of leadership.

Options

Options for the Council include:

- dispatching a small emergency mission with a mandate to visit South Sudan and, convening an informal meeting in the region with IGAD-Plus representatives as well as with Alpha Konaré, the AU High

South Sudan (con't)

Representative for South Sudan, to boost the mediation and convey stern messages and emphasise that the Council is serious about further sanctions, including on top leadership, if immediate progress is not seen;

- imposing an arms embargo on South Sudan;
- authorising an independent commission of inquiry to investigate alleged crimes since September 2014; and
- encouraging UNMISS to develop a communications strategy to emphasise that targeted sanctions are aimed solely at individuals and not at particular communities in South Sudan, given the inter-communal rifts that have been exacerbated by the crisis.

Council and Wider Dynamics

At press time, the AU has seemed intent on taking a significant role in the IGAD-Plus mediation, especially since the 2 June appointment of Konaré, former president of Mali and first Chairperson of the AU, as its High Representative for South Sudan.

Among Council members, the US appears especially keen on engaging actively in the mediation, while China prefers to assume a more low-key approach.

The Council achieved the necessary consensus to designate six military figures for sanctions on 1 July, but nonetheless there are differing perspectives among members on these measures. The P3 believe that the targeted sanctions can exert pressure on key actors to pursue peace and discourage them from committing further human rights violations, while making clear that there will be accountability for such actions. Chile, Lithuania, New Zealand and Spain appear to have positions similar to the P3.

In line with the AU PSC's 13 June communiqué, African members on the UN Security Council supported the 1 July designations, although some of these states have reservations about the timing and potential effectiveness of the measures. Angola is in an awkward position. It agreed to the 1 July designations in line with the PSC position, but it is also a member of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, which

opposes sanctions on South Sudan.

Russia has expressed considerable scepticism about the potential effectiveness of targeted sanctions in South Sudan but decided not to block the 1 July designations, in large part because of the AU PSC's support of sanctions and the apparent desire of the African members of the UN Security Council to support the AU PSC's position. Venezuela's position is similar to Russia's. China has recently maintained a low profile on this issue; although it has made the point that sanctions are a means to an end rather than an end in themselves.

Several members have expressed support for an arms embargo in consultations. However, there have been divisions within the US administration on this matter, even though an arms embargo was threatened in resolution 2206. It is possible that the US might be more amenable to this tool if the current negotiations fail to produce a positive result. Russia appears unlikely to support an arms embargo at this point.

The US is the penholder on South Sudan.

Guinea-Bissau

Expected Council Action

In August, the Council will receive a briefing on Guinea-Bissau from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Miguel Trovoadá, followed by consultations. Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota (Brazil), the chair of the Guinea-Bissau country configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), may also brief

The 2048 Guinea-Bissau Sanctions Committee plans to consider a report from the Secretariat regarding the continuation of the sanctions regime before an expected Council review in September.

No outcome is expected in August. The mandate of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) expires on 29 February 2016.

Key Recent Developments

Guinea-Bissau continued to make progress on governance and economic reforms since last year's presidential and legislative elections that restored constitutional order following the 12 April 2012 coup. A donors' conference on 25 March in Brussels raised \$1.5 billion for Guinea-Bissau's ten-year national development plan. Guinea-Bissau has also benefitted from short-term programmes that the government initiated, including improvements in electrical service and water supply, the timely payment of civil servants' salaries and increased customs revenues. The International Monetary Fund has projected that the country will see a 4.7 percent growth in gross domestic product in 2015.

Despite progress in advancing reforms, tensions escalated between President José Mário Vaz and Prime Minister Domingos

Simões Pereira. As concerns increased over the situation, Senegal, whose president, Macky Sall, is the chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), sent its foreign minister to Guinea-Bissau to meet with both Vaz and Simões Pereira. Amidst rumours that Vaz wanted to change the government, Simões Pereira requested a special session of parliament, which was held on 25 June. At the session, parliament passed a motion of confidence in the Simões Pereira-led government. Vaz subsequently sent a declaration to the parliament, stating he never intended to change the government. Since then, tensions seem to have dissipated. The tensions between Vaz and Simões Pereira have been attributed to differences over interpreting the constitution and past practices regarding the president's role in government decision-making.

UN DOCUMENTS ON GUINEA-BISSAU Security Council Resolution S/RES/2203 (18 February 2015) renewed UNIOGBIS until 29 February 2016 and requested the Secretary-General to submit within six months a report to the 2048 Sanctions Committee with recommendations on the sanctions regime's continuation. [Secretary-General's Report S/2015/37](#) (19 January 2015) was on the activities of UNIOGBIS, including the findings of the UN strategic assessment mission to Guinea-Bissau. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7376](#) (5 February 2015) was a briefing on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of UNIOGBIS.

Guinea-Bissau (con't)

In late May, there were renewed concerns about the risk of Ebola spreading to Guinea-Bissau. The Boke district in Guinea along Guinea-Bissau's border experienced an upsurge in Ebola cases. At least one sick person was believed to have crossed the border several times. The head of the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response, Peter Graaff, visited Guinea-Bissau on 24 and 25 June. While commenting at a press conference that more should be done to improve response capacity, Graaff noted his pleasure with the government's engagement in dealing with the threat and cross-border cooperation between Guinea and Guinea-Bissau.

PBC-Related Developments

At a 16 April configuration meeting, members emphasised that countries must fulfil the pledges they made at the donors' conference. Discussion also focused on a recent UN-led security sector reform (SSR) mission. Additionally, Patriota noted with concern the Council's emphasis on drug trafficking in resolution 2203 when it renewed UNIOGBIS's mandate in February. Patriota said that this emphasis was no longer warranted and unfairly stigmatised the country.

Patriota visited Guinea-Bissau from 19 to 21 April. He met with Vaz, Simões Pereira and a number of other government officials. Meetings with international partners in the country included the force commander of the ECOWAS Security Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB). In his report on the mission, Patriota highlighted the optimism in the country despite Guinea-Bissau's institutional fragility. He noted that according to interlocutors, ECOMIB plays the essential roles of deterrence and providing assurance to the authorities. The PBC was asked to mobilise financial support for maintaining the force. Since the constitutional reform process will take time, the chair noted that it was important for political leaders to show personal responsibility for defusing possible conflicts.

Sanctions-Related Developments

In renewing the mandate of UNIOGBIS in resolution 2203, the Council requested the Secretariat to submit a report within six months to the 2048 Sanctions Committee on progress in stabilising Guinea-Bissau and restoring constitutional order, and to make recommendations regarding the

sanctions regime's continuation. It further decided that in seven months the Council would review the sanctions, which consist of a travel ban created in resolution 2048 and is currently imposed on eleven individuals involved in the 2012 coup.

During August, the Committee will receive this report. The report is expected to assess the contribution made by the sanctions in restoring constitutional order and the role that they currently play, and to provide recommendations. During the report's preparation, options were considered on the future of the regime ranging from lifting sanctions, through maintaining them to strengthening them, such as by targeting those involved in illicit trafficking activities.

Key Issues

An important issue is the state of the relationship between the president and prime minister.

Sustained international attention to Guinea-Bissau to help the government implement its reform agenda and SSR is critical to avoid a reversal in progress.

Related to this are efforts to combat corruption, illegal natural resource exploitation and drug trafficking.

Regarding the upcoming sanctions review, a key issue is whether to lift, maintain or strengthen sanctions.

Options

The Council could issue a press statement:

- welcoming ongoing progress in consolidating the restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau and the government's commitment to implement reforms;
- stressing the importance of inclusive political dialogue, in particular between the president, prime minister and speaker of the parliament;
- encouraging further advances in the constitutional review process and national reconciliation;
- appreciating ECOMIB's ongoing role in providing security and assisting the SSR process; and
- urging donors to quickly fulfil their

pledges and to continue to support Guinea-Bissau's reforms.

Council Dynamics

The Council has tended to follow the lead of Guinea-Bissau's partners, ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP). Council member Nigeria is ECOMIB's main contributor and has previously expressed its desire for greater burden-sharing regarding the mission. Angola, a CPLP state, is also keenly interested in developments in Guinea-Bissau. During negotiations to renew UNIOGBIS's mandate, Angola had sought to reduce language in the resolution on drug trafficking, which it argued no longer accurately represented the situation and maintained a negative impression of the country despite its progress.

Regarding the upcoming sanctions review, it seems that there are diverging preferences among members over keeping the regime. Arguments for ending the sanctions include that their main purpose—to pressure the April 2012 coup leaders and bring about the restoration of constitutional order—was achieved more than a year ago with successful elections. It is also pointed out that the travel ban restrictions have never been properly enforced. Alternatively, some members consider that despite its progress, Guinea-Bissau remains fragile. Resolution 2048 additionally included as criteria for imposing sanctions actions that undermine the country's stability. Some argue that Guinea-Bissau has never completed a full democratic cycle, and there is still a deterrent value in the sanctions. On 12 June, the EU renewed its asset-freeze and travel-ban sanctions against individuals in Guinea-Bissau, and EU Council members are likely to be among countries that will support maintaining the regime.

Nigeria is the penholder on Guinea-Bissau and the chair of the 2048 Sanctions Committee.

Liberia

Expected Council Action

In August, the Council may receive a briefing (followed by consultations) from the chair of the 1521 Liberia Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Dina Kawar (Jordan) on the work of the Committee, the final report of the Panel of Experts and the Secretary-General's update on arms, ammunition and border issues (due 1 August). The travel ban and arms embargo expire on 9 September (the asset freeze is not time-limited). (The Council is also expected to hold a briefing on Ebola in August.)

Key Recent Developments

The extractive industries and agribusiness continue to pose risks to stability in Liberia. On 26 May, armed members of the local community entered a palm oil plantation in south-eastern Sinoe County owned by Golden Veroleum Liberia (GVL), whose principal owner is Singapore-listed Golden Agri-Resources. Media reports have characterised the protest as caused by either labour or land grievances. (GVL's 65-year concession, which covers more than 2 percent of Liberia's total land area, has been contentious.) Deputy Internal Affairs Minister Varney Sirleaf, a nephew of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, was visiting at the time and was wounded as he was evacuated from the protest, while a senior manager of GVL was briefly taken hostage. The Liberian National Police (LNP), with the assistance of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), ended the protest. On 29 May, the LNP arrested 23 protesters and charged them with attempted murder, looting, aggravated assault and armed robbery.

On 10 July, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon convened the International Conference on Ebola Recovery in New York, which was chaired by UNDP and held in partnership with the African Development Bank, AU,

EU and the World Bank. Liberia had been declared Ebola-free by the World Health Organization on 9 May (with no new cases having been reported in the preceding 42 days), but as of press time there have been six new cases of Ebola confirmed in the country since 29 June (two people died, two were discharged after treatment and two remained under observation).

Council members last discussed Liberia on 25 June within the context of a briefing on the annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission and an informal interactive dialogue held with the six country-specific configuration chairs.

Developments in the Sanctions Committee

On 21 July, the 1521 Liberia Sanctions Committee held informal consultations. The meeting concerned the final report of the Panel of Experts and an update from the Secretary-General on arms, ammunition and border issues as requested by the Council in resolution 2188. The analyses of the Panel of Experts and the Secretary-General were consistent as both presentations emphasised that while some progress has been made there remain significant challenges with respect to the Liberian government's institutional capacity. This is particularly true in terms of the state's ability to regulate arms and ammunition and control border areas, which remain risk factors for insecurity. Committee members also discussed an agreement regarding "hot pursuit" in border areas that had been reached in March at a quadripartite meeting of the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia and the UN peacekeeping operations in the two countries.

Key Issues

The principal overall challenge remains maintaining stability in Liberia during UNMIL's drawdown and a potential partial lifting or termination of sanctions.

Risk factors for insecurity in Liberia include inadequate regulation of arms and ammunition, a lack of control over insecure

border areas, potentially contentious upcoming national elections in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, an incomplete transitional justice process, a lack of public sector transparency and accountability, and dependence on natural resources (large-scale agriculture and the extractive industries continue to be sources of social unrest over labour and land issues).

Options

While Council members are unlikely to take action in August regarding Liberia other than participation in a potential briefing and consultations on sanctions, they may begin their consideration of whether to renew existing measures, modify the regime to partially lift sanctions, or terminate them in September.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Regarding sanctions, the Council stated its intention in resolution 2188 to keep measures under review with a view toward their modification or termination, contingent upon sufficient progress toward meeting the conditions outlined in resolution 1521 (i.e. maintain cease-fire; disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and repatriation; security sector reform; implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement; and stability in Liberia and the sub-region), while also taking into consideration the threat posed by Ebola. In addition to the final report by the Panel of Experts transmitted on 21 July, the forthcoming update by the Secretary-General should offer further assessment of whether these conditions have been met, particularly regarding the regulation of arms and ammunition and the control of border areas.

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

UN DOCUMENTS ON LIBERIA Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2188 (9 December 2014) reaffirmed the asset freeze and renewed the travel ban, targeted arms embargo and mandate of the Panel of Experts. S/RES/2177 (18 September 2014) declared the Ebola outbreak a threat to international peace and security. S/RES/1521 (22 December 2003) imposed sanctions on Liberia, including an arms embargo, targeted travel ban, rough diamond export ban and timber export ban. **Sanctions Committee Document S/2015/558** (21 July 2015) transmitted the final report of the Panel of Experts.

USEFUL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES *Ebola Situation Report*, World Health Organization, 22 July 2015. *Hollow promises: An FPIC assessment of Golden Veroleum and Golden Agri-Resources palm oil project in south-eastern Liberia*, Forest Peoples Programme, 15 April 2015.

Notable Dates for August

REPORT DUE	REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION IN AUGUST	REQUESTING DOCUMENT
21 July	1521 Liberia Sanctions Committee's Panel of Experts' final report (S/2015/558)	S/RES/2188
27 July	OPCW report on the implementation of resolution 2118 (Syrian chemical weapons)	S/RES/2118
28 July	2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee's Panel of Experts' mid-term report	S/RES/2206
29 July	SG report on MINUSCA (Central African Republic)	S/RES/2217
30 July	SG report on UNMIK (Kosovo)	S/RES/1244
30 July	2127 Central African Republic Sanctions Committee's Panel of Experts' mid-term report	S/RES/2196
12 August	1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee's Panel of Experts' mid-term report	S/RES/2200
17 August	SG report on UNSMIL (Libya)	S/RES/2208
17 August	SG report on UNMISS (South Sudan)	S/RES/2223
18 August	SG report on UNIOGBIS (Guinea-Bissau)	S/RES/2203
19 August	SG report on the humanitarian situation in Syria	S/RES/2139
MANDATES EXPIRE	RELEVANT DOCUMENT	
31 August	UNIFIL (Lebanon)	S/RES/2172

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