

Monthly Forecast

- 2 Status Update since our September Forecast
- 3 In Hindsight: Security Council Decision-Making and the Veto
- 4 Working Methods
- 6 Women, Peace and Security
- 8 Security Council Elections 2015
- 9 Mali
- 10 Democratic Republic of the Congo
- 11 Syria
- 13 Haiti
- 15 Somalia
- 16 Yemen
- 18 Israel/Palestine
- 20 Lebanon
- 21 Counter-Terrorism
- 22 Sudan (Darfur)
- 24 Notable Dates

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Overview

Spain will hold the Council's presidency in October. Three open debates are planned. The open debate on [women, peace and security](#) will be presided over by the country's Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, and two civil society representatives expected to brief. The annual open debate on the [Council's working methods](#) is planned in October, and President of the General Assembly Mogens Lykketoft is invited to brief. There will also be the quarterly open debate on [the Middle East](#), with Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman briefing.

The Council will hold a debate on [Haiti](#) preceded by a briefing by the Secretary-General's Special Representative and head of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Sandra Honoré.

Briefings, followed by consultations, are expected on:

- developments in [Mali](#) and the latest Secretary-General's report on the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), by the mission's head, Mongi Hamdi;
- developments in the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#) (DRC) and the latest report on the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) by its head, Martin Kobler, and Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region Said Djinnit;
- the Secretary-General's report on the support package to the Somali National Army and the strategic review of the UN Support Office for the AU Mission in [Somalia](#) by the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Atul Khare;
- the situation in [Yemen](#), by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed;
- the Secretary-General's quarterly report on

the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in [Darfur](#) (UNAMID), by Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet;

- the work of the [2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee](#), by its chair, Ambassador Raimonda Murkmokaitė (Lithuania); and
- the [humanitarian situation in Syria](#), by Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien.

Briefings in consultations are planned on:

- the latest Secretary-General's report on the implementation of [resolution 1559 on Lebanon](#), by Special Envoy Terje Roed-Larsen;
- two recent reports of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee's Monitoring Team: on [the financing of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham and the Al-Nusra Front in Iraq and Syria](#) and on the [terrorism threat in Libya](#), from the 1267/1989 Sanctions Committee chair, Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen (New Zealand); and
- the latest Secretary-General's report on [chemical weapons in Syria](#), by Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo.

Formal sessions will be held to adopt resolutions to:

- renew the [Somalia-Eritrea sanctions](#);
- extend the mandate of [MINUSTAH](#); and
- adopt the Council's [annual report to the General Assembly](#).

Throughout the month, members will be following closely developments in [Burkina-Faso](#), [Burundi](#), [Central African Republic](#), [South Sudan](#) and [Ukraine](#), and additional meetings may be scheduled.

General Assembly is scheduled to elect [five non-permanent Security Council members](#) on 15 October. •

Status Update since our September Forecast (con't)

Iran

The 1737 Iran Sanctions Committee met on 1 September to consider implementation of resolution 2231 on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) agreed by Iran, the P5 and Germany on 14 July. On 14 September the Council received two reports from the IAEA: the regular quarterly report on implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement and relevant provisions of Council resolutions in Iran (S/2015/705) and a special report on the implications for the IAEA of resolution 2231 (S/2015/706). On 15 September, the Sanctions Committee chair, Ambassador Román Oyarzun (Spain), briefed the Council on the work of the Committee (S/PV.7522). He emphasised that sanctions would remain fully in effect until the Council received the report from the IAEA confirming that Iran had taken all the actions required under the JCPOA and that the Committee was fully committed to the implementation of all relevant resolutions.

Liberia

On 2 September, the Council adopted resolution 2237, which renewed the arms embargo on non-state actors for nine months but terminated the asset freeze and travel ban (S/PV.7517). Resolution 2237 also renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts for ten months, but reduced the Panel from two members to one member. On 10 September, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefed the Council on the most recent UNMIL report (S/2015/620). Ambassador Olof Skoog (Sweden), chair of the Liberia country-specific configuration in the Peacebuilding Commission, and Benedict Sannoh, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Liberia, also addressed the Council (S/PV.7519). On 17 September, the Council adopted resolution 2239 renewing the mandate of UNMIL until 30 September 2016 and continuing the draw-down of UNMIL, to 1,240 military personnel and 606 police personnel by 30 June.

South Sudan

On 4 September, Council members received a briefing in consultations from Special Representative and head of UNMISS Ellen Margrethe Løj on the situation in South Sudan following the signing in August of the "Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the

Republic of South Sudan." In elements to the press following the meeting, Council members "expressed deep concern at the recent reports of fighting and called upon the parties to adhere to the permanent cease-fire immediately and unconditionally." A US proposal, jointly sponsored by France and the UK, to impose targeted sanctions on Paul Malong Awan, chief of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), and Johnson Olonyi, an SPLA in Opposition general, was put on hold by Angola, China, Russia and Venezuela prior to the 15 September expiry of a no-objection period. At press time, Council members were negotiating a US draft resolution to enhance the mandate of UNMISS by authorising it to support the implementation of the August peace agreement.

UNRCCA (Central Asia)

On 8 September Special Representative and head of UNRCCA Petko Draganov briefed Council members in consultations. It was his first briefing since taking office in March. Breaking with recent Council practice, there was no press statement following the meeting. It appeared that some Council members had objected to the initial text proposed by the penholder Russia. At the time of writing it was unclear whether Russia was still planning to try to get agreement on a statement.

Women, Peace and Security

On 9 September, representatives of UN Women and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate briefed member states at an open meeting of the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee about how gender has started to be integrated into the UN's policy and programming on counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism. Civil society participants spoke on recent women-led initiatives to counter terrorism and violent extremism in areas that have been impacted by Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham.

Libya

On 10 September, the Council adopted resolution 2238 renewing the mandate of the UNSMIL until 15 March 2016. On 16 September, the UK presented under "any other business" a draft resolution authorising member states to interdict vessels involved in human trafficking and migrant smuggling in

the high seas off the coast of Libya. Given the failure to ensure the support of some Council members, at press time the draft resolution had not been put to a vote. On 21 September, the 1970 Sanctions Committee discussed the interim report which was presented by the coordinator of the Panel of Experts.

Central African Republic

On 10 September, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefed Council members under "any other business" on his recent visit to the CAR. Later that day, the chair of the 2127 CAR Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė (Lithuania), briefed the Committee on her 24-29 August visit to the CAR. On 28 September, Council members issued a press statement reiterating their support for the Transitional Authorities and called for an immediate end to the recent upsurge in violence in Bangui (SC/12061).

Côte d'Ivoire

On 11 September, the 1572 Côte d'Ivoire Sanctions Committee held informal consultations to discuss the interim update report of the Group of Experts.

Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa

On 14 September, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa held a panel discussion on preventive diplomacy, including the role of the AU and its cooperation with the UN. The panelists, who participated via video teleconference from Addis Ababa, were Haile Menkerios, Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the AU, and Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the AU.

Burkina Faso

On 16 September, Council members issued a press statement condemning the detention by the Presidential Security Regiment (RSP) of transition President Michel Kafando, Prime Minister Isaac Zida and other ministers earlier that day (SC/10248). On 17 September, following the RSP's announcement that it had taken over power, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman briefed Council members in consultations under "any other business". Members issued

Status Update since our September *Forecast* (con't)

a press statement later that day condemning RSP elements' forceful seizure of power, and expressed strong support for UN, ECOWAS and AU mediation efforts (SC/10251). On 24 September, Council members welcomed the reinstatement of Kafando and the transitional authorities, calling for the resumption of the transition process without delay (SC/12057).

Afghanistan

On 17 September, the Council held a debate (S/PV.7526) on the quarterly UNAMA report (S/2015/684). Special Representative and head of UNAMA Nicholas Haysom and Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime briefed the Council. Haysom emphasised the heavy toll the conflict continues to take on civilians and noted that foreign assistance beyond 2017 will rely on the government meeting agreed upon performance indicators, including those related to

countering corruption. Fedotov argued that illegal drugs in Afghanistan “are supporting instability, insurgency, corruption and organized crime, while weakening state institutions and Afghanistan’s overall ability to promote peace and good governance.”

Sudan/South Sudan and UNISFA

On 17 September, Council members were briefed in consultations on Sudan/South Sudan and on UNISFA. Haile Menkerios, Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, briefed on Sudan/South Sudan issues, while Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous reported on the Secretary-General’s UNISFA report (S/2015/700).

UNDOF (Golan Heights)

On 17 September, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations briefed Council members

in consultations on the Secretary-General’s latest UNDOF report (S/2015/699).

Guinea-Bissau

On 21 September, Council members issued a press statement, taking note of the appointment of Carlos Correia as Prime Minister as an important step for ending Guinea-Bissau’s political crisis (SC/12054).

Counter-Terrorism

On 30 September, the Council held a ministerial-level open debate on the settlement of conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa and countering the terrorist threat in the region (S/PV.7527). Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon briefed and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov presided over the meeting. On 1 September, Russia had circulated a concept note as a basis for the discussion (S/2015/678).

In Hindsight: Security Council Decision-Making and the Veto

In the lead-up to the UN’s 70th anniversary on 24 October, three initiatives addressing one of the more challenging issues facing the organisation—how the Security Council can more effectively prevent and halt mass atrocities—have been garnering considerable attention. These include: a French initiative; the Accountability, Coherence, and Transparency Group (ACT) initiative; and a reform proposal by the Elders.

All three are being discussed in the context of heightened controversy regarding Security Council decision-making. Russian vetoes in July prevented the Council from adopting a resolution that would have commemorated the 20th anniversary of the genocide at Srebrenica and a second one that would have established an international criminal tribunal to prosecute those responsible for the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17. Also in July, New Zealand hosted an informal discussion on Council decision-making, including practices which have developed around the veto and the impact on the Council’s effectiveness. Elected members reportedly expressed concerns about the ways in which the permanent members arrive at outcomes without adequately consulting the elected members.

The veto and the threat of a veto play considerable parts in the growing disappointment with how the Council is managed. Under article 27 (3) of the UN Charter, the “concurring votes of the permanent members” are required to adopt resolutions on substantive matters. However, there is a perception that the privilege of the veto granted to permanent members is at times abused to the detriment of international peace and security.

There have been longstanding concerns about the veto being employed to block Council action in situations of mass atrocities, but four joint China-Russia vetoes since October 2011 on the situation in Syria, a conflict that has now claimed more than 250,000 lives, have added renewed vigour to these concerns. The current initiatives reflect the view that the Council needs to do a better job of preventing and responding to mass atrocities.

French Initiative

On 4 October 2013, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius published an op-ed article in *The New York Times* advocating that the permanent members refrain from using the veto “if the Security Council were required to make a decision with regard to a mass

crime...[except in] cases where the vital interests of a permanent member...were at stake”. Fabius laid out criteria for triggering this veto restraint, stating that the UN Secretary-General would make the determination on the occurrence of mass crime at the request of at least 50 member states.

For the second consecutive year, France co-hosted on 30 September a ministerial-level meeting with Mexico on the veto during high-level week. In preparation for the meeting, France and Mexico presented a “political declaration on suspension of veto powers in cases of mass atrocity”, open to the support of UN member states. The declaration “welcome[s] and support[s] the initiative... to propose a collective and voluntary agreement of the permanent members...in which the permanent members would abstain from using their veto powers in cases of mass atrocities”. France announced at the 30 September event that it had received the support of 70 member states for the declaration.

ACT Code of Conduct

In July, ACT circulated a “code of conduct” that calls on member states to “pledge to support timely and decisive action by the

In Hindsight: Security Council Decision-Making and the Veto (con't)

Security Council aimed at preventing or ending the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes". The text calls on Council members not to vote against draft resolutions that seek to end or prevent such crimes. This means that the pledge is applicable to the UN's broader membership—not just the permanent members of the Council—as all member states are eligible to run for a seat on the Council and thus to serve as elected members. There is no procedural trigger for the code's application. The code simply requests the Secretary-General, using the early-warning capacities and expertise of the UN system, to continue to bring to the Council's attention situations involving, or likely leading to, genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.

ACT will officially launch its code of conduct at an event on 23 October. In the lead-up to this event, ACT is holding a ministerial-level presentation of its code on 1 October. At press time, 53 member states—including France and the UK, among the permanent members—had committed to the code.

The Elders' Proposal

On 7 February, the Elders, a diverse and independent group of global leaders working to promote peace and human rights, adopted a statement on strengthening the UN. Among their proposals, the Elders called for the permanent members of the Security Council to pledge "not to use, or threaten to use, their veto in...crises" in which genocide or other mass atrocities are committed or threatened "without explaining, clearly and in public, what alternative course of action they propose, as a credible and efficient way to protect the populations in question". According to the Elders, the explanation should pertain to concerns about international peace and security and not be based on national interest, which they say represents an abuse of the veto privilege. In cases where the veto is cast by one or more permanent members, the Elders argue that efforts must be made by Council members "not to abandon the search for common ground".

On 26 September, the Elders co-hosted a high-level panel discussion with the Global

Centre for the Responsibility to Protect and the International Peace Institute (IPI) at IPI entitled "Preventing Mass Atrocities: How Can the UN Security Council Do Better?"

There is a divergence of views on the veto-restraint initiatives among the P5. Like France, the UK has expressed support for veto restraint in cases pertaining to atrocity crimes. On 29 July, in a meeting for the UN membership on the ACT code of conduct, the UK stated that it would never use its veto "to block credible Security Council action aimed at stopping mass atrocities and crimes against humanity". However, Russia has been particularly vocal in its opposition to the notion of veto restraint. In a briefing of the UN press corps on 2 September at the outset of Russia's Council presidency, Ambassador Vitaly Churkin said that the veto is "a tool which allows the Security Council to produce balanced decisions" and that "sometimes the absence of veto can produce disaster." China and the US appear to be wary over restraint of their veto prerogative.

Working Methods

Expected Council Action

In October, the Security Council will hold an open debate on its working methods. The president of the General Assembly, Mogens Lykketoft, will be invited to speak. One of the key areas of focus is expected to be relations between the Security Council and the General Assembly, with particular attention being paid to the issue of selecting the Secretary-General. The other area that is likely to be a focus during the debate is the implementation of notes by the president of the Council, which have been used to capture in written form changes in Council working methods. Other areas that might be discussed by Council members and the wider membership include the use of the veto, the relationship with troop-contributing countries, the internal division of labour within the Council, and how to use Council working methods to achieve maximum

effectiveness of its actions in times of crises.

Spain is expected to circulate a concept note outlining possible themes for the debate and an outcome following the debate is possible.

Key Recent Developments

One of the key areas Lykketoft is likely to focus on is the resolution on the revitalisation of the General Assembly adopted on 11 September (A/RES/69/321). The resolution includes significant language on the selection of the Secretary-General relevant to the Security Council's role in the process, as well as enhancing the input from the General Assembly, including:

- a request for the Security Council and General Assembly presidents to start the process through a joint letter describing the selection process and inviting candidates to be presented in a timely manner;

- a request for the two presidents to jointly circulate information on candidates on an ongoing basis;
- selection criteria for candidates that include "proven leadership and managerial abilities, extensive experience in international relations, and strong diplomatic, communication and multilingual skills";
- deciding that the General Assembly would conduct informal dialogues or meetings with candidates; and
- "equal and fair distribution based on gender and geographical balance" to be taken into consideration, and member states to consider presenting women as candidates.

Two areas that had been discussed during the negotiations but were not included in the final General Assembly resolution were the possibility of the Council recommending multiple candidates and the proposal of a single term for the Secretary-General.

UN DOCUMENTS ON WORKING METHODS Notes by the President of the Security Council S/2014/922 (18 December 2014) was on texts of statements and verbatim records. S/2014/739 (15 October 2014) was on the speaking order for Council meetings. S/2014/565 (4 August 2014) stressed the need to enhance cooperation and consultation among Council members. S/2014/393 (5 June 2014) proposed measures to improve the effectiveness and continuity of the work of the Council's subsidiary bodies. S/2014/268 (14 April 2014) called for wider participation of Council members in the drafting of Council documents. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7285** (23 October 2014) was the annual open debate on working methods. **General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/321** (11 September 2015) was on the revitalisation of the General Assembly.

Working Methods (con't)

Council members had their first discussion on the process for selecting the next Secretary-General on 22 July under “any other business”. This meeting was partly prompted by a 1 June letter from the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (ACT), made up of 27 UN member states, to the president of the Council, as well as parallel letters to the president of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, with proposals for the selection and appointment of the next Secretary-General.

In 2014, under the chairmanship of Argentina, the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions agreed on five notes by the president. The notes covered wider participation of Council members in drafting Council documents and penholder issues; the appointment of chairpersons of subsidiary bodies; the need for enhanced dialogue between Council members, especially during crises or fast-evolving situations; the speaking order for Council meetings; and texts of statements and verbatim records. No notes have been adopted in 2015.

In recent years, there has been greater use of the veto by the permanent members. There have been four joint China-Russia vetoes since October 2011 on the situation in Syria. Russia also vetoed a resolution on Ukraine in March 2014 and two resolutions in July of this year—one commemorating the 20th anniversary of the genocide at Srebrenica and another that would have established an international criminal tribunal to investigate the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17. There are currently three initiatives to restrict the use of the veto from France, ACT and the Elders, a diverse and independent group of global leaders working to promote peace and human rights. This issue was to be discussed during the high-level week of the General Assembly. (For more information, see our *In Hindsight* on Security Council Decision Making and the Veto in this month's *Forecast*.)

Key Issues

An overarching working methods issue for the Council, with ever growing demands for its action, is how to continue to adapt its working methods to ensure the highest effectiveness of the Council's work.

An issue for the months ahead is how to work with the president of the General

Assembly regarding the selection of the Secretary-General, and how to keep the larger membership informed.

An important issue is how best to capture the main ideas from this debate in a useful format. With Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's term ending on 31 December 2016 and the selection of the Secretary-General being a matter that involves both the Security Council and the General Assembly, a high level of interest is expected from the membership at large. Last year, 40 member states in addition to Council members took the floor during the working methods open debate. This year, the number of speakers is expected to be higher. While the open debate format allows a large number of member states to give their views on a range of issues, it can also result in a very long session, during which attendance by Council ambassadors dwindles. Getting agreement from some permanent members on an outcome document that would allow Council members to plan for next steps in all areas related to the Council's working methods may be difficult.

A closely related challenge is how to ensure a more interactive debate. While there may be interest in having a less rigid format that could allow for like-minded members to provide their views collectively and to devise a format that might allow members to respond to new ideas, some Council members may be wary of moving away from prepared statements.

A long-standing issue is how to improve the implementation of the measures agreed to in the notes adopted by the Informal Working Group. Notes S/2006/507 and S/2010/507, and other notes that cover a number of practical suggestions for improved Council working methods have not been fully implemented.

An additional issue is how to use the Informal Working Group more effectively in the implementation of past notes, as well as in activities related to the selection of the Secretary-General.

Options

Possible options for an outcome document following the debate include:

- a formal document (presidential statement or resolution) that acknowledges the aspects of the resolution on the revitalisation of the General Assembly relevant

to both bodies, includes the key points made during the debate and suggests ways in which Council working methods can be implemented through activities of the Informal Working Group;

- a chair's summary, which could be in the form of a non-paper issued after the debate, highlighting points that may require further Council action (this has been done in the past, most recently by France following the March debate on children and armed conflict during its presidency); and
- a summary of the debate approved by all Council members and issued as a Council document.

Options for creating a more interactive debate include:

- keeping strictly to short statements or joint statements by like-minded members; and
- alternating between statements by Council members and the wider membership during the debate as a way of making it more dynamic.

Options for the Secretary-General selection process are:

- having the Security Council and General Assembly presidents discuss the contents of a joint letter outlining the selection process and inviting nominations;
- holding a Council retreat following the Council elections in October that includes the incoming five members, who will be on the Council from January 2016, to discuss the Secretary-General's selection (this would allow both current Council members and the incoming members to have a frank discussion, particularly regarding changes in the process that may be envisioned in light of the General Assembly resolution); and
- holding regular discussions, possibly under “any other business”, on the next steps in this process.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Over the next 12 months, discussions regarding the Council's working methods are likely to include the process of selection of the next Secretary-General. Initial informal discussions have revealed divisions among the P5. The UK has publicly expressed openness to having a more transparent process and has declared its willingness to use the

Working Methods (con't)

Arria-formula meeting format to hear candidates' views. Although the General Assembly resolution was adopted by consensus, Russia has indicated that it prefers no change in the process and that discussion and decisions should wait until next year, when the Council that will choose the next Secretary-General is in place. The P5 are likely to be united in their resistance to recommending multiple candidates to the General Assembly and to setting any closing date for nominations. Substantial changes to the way in which the process has been conducted in the

past are likely only if they are strongly supported by elected members. In terms of next steps, at a high-level event on the Selection of the Secretary-General hosted by ACT and the Elders, Spain (president of the Council in October) and the UK (president of the Council in November) said they had been discussing the idea of a joint letter from the presidents of the Security Council and the General Assembly that would start the selection process, but it was unclear which of them would move this idea forward.

With regard to other working methods

issues there has been little activity in the Informal Working Group this year under Angola's chairmanship. The main focus has been on the Council's annual report to the General Assembly. There seems to be little resolve among elected members to push for implementation of recently adopted notes by the president which stress issues like the selection of chairs of the subsidiary bodies and pen-holders, despite often voiced concerns about the lack of internal transparency in the Council.

Women, Peace and Security

Expected Council Action

On 13 October, Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy of Spain, which has the presidency of the Security Council for the month, will preside over the annual debate on women, peace and security. This is the 15th anniversary of resolution 1325, which acknowledged that conflict had a differential impact on women and decided that addressing the needs, views and participation of half of society would provide a positive peace dividend. The Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN Women and two civil society representatives are expected to brief. A resolution is a possible outcome.

Background

The Open Debate

It is expected that Spain will circulate a concept note ahead of the debate asking member states to focus their interventions on how the international community can better deliver on women, peace and security commitments that are still unfulfilled 15 years after the adoption of resolution 1325.

The debate will also serve as the Council's High-Level Review on the implementation of resolution 1325. It will provide a forum for the Council and member states to reflect on the recommendations emanating from the 2015 Global Study on women, peace and security and the Secretary-General's 17 September report on the issue.

The High-Level Review and Global Study

The Council adopted resolution 2122 in October 2013 to address the persistent gaps in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. It reiterated the Council's intent to convene a High-Level Review in 2015 to assess progress in implementing the women, peace and security agenda as well as to identify obstacles and constraints that have emerged in the implementation of resolution 1325. In preparation for this review, resolution 2122 invited the Secretary-General to commission a Global Study.

UN Women led on the Global Study, and the former Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy, was appointed the lead author. The Global Study identified five key areas for achieving the implementation of resolution 1325: (1) making women's participation and leadership part of the core of peace and security efforts; (2) protecting the human rights of girls and women during and after conflict, especially in the context of emerging threats; (3) ensuring gender-responsive planning and accountability; (4) strengthening the UN's gender architecture and expertise; and (5) financing the women, peace and security agenda. The study will be made public on 14 October, but it is expected that an advance copy will be informally circulated prior to the open debate.

The Secretary-General's Report on Women, Peace and Security

The Secretary-General's report noted that the Global Study—like the two other independent reviews carried out in 2015 on peace operations and on the peacebuilding architecture—found that the nature of warfare is changing. It is characterised by blatant violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, involvement by a growing number of armed non-state actors, the spread of violent extremism and a brutal wave of organised violence that has led to record-setting levels of displacement. The findings of all three reviews have underlined that women and girls face challenges in having their voices heard and having their needs addressed in both conflict and post-conflict situations at the global, regional and national levels.

The report reflected on the role of key actors in the UN system to address the obstacles to full implementation of resolution 1325. Regarding peacekeeping, where the Security Council has a direct oversight role, the Secretary-General's report called for mainstreaming gender perspectives into mission mandates, addressing sexual exploitation and abuse, integrating gender expertise within mission staffing structures and improving the gender balance in UN military and police contingents. It welcomed the recommendation to specify performance indicators related

UN DOCUMENTS ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2122 (18 October 2013) addressed the persistent gaps in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda and requested the Global Study. S/RES/1325 (31 October 2000) was the first resolution on women, peace and security. Security Council Presidential Statements S/PRST/2014/21 (28 October 2014) highlighted the impact of violent extremism on women. S/PRST/2005/21 (31 May 2005) was on sexual exploitation and abuse. Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7428 (15 April 2015) was on conflict-related sexual violence. S/PV.7289 (28 October 2014) was on women, peace and security. Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/716 (17 September 2015) included recommendations from the Global Study. S/2015/203 (23 March 2015) was on conflict-related sexual violence.

Women, Peace and Security (con't)

to gender in the compacts between the Secretary-General and heads of missions. The Secretary-General also encouraged strengthened partnerships between UN Women and peace operations.

Regarding the Security Council, the report highlights the Council's important role in establishing the normative framework over the past 15 years. However, both the Peace Operations Panel and the Global Study found deficits in implementation. The report recommends strengthening the quality of gender analysis related to conflict flowing into the Council, more frequent country-specific briefings by the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the head of UN Women, increased attention to gender during Council visiting missions and appointing gender experts to the monitoring groups that assist relevant Security Council sanctions committees. The Secretary-General recalls that political will and consistent oversight by the Council are central to improving implementation. The report puts forward the Global Study's recommendation for a mechanism that will allow the Council to better integrate gender into its outcomes and connect itself, through increased interaction with the UN system, to the security challenges and participation barriers women face in country-specific situations.

Countering violent extremism is another focus of the report. The past two years have been marked by harrowing accounts of sexual violence in the context of violent extremism, with particular focus on Boko Haram and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham. Terrorist groups use sexual violence to achieve tactical objectives, terrorize communities into compliance and generate revenue through trafficking, slave trade and ransoms. Terrorist groups also displace populations from strategic areas, with a knock-on effect that displaced or refugee women and girls are vulnerable to sexual exploitation, such as human trafficking, early marriage and forced marriage. Violent extremism has a gender dimension in that women's rights are attacked, in particular their rights to education, public life and decision-making over their own bodies.

The Secretary-General's report notes that even though extremist groups have placed the subordination of women at the forefront of their agenda, the promotion of gender equality has remained an afterthought in national and international responses.

Developments in the Counter-Terrorism Committee

[On 9 September, representatives of UN Women and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate briefed member states at an open meeting of the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee about how gender has started to be integrated into the UN's policy and programming on counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism.](#)

Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is whether and how it will take forward actionable recommendations from the Global Study to achieve fuller implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in its own work, in particular how gender is incorporated into mandates of peace operations, how gender is reported to the Council and how the Council's subsequent oversight role is enhanced if conflict gender analysis is presented.

Related to the Council's oversight role, an issue is how the Council can demand greater transparency from the UN system as well as troop- and police-contributing countries regarding allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel.

A central issue for the open debate will be countering violent extremism, and at the same time ensuring that counterinsurgency efforts against extremist groups do not exacerbate the vulnerabilities that women and girls already face, such as in Somalia.

A related issue is not losing sight of the fact that in many situations where violent extremism and terrorism are hallmarks of active conflict, governments can also be a primary driver of conflict and displacement, such as in Syria. Also related to massive internal displacement and refugee flows is how the Council can encourage the UN system and member states to develop and implement a gender-sensitive humanitarian response to the needs of displaced women and girls.

Options

The Council could adopt a resolution taking up recommendations from the Secretary-General's report and the Global Study to:

- encourage the UN system to deliver improved gender analysis for the situations on the Council's agenda; and
- commit to a mechanism that will support consistent implementation of the women, peace and security agenda by the Council.

Regarding subsidiary bodies, the Council could request that gender experts be included in the groups that assist relevant Security Council committees. In the context of countering violent extremism, this is particularly relevant to the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee, the 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee and the 751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Sanctions Committee.

Regarding sexual exploitation and abuse, the Council could reiterate its request in the 31 May 2005 presidential statement for specific reporting on accountability measures once accused peacekeepers are repatriated, to enhance the transparency efforts of troop- and police-contributing countries.

Council Dynamics

The Council has not adopted a resolution on women, peace and security since 2013, leaving dynamics largely untested for two years on this issue. It seems Council members who are supportive of this thematic agenda agree that it is time for a new resolution if it can substantively address two issues: countering violent extremism and improving the Council's own implementation through concrete commitments.

However, there may be resistance by some Council members to any ambitious expectations. China and Russia made agreement difficult on language in the presidential statement following last October's debate that referenced accountability issues and the Global Study. Venezuela, which came onto the Council in 2015, may be similarly cautious.

The UK is the penholder on women, peace and security in the Council. The US is the penholder on sexual violence issues.

Security Council Elections 2015

Expected General Assembly Action

On 15 October, the General Assembly is scheduled to elect five states to two-year terms on the Security Council beginning on 1 January 2016.

(Please see our 2 October Special Research Report: Security Council Elections 2015 for more detailed information.)

Background

The five seats available for election in 2015 will be distributed as follows:

- two seats for the African Group (currently held by Chad and Nigeria);
- one seat for the Group of Asia and the Pacific Small Island Developing States (the Asia-Pacific Group, currently held by Jordan);
- one seat for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC, currently held by Chile); and
- one seat for the Eastern European Group (currently held by Lithuania).

The Western European and Others Group is contesting no seats this year, as its two seats are up for election every even calendar year.

At press time all five candidates—Egypt, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay—seemed to be running unopposed. The table below shows the number of seats available per region in the 2015 election, the declared candidates and their prior terms on the Council.

Voting Procedures

A country must obtain the votes of two-thirds of the member states present and voting at the General Assembly session in order to secure a seat on the Council, regardless of whether the election is contested. This means that 129 positive votes are required at a minimum to win a seat if all 193 UN member states are present.

Elections to the Council, as with other principal organs of the UN, require formal balloting, even if candidates have been endorsed by their regional group and are running unopposed. In theory, it is possible, although unlikely, that a country running unopposed might not garner the requisite votes of those present in the General

Assembly in the first round of voting. Such a country may then be challenged in subsequent rounds by a new candidate and ultimately not obtain a seat.

This will be the last time that elections are held in October. As a result of concerns that elected Council members do not have enough time to prepare for their terms, the General Assembly decided to hold the elections about six months before the members elected assume their responsibilities. Resolution 68/307 of 18 September 2014 decided that this would start in the 70th session of the General Assembly, so the next election is expected in June 2016.

Potential Council Dynamics in 2016

Several of the candidates appear to have a strong national interest in countries in their respective regions that are on the Council's agenda. Ukraine is likely to prioritise the situation in its own country and immediate region, which has become one of the most divisive issues on the Council's agenda. Japan has been interested historically in non-proliferation issues and the DPRK and is likely to play an important role in those issues. Egypt, a major regional actor, will enter the Council at a time of turmoil in the Middle East and has an important stake in developments in several situations in its neighbourhood that

are on the Council's agenda, most notably Libya. During its campaign, Senegal has shown interest in focusing on threats to international peace and security such as terrorism and transnational organised crime in Western Africa. Uruguay's engagement in peacekeeping in Haiti is likely to be reflected in the Council's discussions about the ongoing downsizing of the UN mission there.

Following the release of the report by the High-level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations and a subsequent report by the Secretary-General on its recommendations, thematic discussions on peace operations are expected to attract the attention of the Council.

A significant focus of attention for Council members in 2016 is the selection of the next Secretary-General. So far, Council members have only begun to discuss issues related to the process. There is expected to be more discussion in the coming months about improving the transparency of the selection process as well as about particular candidates.

Because of the growing disillusionment with the manner with which the permanent members conduct Council business, often voiced by elected members, there appears to be a strong desire among candidates and some continuing Council members to enhance the transparency and inclusiveness of the Council's working methods.

REGION	SEATS AVAILABLE IN THE 2015 ELECTION	MEMBER STATES RUNNING AND PREVIOUS TERMS ON THE COUNCIL
Africa	2	Egypt (1946, 1949-1950, 1961-1962*, 1984-1985 and 1996-1997) and Senegal (1968-1969 and 1988-1989)
Asia-Pacific	1	Japan (1958-1959, 1966-1967, 1971-1972, 1975-1976, 1981-1982, 1987-1988, 1992-1993, 1997-1998, 2005-2006 and 2009-2010)
Eastern Europe	1	Ukraine (1948-1949, 1984-1985** and 2000-2001)
Latin America and Caribbean	1	Uruguay (1965-1966)

*The third term was as the United Arab Republic.

**The first two terms were as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Expected Council Action

In October, the Council expects to receive a briefing from the Special Representative and head of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), Mongi Hamdi, followed by consultations. A high-level meeting focused on the implementation of the peace agreement is expected to take place on the margins of the UN General Assembly on 1 October.

MINUSMA's mandate expires on 30 June 2016.

Key Recent Developments

Since the signing of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali (the Agreement) on 20 June by the Coordination—a coalition of armed groups seeking autonomy for the north of the country—the political process has been marked by major ceasefire violations and other difficulties in the implementation of the Agreement.

On 16 August, the Groupe Autodéfense Touareg Imghad et Alliés (GATIA)—a member of the Platform coalition of armed groups closely aligned with the government—took control of the town of Anéfis (Kidal region), in violation of the ceasefire laid out in the Agreement. Following engagement by the mediation team and President Ibrahim Bobacar Keita's call for the group to immediately and unconditionally withdraw from Anéfis, the Platform withdrew on 14 September. On 19 September the Coordination returned to Anéfis, in a move criticised by MINUSMA for not being coordinated with the mission.

Several violations of the ceasefire have also been reported in the Gao and Timbuktu regions, and MINUSMA established a security zone covering a 20-kilometre radius around the town of Kidal to protect civilians. Any movement of armed groups' troops from their positions as of 20 June is considered a violation of the ceasefire. Resolution 2227, adopted on 29 June, mandates MINUSMA to support the implementation of the agreement as well as to support, monitor and supervise the implementation of the ceasefire arrangements and confidence-building measures and to report to the Council on any violations of the ceasefire.

The implementation of other provisions of the Agreement has been hindered

by difficulties in agreeing on the membership and timelines of the Comité de Suivi de l'Accord (CSA), the main follow-up mechanism to the Agreement, chaired by Algeria, and its four sub-committees. On 23 August, the Coordination announced the suspension of its participation in the CSA until GATIA withdrew from Anéfis. Despite the withdrawal on 14 September, the Coordination did not attend a 17 September meeting of another follow-up mechanism to the Agreement, the Commission Technique de Sécurité (CTS), chaired by MINUSMA's Force Commander Major General Michael Lollesgaard. Arrangements for joint patrolling by the parties, establishment of cantonment sites and deployment of additional mixed observation and verification teams are contingent on the participation of all parties in the follow-up mechanisms. At press time, another meeting of the CTS was expected on 29 September.

The complete redeployment of civil servants to northern regions continues to be hindered by the security situation. Local and regional elections, which had been originally scheduled for 25 October, have been postponed, given the incapacity of the government to prepare for the elections in the north, as well as the need to review the electoral law in accordance with the Agreement.

MINUSMA, its contractors and other international actors (including NGOs) continue to be targeted by Al-Qaida-affiliated terrorist groups through improvised explosive devices, ambushes, suicide bombings and other attacks. On 11 September, MINUSMA suffered its 50th attack when armed men ambushed a convoy; two peacekeepers were wounded. Since its establishment, 42 peacekeepers have been killed and 126 gravely wounded.

Security incidents have had a negative impact on the distribution of humanitarian assistance in the north, where the movement of humanitarian personnel and goods is restricted. According to the 22 September report of the Secretary-General, the number of security incidents affecting humanitarian personnel in 2015 is almost three times higher than that of 2014.

Key Issues

An overarching issue is the slow and difficult

implementation of the Agreement, and ensuring that the CSA and its sub-committees are fully functional and include all stakeholders.

Preventing further escalation of violence by the warring parties and establishing accountability mechanisms for those violating the ceasefire are imminent issues of concern for the Council.

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

Options

The Council could issue a statement that:

- calls on all parties to respect the ceasefire agreement, act with restraint and refrain from any further violence, and threatens to impose sanctions on those violating the ceasefire;
- urges the parties to act in good faith and with the spirit of compromise in the discussions regarding the implementation of the Agreement;
- urges Malian authorities to ensure accountability for armed attacks against civilians;
- requests the Secretary-General to share with the Council the results of MINUSMA's investigation into the recent ceasefire violations; and
- reiterates the Council's support of MINUSMA's good-offices mandate to encourage and support the full implementation of the Agreement.

The Council could also establish a sanctions regime to impose measures on those violating the ceasefire, whether directly or through proxies.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Despite the Secretary-General's suggestion in his 11 June report that “the Council may wish to consider the introduction of sanctions against perpetrators of the ceasefire violations”, Council members have not moved forward in this regard and seem to believe that the threat to impose sanctions remains appropriate despite the ceasefire violations by the parties.

Between 2 and 4 September the AU organised a meeting of the Nouakchott

Mali (con't)

process in Bamako focusing on security cooperation in the Sahelo-Saharan region. The meeting's conclusion was that the establishment of an intervention force brigade to combat terrorism in northern Mali should be further considered. Requests to include such a force within MINUSMA's mandate have been ongoing since 2013 and have been ruled out by Council members on several occasions. However, it is unclear whether the

proposal might gain new momentum if the force were deployed alongside MINUSMA by a regional or subregional organisation.

Council members continue to be worried about attacks targeting MINUSMA in northern Mali. Despite improvements in the living conditions for troops deployed in the north, MINUSMA's exceptionally high number of fatalities and casualties has led to tension between the troop contributors

willing to deploy their forces in the most dangerous territory (whose troops are not necessarily the best equipped) and other, more risk-averse contributors. That tension reflects what is seen as an increasing divide between contributors from the developing and the developed world.

France is the penholder on Mali.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Expected Council Action

In October, the Council will be briefed by Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region, Said Djinnit, will brief on the latest report on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement.

MONUSCO's mandate expires on 31 March 2016.

Key Recent Developments

Rebel groups continue to spread violence in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Joint operations by the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and MONUSCO's Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) against the Ugandan Islamist group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) have been ongoing since January 2014. While ADF leader Jamil Mukulu was captured in Tanzania and extradited to Uganda in July, the group continues to endanger the lives of civilians in Beni, North Kivu. Over the last ten months, more than 400 deaths have been attributed to the ADF.

Starting in April, Council members and troop-contributing countries have been receiving monthly updates at the expert level from the Secretariat on MONUSCO and the FIB. The latest such meeting took place on 11 September, with Under-Secretary-General

for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefing. He updated the attendees on the status of the joint operations against the Force de résistance patriotique en Ituri from the Ngiti ethnic group in Orientale Province, where operations have been successful in reducing human rights violations committed by the group and reportedly lowering its members' morale. On the ADF, Ladsous said that it has responded to military pressure by targeting civilians it believes are collaborating with the FARDC and MONUSCO. Ladsous also noted an increase in the Lord's Resistance Army activities in Orientale.

Ladsous added that there has not been any movement on the renewal of MONUSCO-FARDC joint operations against the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) rebel group. The cooperation has been suspended since February, as MONUSCO will not cooperate with the FARDC generals leading the operation, who are suspected of human rights abuses, in accordance with the UN human rights due-diligence policy. Meanwhile, the DRC continues to operate unilaterally against the group, but the operation has produced very limited results.

On the political front, tensions continue to mount around the upcoming electoral period and questions surrounding President Joseph Kabila's intentions to stay in power beyond the constitutionally mandated limit of two terms, which ends in November 2016. The current schedule set by the Independent

National Electoral Commission (CENI) begins with municipal, urban and local elections to take place on 25 October, followed by senatorial elections on 17 January 2016. Governors and vice-governors will be elected on 31 January 2016, and parliamentary and presidential elections will end the cycle on 27 November 2016.

On 8 September, the DRC Constitutional Court ordered the CENI to reassess the packed electoral calendar, as budgetary and political constraints make it unattainable.

Kabila's critics see the packed electoral calendar as a ploy for him to stay in power beyond his constitutionally limited term as delays occur. While Kabila has not commented publicly on his political future, the government's official line is that Kabila will abide by the constitution. On 14 September, seven leaders of political parties within the government coalition wrote a letter to Kabila, demanding that steps be taken to ensure that his presidential term ends in a timely fashion after the November 2016 presidential polls. Three days later, the government announced that the seven had been expelled from the ruling coalition. Two of the seven leaders who held governmental positions were relieved of their duties. Thereafter, on 18 September, civil service minister Jean-Claude Kibala and land affairs minister Bolengetenge Balela quit their posts after they refused to sign a loyalty pledge to Kabila's majority coalition; the ministers belong to the Social Movement for Renewal party, whose leader was one of the

UN DOCUMENTS ON THE DRC Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2211 (26 March 2015) renewed the mandate of MONUSCO, including its intervention brigade. **S/RES/2198** (29 January 2015) renewed the DRC sanctions regime and the mandate of the Group of Experts. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7484** (14 July 2015) was a briefing by the head of MONUSCO, Martin Kobler, on the latest MONUSCO report, and Ambassador Dina Kawar (Jordan), chair of the 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee, following her visit to the country.

OTHER RELEVANT FACTS Special Representative of the Secretary-General Martin Kobler (Germany) **MONUSCO Force Commander** Lieutenant General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz (Brazil) **MONUSCO Size, Composition and Cost of Mission** *Strength as of 31 August 2015* 23,438 troops (including 481 military observers and 1,178 police), 840 international civilian personnel, 2,725 local civilian staff and 450 UN volunteers. *Approved budget* (1 July 2015-30 June 2016): \$1.33 billion *Mission duration* July 2010 to present

Democratic Republic of the Congo (con't)

seven expelled from the coalition.

On 15 September, an anti-Kabila rally in Kinshasa turned into a riot when some 3,000 protesters were attacked by unidentified youths. This was the first major anti-Kabila rally since January, when roughly 40 people were killed in clashes between protesters and government forces in several cities. According to the UN Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO), there is a documented increase in politically-related human rights violations against the freedom of expression of those criticising the government, including arbitrary arrests and intimidation.

Sanctions-Related Developments

In October, the 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee will be briefed by the Group of Experts on its midterm report. The chair of the Committee, Ambassador Dina Kawar (Jordan), is expected to brief the Council in November on the report, due to the Council by 30 October. Kawar last briefed the Council on 14 July, following her visit to the country.

Human Rights-Related Developments

In August, the UNJHRO documented 409 human rights violations, compared to 393 recorded in July, with the eastern provinces of the country remaining the most affected. Of these violations, 24 were election-related, including arbitrary arrests and threats, compared with 14 such incidents in July. Journalists were targeted in eight cases, while the same number involved activists.

During its 30th session, the Human Rights

Council (HRC) considered the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation in the DRC, covering June 2014 to May 2015 (A/HRC/30/32). The report highlights issues relating to protection of human rights defenders, journalists and political opponents; sexual violence; extrajudicial killings and summary executions; torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; the fight against impunity; and protection of civilians.

Key Issues

While military cooperation continues on some fronts, an ongoing issue is the working relationship between MONUSCO and the government, in particular, the breakdown in cooperation against the FDLR.

An increasingly troubling development is the political tension surrounding the electoral calendar and Kabila's possible attempt to remain in power.

Options

Council members may wish to adopt a statement regarding the need to uphold the constitution and conduct free, fair and timely elections.

The Council may also consider visiting the country during the electoral period to take stock of the situation and deliver a strong political message to interlocutors.

Council and Wider Dynamics

As the recent Council dynamics in the case of

Burundi and its president, Pierre Nkurunziza, being elected for what some view as an unconstitutional third term demonstrate, Council members are divided in their perspective on constitutional and electoral matters and how they relate to the issue of sovereignty. Countries such as Russia and China view these issues as mainly internal, while western countries feel that a strong message should be sent to individuals who try to remain in power beyond their constitutional mandate, causing instability and violence in the country. In the case of Burundi, the African members of the Council ultimately sided with those countries that did not want to take a strong position against Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term and the government's policies in shutting down the opposition.

It is possible that these divisions will play out similarly with respect to the DRC, thus limiting the substance of any statement on the political situation that Council members may agree on. However, unlike the Council dynamics concerning Burundi, Council members have generally seen eye-to-eye on most issues relating to the DRC, and it is possible that common ground may be found. Another consideration which may contribute to achieving consensus is that, unlike in Burundi, there is no constitutional ambiguity regarding Kabila's obligation to step down at the end of his second term.

Syria

Expected Council Action

In October, Council members will receive their regular monthly briefings on the chemical weapons and humanitarian tracks in Syria.

A new element this month is the likely inclusion of updates regarding the UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM), established to determine responsibility for the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

Key Recent Developments

At press time, the main Syrian issues that were expected to be raised during the General Assembly's high-level week included prospects for a political solution; the utility of no-fly zones; accountability; the use of indiscriminate attacks by all parties, but in particular the government's use of barrel bombs; counterterrorism; and humanitarian concerns, including the long-standing refugee crisis that has only recently begun to impact Europe.

There are 4.08 million registered Syrian refugees mainly in neighbouring states. The overwhelming majority of civilians are fleeing attacks by the government and a smaller percentage are fleeing areas under the control of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS)—some analysts have estimated the ratio to be 7 to 1. The surge of approximately 200,000 Syrians seeking refuge in Europe is attributable to several factors. In principle, neighbouring states remain open

UN DOCUMENTS ON SYRIA Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2235 (7 August 2015), 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 Letters S/2015/710 and S/2015/709 (15 September 2015) was an exchange of letters regarding the appointment of Virginia Gamba to head the three-member JIM panel. S/2015/697 (10 September 2015), S/2015/696 (9 September 2015) and S/2015/669 (27 August 2015) was the exchange of letters regarding the JIM recommendations. S/2015/693 (9 September 2015) and S/2015/688 (7 September 2015) Australia and the UK, respectively, reported to the Security Council that they would take military action against ISIS in Syria, citing Article 51 of the UN Charter – the right of self-defence under Chapter VII. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7524 (16 September 2015) was on the humanitarian situation. Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/698 (10 September 2015) was on the humanitarian situation. S/2015/668 (26 August 2015) was on chemical weapons.

Syria (con't)

to those fleeing the war in Syria. However, in practice, neighbouring states are reeling from the burden of hosting such large refugee communities and have placed restrictions on their borders. Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries are also trying to move on from untenable conditions—in particular in Lebanon. Finally, Syria's recent conscription to replenish its diminishing military ranks, as well as making passports easier to obtain from its consulates in neighbouring countries, have also contributed to an increase in those seeking to flee the country and the region.

When OCHA head Stephen O'Brien briefed the Security Council on 16 September, he urged the Council to find a political solution. He said the war in Syria had created one of the largest refugee exoduses since the Second World War and civilians were risking the perilous journey across the Mediterranean to escape.

On the political track, Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Barack Obama were set to meet in New York on 28 September to discuss Syria. Expectations were low for any breakthrough given the US's repeated warnings that Russia's military build-up and continued support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad risked exacerbating and extending the conflict.

In late August—before the Russian military build-up became widely known—Assad said he had strong confidence that Russia would continue to support his government and that both Iran and Russia remained steadfast allies. He reiterated that a political solution was possible only after the “outside world stopped supporting terrorism”—his reference to opposition groups as well as to ISIS. The threats of ISIS and a burgeoning refugee crisis that directly affects Europe led the P3 to modify publicly their stance on Assad's role in a political transition, indicating that the timing of his exit from power did not have to be immediate. (This has been a private position for some time, but has only recently been signalled publicly.) Meanwhile, Iran, Syria and Russia purport to signal flexibility by reporting that the government is willing to share power, but are reiterating well-known positions that power-sharing can only occur in the context of a united anti-ISIS effort, elections and talks with a “healthy” opposition. In the midst of such intransigent positions, UN Special

Envoy Staffan de Mistura's 22 September announcement of those who will lead his proposed intra-Syrian working groups went almost unheeded, and hopes were dashed for any near-term agreement between Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia and the US to meet together and form an international contact group in support of de Mistura's mediation efforts.

On the chemical weapons track, the Secretary-General's recommendations to establish the JIM were sent to the Council on 27 August and, pursuant to resolution 2235, the Council was to respond within five days. However, Russia raised several issues related to recommendations such as sources of funding and modalities for the Syrian government's cooperation, while also suggesting that the scope of the JIM's work should be extended to Iraq. It took two weeks of discussions between Russia, the US and the Secretariat to resolve Russia's concerns. The Secretary-General and the Security Council finally exchanged letters on 9 and 10 September, formally establishing the JIM. Separately, on 9 September, Acting UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo briefed Council members on the regular chemical weapons track as set out in resolution 2118.

On 11 September, the Secretary-General appointed Virginia Gamba, the current Deputy to the Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, to head a three-member panel that will exercise overall responsibility for the JIM.

Developments in the Council's Subsidiary Bodies

On 9 September, representatives of UN Women and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate briefed member states at an open meeting of the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee about how gender has started to be integrated into the UN's policy and programming on counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism. The briefing included a focus on ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

In late September, the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee added three individuals to its sanctions list for being financial facilitators for the Syrian-based Al Nusra Front (SC/12053). It also listed 10 more individuals and one entity for their affiliation with ISIS (SC/12059, SC/12062 and SC/12063).

Human Rights-Related Developments

The tenth report of the Commission of Inquiry on Syria said that with no end to the Syrian conflict in

sight, it is the particular obligation of the Security Council to open a path to justice (A/HRC/30/48). The report recommends that the P5 work to put pressure on the parties to end the violence and initiate all-inclusive negotiations for a sustainable political transition. It also recommends that the Security Council include regular briefings by the Commission in the Security Council's formal agenda; take appropriate action by referring the situation to justice, possibly to the ICC or an ad hoc tribunal; and ensure immediate commitment by the relevant actors and stakeholders to a comprehensive peace process.

In early October, the Human Rights Council is expected to adopt a resolution that calls for the General Assembly to submit all of the Commission's reports and oral updates to the Security Council for appropriate action. A similar request was included in the March 2015 Human Rights Council resolution renewing the mandate of the Commission. However, no such action seems to have been taken.

Key Issues

The only 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 exert effective leadership, particularly in supporting a cessation of violence and resuscitating efforts for a political solution.

Options

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—but P5 divisions have made it impossible for the Council to fulfil its responsibility for maintaining international peace and security in the case of Syria.

The diplomatic space that was perceived to have opened this summer following the conclusion of the Iran nuclear deal has quickly dissipated. In its place is the increasing militarisation of the conflict and hardening positions regarding the possible nature of a political solution. As a result, there seems to be extremely limited room for Council members to take forward any new initiative on Syria—including the French draft resolution on indiscriminate attacks and the government's use of barrel bombs.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members have observed that the spate of diplomatic activity around the

Syria (con't)

prospects of a political solution to the Syrian crisis that followed the Iran nuclear deal is not reflected in the increasing militarisation of the conflict. September saw the build-up of Russian military capabilities in Syria, stated to be in support of the government's fight against terrorism. Media reports indicate that Russia carried out its first airstrikes in Syria on 30 September against the rebel-held town of Talbisah situated north of Homs.

Meanwhile, Australia, France, Turkey and the UK have joined the US-led anti-ISIS coalition airstrikes in Syria. While the US-led anti-ISIS coalition "de-conflicts" its strikes with the Syrian government, and will likely do so with any direct Russian involvement, there are no joint strikes with Russia or the government against ISIS.

Russia's attempt to have a presidential

statement adopted on counter-terrorism in the region at an open debate on 30 September was thwarted by the US. The US declined to support the Russian text that would, in its view, have been interpreted as the Security Council's approval of the Russian military build-up in Syria and encouragement of cooperation with the Syrian government. At his address to the General Assembly on 28 September, Obama publicly rejected the idea of cooperating with "tyrants like Bashar al-Assad" who drop barrel bombs on civilians. Putin, in his address to the General Assembly, emphasised that it was an "enormous mistake" to not work with Assad.

These developments have further soured the divisive dynamics in the Council in relation to Syria, and were demonstrated in a tense exchange between Russia and the US

during consultations following the Middle East briefing on 15 September.

For some time, the assumption that Russia would veto any Council outcome that points to government culpability has been a deterrent to any meaningful action on the Syria situation. Now the likelihood of the Council taking any action on the French initiative on indiscriminate attacks, let alone on more robust actions like a genuinely agreed plan for political transition, targeted sanctions, an arms embargo, authorising a no-fly zone or another attempt at an ICC referral, seem more remote than ever.

France is the penholder on Syria overall. In practice, however, most texts are agreed between Russia and the US prior to seeking agreement by the broader Council.

Haiti

Expected Council Action

In October, the Security Council is due to hold its semi-annual debate and adopt a resolution extending the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) before the current mandate expires on 15 October. Special Representative Sandra Honoré is expected to present the Secretary-General's 31 August report and brief the Council on recent developments.

Key Recent Developments

On 9 August, Haiti held the first round of long-overdue legislative elections to fill the 119 seats of the Chamber of Deputies and two-thirds of the 30 Senate seats.

In a 10 August statement, Honoré and members of the international core group based in Port-au-Prince (Brazil, Canada, France, Spain, the US, the EU and the Organisation of American States [OAS]) welcomed the elections and expressed support for the completion of the electoral process according to the established calendar. (The calendar stipulates that the second round shall be held on 25 October together with the first round of presidential elections and

local and municipal elections, followed by a possible run-off on 27 December.) The statement also deplored, however, "interruptions of the polls in certain areas, acts of violence and the loss of human life" (two people were killed) and encouraged Haitian authorities to investigate the incidents without delay and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Media coverage of the 9 August elections also highlighted the disruptions faced by voters in casting their ballots and other irregularities, such as ballot-stuffing. The Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) confirmed that 54 polling stations, or approximately 5 percent of the total, were closed down due to violence and other disruptions. As a result, the CEP later announced that the elections in 25 of 119 voting districts would be repeated and decided to disqualify 16 candidates suspected of involvement in violent acts. Voter turnout was less than 18 percent.

On 25 August, three Haitian NGOs—the National Human Rights Defense Network, the National Observation Council and the Haitian Council of Non State Actors, which together had deployed 1,500 observers in the elections—published a highly critical

report calling for an independent investigation to restore confidence in the electoral process. Meanwhile, a group calling itself Front national de coordination des candidats pour la lutte démocratique demanded the annulment of the elections and resignation of the CEP. Several demonstrations took place in Port-au-Prince throughout September.

Meanwhile, the Secretary-General noted in his 31 August report that national and international observers (the EU and the OAS) had described the elections as generally peaceful. He commended the CEP for its handling of the electoral process, both in ensuring transparency, fairness and inclusiveness and in maintaining tight deadlines, while standing its ground on difficult decisions.

The campaign for the presidential elections was officially launched on 9 September with a total of 54 accredited candidates. In a controversial decision, the CEP had earlier rejected the candidacy of Jacky Lumarque of Vérité, one of the main opposition parties. Vérité announced on 8 September that the party would not participate in the second round of the legislative elections. On 17 September, the CEP issued the list of candidates

UN DOCUMENTS ON HAITI Security Council Resolution S/RES/2180 (14 October 2014) renewed MINUSTAH's mandate until 15 October 2015. [Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/667](#) (31 August 2015) was the most recent MINUSTAH report. [S/2014/617](#) (29 August 2014) indicated that a further drawdown of MINUSTAH's military contingent might be possible after the elections. [S/2014/162](#) (7 March 2014) outlined five options for the post-2016 UN presence in Haiti. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7408](#) (18 March 2015) was the Council's last debate on Haiti.

Haiti (con't)

for the local elections.

On 15 September, Honoré and members of the core group issued another statement, emphasising the crucial importance of the elections in Haiti. They urged all actors to spare no effort in ensuring the completion of the electoral process, with the installation of a new parliament on 11 January and a new president on 7 February 2016. They also noted the steps taken by the CEP to improve the process based on the experience gained from the first round and the recommendations of the electoral observer missions.

On 28 September, the CEP announced the 9 August final results. Only eight deputies and two senators had been elected in the first round. There was renewed criticism of the CEP following the announcement, in particular relating to its handling of challenges to the initial vote count.

In other developments, MINUSTAH completed the reduction of its military component from 5,021 to 2,370 personnel, as authorised by the Council in last year's mandate renewal. The authorised police component remains unchanged at 2,601. According to the Secretary-General's latest report, the security environment remained generally stable although there was an increase in the number of incidents related to public protests. The report also highlighted the leading role played by the CEP in organising the elections as proof of increased national capacity to handle the security situation.

With regard to MINUSTAH's mandate renewal, the Secretary-General recommends that the mission be extended for an additional and possibly final year without any further reductions, noting the importance of providing "a period of stability" for the new administration. A strategic assessment mission will be dispatched to Haiti following the installation of a new president with a view to presenting recommendations to the Council on the future UN presence. These will presumably build on the five options outlined in the Secretary-General's 7 March 2014 report to the Council.

On 16 September, the Council held a meeting with MINUSTAH's troop- and police-contributing countries with a briefing

by Honoré via video teleconference.

There was a significant deterioration in the humanitarian situation. The World Food Programme on 26 August warned that a severe drought in Haiti had weakened the already-fragile food supply and might lead to food insecurity for as much as 30 percent of the population. According to the Secretary-General's report, the UN's response to the crisis is hampered by reduced funding.

Human Rights-Related Developments

The independent expert on the human rights situation in Haiti, Gustavo Gallón, visited the country from 6 to 15 September. In a press release on 17 September, Gallón voiced concern over serious irregularities surrounding the 9 August elections, such as politically-motivated violence and electoral fraud. He stressed the importance of improving safeguards for the upcoming elections in October and the possible third round in December. He also voiced concern over the precarious conditions in camps where Haitians who have returned from the Dominican Republic live, and called on Haitian authorities to take appropriate measures.

Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is the renewal of MINUSTAH's mandate and how to address the anticipated reconfiguration of the UN presence.

A further issue is the continued risk of instability and violence associated with the electoral process, as well as the risk of further delays.

The deterioration in the humanitarian situation is also a cause for concern.

Options

One option for the Council is to simply extend MINUSTAH for another year with no changes, as recommended by the Secretary-General.

Another option is to likewise extend the mission but at the same time signal the Council's intention to review the situation before the end of the mandate, based on recommendations from the Secretary-General's strategic assessment mission, and to consider a further reduction of MINUSTAH's military component and reconfiguration of the UN presence. (In his 29 August 2014 report to the Council, the Secretary-General seemed to indicate that a

reduction in the military component to one battalion could be possible after the installation of a new government.)

A further option is to extend MINUSTAH for a shorter period, such as nine months.

Council and Wider Dynamics

The Group of Friends on Haiti in New York (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Guatemala, Peru, the US and Uruguay, which is the chair) started discussions on MINUSTAH's mandate renewal in early September based on the Secretary-General's recommendations, but at press time had yet to agree on a common position. (Following established Council practice on MINUSTAH, the US, as the penholder, seeks the input of the Group of Friends before starting negotiations in the Council.)

There is no disagreement that current troop levels must be maintained until the completion of elections. It appears, however, that France, alone among the Group of Friends but with the assumed backing of the UK, initially pushed to include elements in the draft resolution that would indicate the Council's intention to review MINUSTAH by June 2016, and depending on the situation on the ground authorise a further drawdown. It seems France would like to anticipate the reconfiguration of the UN presence and possible termination of MINUSTAH, and to include a specific timeline for the strategic assessment mission.

Other members of the Group of Friends, however, believe it is too early for the Council to signal its intentions for the post-election phase or make any references to a further drawdown. They appear concerned that even if the president is inaugurated in February, it may take a while before a new government is formed and MINUSTAH's continued presence will therefore still be needed to ensure stability during this period. (Honoré has apparently indicated May as a realistic timeframe.) According to this view, the timing of the assessment mission also has to be carefully considered to ensure that the views of the new government can be taken into consideration.

Somalia

Expected Council Action

In October, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support Atul Khare is expected to brief the Council on the strategic review of the UN Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA). The report is due 30 September.

The Council is scheduled to adopt a resolution on Somalia-Eritrea sanctions. The authorisation for maritime interdiction of illicit charcoal exports and illegal arms imports expires 24 October; the partial lifting of the arms embargo expires 30 October; and the mandate of the Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group expires 30 November.

Key Recent Developments

On 19 July, the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) announced a resumption of offensive military operations, Operation Jubba Corridor, targeting Al-Shabaab strongholds in the Bakool, Bay and Gedo regions of southern Somalia. The offensive is being undertaken by contingents of AMISOM from the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) and Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF), with supporting units from the Somali National Army (SNA) and in collaboration with “strategic partners”, which is typically an implicit reference to the US. Media reports suggest that 3,000 additional non-AMISOM ENDF troops have also participated in the new offensive, backed with airstrikes by Ethiopia and Kenya. On 22 July, SNA troops supported by AMISOM captured the town of Baardheere, a long-time Al-Shabaab stronghold, representing a significant victory for the new offensive. However, AMISOM has also faced numerous charges of civilian casualties, including two separate incidents in the town of Marka, Lower Shabelle region, on 21 and 31 July.

Operation Jubba Corridor was launched just a few weeks after AMISOM had suffered perhaps its worst military defeat. On 26 June, Al-Shabaab overran a base in Leego (100 kilometres northwest of Mogadishu), killing approximately 50 Burundian troops. Al-Shabaab launched suicide attacks on the Siyad Hotel and the Weheliye Hotel in Mogadishu

on 10 July and the Jazeera Palace Hotel in Mogadishu on 26 July. On 1 September, Al-Shabaab attacked an AMISOM base at Janaale (100 kilometres southeast of Mogadishu), killing at least 12 Ugandan troops. In contrast to the attacks in Mogadishu, which have become increasingly typical of Al-Shabaab’s tactics as it loses territory in south-central Somalia, the AMISOM reversals at Leego and Janaale were unexpected as it was generally assumed that Al-Shabaab no longer had sufficient military capacity to engage directly with AMISOM troops. Council members issued press statements condemning the 26 June, 26 July and 1 September attacks by Al-Shabaab.

The political situation in Somalia has been in a state of flux, with uneven progress toward realising the Vision 2016 goals (federal state formation, new constitution and national elections). On 28 July, the Federal Parliament passed a resolution stating that a country-wide ‘one person, one vote’ election would not be possible in 2016 due to political delays, technical issues and security challenges. On 29 and 30 July, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Nicholas Kay co-chaired the High-level Partnership Forum (HLPF) in Mogadishu. The meeting, attended by 32 delegations, was a follow-up to a conference held in Copenhagen in November 2014. On 3 August, envoys representing the UN, the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the EU, AMISOM, the UK, and the US issued a statement welcoming the commitments made at the HLPF and recognising that ‘one person, one vote’ elections will not be possible in 2016. On 20 August, the six envoys issued another joint statement expressing concern regarding a 12 August motion by 95 members of the Federal Parliament to impeach President Mohamud. On 25 September, the parliament’s speaker, Mohamed Sheikh Osman Jawari, announced the motion had been dropped due to insufficient support (a two-thirds majority of the 275 members of parliament would have been required to pass).

The humanitarian situation in Somalia has deteriorated further. According to the latest assessment presented on 31 August by the Food and Agricultural Organization’s Food Security and Nutritional Analysis Unit, within the last six months the number of people who face a food crisis or emergency has increased 17 percent, from 731,000 to 855,000. Another 2.3 million people are food-stressed and also require humanitarian assistance. Food insecurity is projected to worsen during 2015 due to low agricultural production, poor rains, the disruption of trade in conflict-affected areas and internal displacement.

Kenya has renewed its threat to close the Dadaab refugee camp or relocate it across the border with Somalia. Kenya briefed the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) on 24 July on its efforts to fight Al-Shabaab and its plans regarding the Dadaab refugee camp. The AU PSC issued a statement on 31 July taking note of Kenya’s briefing and requesting the AU Commission to submit a report with recommendations by early October. A representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees recently emphasised that voluntary return remains one of three potential durable solutions for the more than 400,000 refugees in Dadaab (in addition to integration in Kenya or resettlement in a third country), but that conditions are not yet conducive to a large-scale return of refugees to Somalia.

The Council last discussed Somalia on 16 July, when Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet briefed the Council on the Secretary-General’s 2 July letter transmitting the joint AU-UN review report of 30 June. Ambassador Awale Kullane (Somalia) also addressed the Council. The public briefing was followed by consultations with Mulet and Ambassador Rafael Ramirez (Venezuela), chair of the 751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Sanctions Committee, who presented a 120-day briefing. On 28 July, the Council adopted resolution 2232, extending the mandate of UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) until 30 March 2016 and reauthorising AMISOM

UN DOCUMENTS ON SOMALIA AND ERITREA [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2232](#) (28 July 2015) extended the mandate of UNSOM until 30 March 2016 and reauthorised AMISOM through 30 May 2016. [S/RES/2182](#) (24 October 2014) reauthorised AMISOM, renewed sanctions measures and authorised maritime interdiction of illegal arms imports and charcoal exports. [Security Council Letter S/2015/731](#) (18 September 2015) transmitted the report of the Emergency Relief Coordinator. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7487](#) (16 July 2015) concerned the joint AU-UN review of UN peacekeeping benchmarks, the AMISOM troop surge and military strategy. [S/PV.7286](#) (24 October 2014) concerned the adoption of resolution 2182. [Security Council Press Statements SC/12033](#) (2 September 2015) condemned the 1 September Al-Shabaab attack against an AMISOM base in Janaale. [SC/11981](#) (27 July 2015) condemned the 26 July Al-Shabaab attack against the Jazeera Hotel in Mogadishu. [SC/11949](#) (27 June 2015) condemned the 26 June Al-Shabaab attack against the AMISOM base in Leego. [Secretary-General’s Report S/2015/702](#) (11 September 2015) was on UNSOM.

USEFUL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES Paul D. Williams, *Special Report: How Many Fatalities Has the African Union Mission in Somalia Suffered?*, IPI Global Observatory, 10 September 2015. Jason Mosley, *Somalia’s Federal Future: Layered Agendas, Risks and Opportunities*, Chatham House, September 2015.

Somalia (con't)

through 30 May 2016.

A high-level meeting on Somalia was held in New York on 28 September, co-chaired by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and President Mohamud among others.

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 31 July, the UK's Serious Fraud Office announced a criminal investigation into UK-based oil exploration firm Soma Oil and Gas in relation to allegations of corruption in Somalia. The Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group has also been investigating the oil company with respect to concerns regarding the misappropriation of public financial resources, which is among the listing criteria for sanctions. Soma Oil and Gas, which first signed an exploration contract with the Federal Government of Somalia in August 2013, is chaired by Michael Howard, a former leader of the Conservative Party.

On 18 September, the 751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Sanctions Committee held informal consultations. The meeting concerned the annual report of the Emergency Relief Coordinator regarding the humanitarian exemption to Somalia sanctions.

Human Rights-Related Developments

The Human Rights Council considered the report of the independent expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, Bahame

Nyanduga, during its 30th session in September (A/HRC/30/57).

Key Issues

In October, the Council's focus will return to issues raised within the context of the joint AU-UN review, particularly the SNA support package and the performance of UNSOA.

Another set of issues that will come up in October concern sanctions, principally the Federal Government of Somalia's management of arms and ammunition and implementation of maritime interdiction measures regarding arms and charcoal.

Options

Regarding modification of the SNA support package or adjusting the mandate of UNSOA, it seems the Council is most likely to defer taking action until November.

With respect to sanctions, the most probable option would be for the Council to renew the partial lifting of the arms embargo, maritime interdiction and the mandate of the Monitoring Group.

Council and Wider Dynamics

While Council members have generally been collaborative regarding Somalia policymaking,

certain differences could resurface within the context of the reauthorisation for maritime interdiction. Two Council members, Jordan and Russia, abstained on resolution 2182. Jordan objected to the geographic scope, the range of interdicting actors, and the "reasonable grounds" basis for maritime interdiction. Russia suggested that the Arab Group and the Gulf Cooperation Council had not been adequately consulted during negotiation of the draft resolution.

The AU-UN joint review presented analyses and recommendations that were mutually agreed upon by the two organisations, and relations between the AU and UN have been increasingly positive with respect to Somalia policy. However, earlier differences between the AU and the UN—particularly with respect to financing and equipping AMISOM—could reappear during consultations in October and the potential adoption of a resolution in November on UNSOA and the SNA support package. Members of both the Council and the AU PSC, Chad and Nigeria, could play an important role.

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

Yemen

Expected Council Action

In October, Special Envoy for Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed and the chair of the Yemen 2140 Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Raimonda Murkmokaitė (Lithuania), are expected to brief the Council, followed by consultations.

No outcome is currently planned.

Key Recent Developments

Since taking Aden in July, the Saudi-led coalition, supporting transition President Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi, deployed thousands of ground forces, equipped with armoured vehicles, tanks and helicopters. Advancing north from Aden, the coalition offensive has driven the Houthis and security forces loyal

to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh out of much of the south and into central Yemen. Coalition forces and Yemeni soldiers trained abroad have also entered Yemen from Saudi Arabia, massing in Marib governorate for a possible offensive on the capital, Sana'a.

In September, coalition advances stalled. Heavy fighting continued in Taiz, Yemen's third largest city. On 4 September missile strike in Marib killed 52 Emirati, ten Saudi and five Bahraini soldiers. Since the missile strike, Qatar confirmed that it was deploying ground troops to Yemen, and media reports have cited other coalition members, including Egypt and Sudan, as planning to contribute ground forces. On 14 September, the coalition announced it had secured Marib City

and had commenced an offensive to take Sana'a, approximately 100 miles to the west. Meanwhile, Aden is reportedly plagued by rampant lawlessness.

Amidst this fighting, the conflict continues to take a devastating toll on civilians and on Yemen's infrastructure. Coalition airstrikes on 18 August severely damaged the port of Al-Hudaydah, the main port for delivering humanitarian aid to Houthi-controlled parts of Yemen. A 30 August airstrike on a bottling factory in Haijah reportedly killed 34 people. Suicide bombings at mosques in Sana'a, claimed by an Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS)-affiliated group, killed 32 people on 2 September and at least 25 on 24 September. On 28 September, coalition airstrikes

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 Saleh. **Security Council Press Statements** SC/12056 (24 September 2015) condemned the terrorist attack at a mosque in Sana'a. SC/12042 (11 September 2015) welcomed the announcement of upcoming talks between the Houthis, GPC and the Yemeni government. SC/12036 (4 September 2015) condemned the 2 September terrorist attacks in Sana'a and the killing of two ICRC staff. **Security Council Meeting Record** S/PV.7507 (19 August 2015) was a briefing by OCHA head Stephen O'Brien. **Human Rights Council Document** A/HRC/30/31 (7 September 2015) was a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights report on Yemen, which recommended establishing an international mechanism to investigate alleged human rights violations.

Yemen (con't)

killed as many as 135 people at a wedding party near Mokha. According to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as of 24 September, there have been 2,355 confirmed civilian deaths and 4,862 injured since 26 March. Actual casualties are believed to be much higher. The coalition's use of cluster munitions in Saada and elsewhere has been documented by NGOs, while the Houthis have laid landmines as they retreat. More than 80 percent of Yemen's population, 21.1 million people, require humanitarian assistance. Coalition restrictions on shipping, creating a de-facto blockade, have severely limited commercial goods deliveries, such as food, fuel and medicine, posing the threat of famine and creating difficulties in running hospitals and pumping ground water.

Almost five months after pledging to fund fully OCHA's \$273 million emergency appeal, Saudi Arabia concluded eight of the nine memoranda of agreements with UN agencies in mid-September for use of the money, resulting in the disbursement of \$244 million of the pledged funds. As of 18 September, the UN's \$1.6 billion humanitarian response plan was 38 percent funded.

Ould Cheik Ahmed last briefed Council members in consultations on 10 September. He reported that the Houthis and the General People's Congress (the GPC, Saleh's political party) committed in discussions in Oman to implement resolution 2216, which requires the Houthis to withdraw from territory and relinquish arms they have seized. He also said that Hadi agreed to the government's participation in direct talks, which the Special Envoy intended to start ahead of the Eid. The following day, Council members issued a press statement welcoming the upcoming talks. Two days later, however, the Yemeni government announced it would not attend, and has called for a Houthi public commitment to implement resolution 2216. Regarding the humanitarian situation, OCHA head Stephen O'Brien briefed the Council on 19 August on his visit to Yemen and Djibouti from 9 to 13 August.

Sanctions-Related Developments

The 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee considered the midterm report of the Yemen Panel of Experts in a meeting on 17 August. Committee members criticised the report, feeling it lacked specific information that could provide a basis for Committee action. Due to similar criticisms expressed previously, it seems that the Committee intends to maintain greater interaction with the Panel to ensure

that it provides the type of information it needs. In October, the Committee is expected to follow up with the Panel on its findings on financial sanctions and international humanitarian law issues.

On 25 August, the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Yemen Crisis, Amer Daoudi, briefed the Committee on the recent agreement between the UN, the Yemeni government and the coalition to establish a UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) to increase commercial goods deliveries. Daoudi explained that a UN Verification Center (UNVC) in Aden would review all planned shipments to ports not under the government's control. Ships will either be cleared to proceed or flagged for inspection, and the UNVC will report all inspections to the 2140 Sanctions Committee in accordance with resolution 2216. Consideration of the issue by the Committee seemed to reflect concerns that the coalition has not properly implemented the arms embargo established by resolution 2216. At press time, the UNVIM had not started operating due to a funding shortage.

An open briefing for member states was held on 1 September to raise awareness about the Yemen sanctions regime. Murkmokaité and the new Coordinator of the Panel, Ahmed Himmiche, briefed.

The Committee also held a joint meeting with the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict on 18 September with the Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict Leila Zerrougui. Zerrougui noted that during the second quarter of 2015 coalition airstrikes were responsible for 73 percent of child deaths and injuries. She also highlighted the use of child soldiers by the Houthis and other parties to the conflict.

Human Rights-Related Developments

Commenting on the conflict's impact on civilians, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said during his opening statement at the 30th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) that credible allegations of human rights violations by all parties to the conflict should be thoroughly examined by an independent and comprehensive body.

The HRC considered the High Commissioner for Human Rights' report on the situation in Yemen (A/HRC/30/31) during its 30th session. The report, which covers 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015, notes concern over the continued escalation of violence in Yemen and related allegations of violations of international humanitarian law, some of which may amount to war crimes; recalls that the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council in resolution 2216 should not result in restrictions of the right to freedom of movement and trade in commercial goods, including fuel; and calls for the establishment of an international independent and impartial mechanism to investigate alleged violations, among other recommendations.

On 24 September, the Netherlands submitted a draft resolution to the HRC calling for a UN fact-finding mission to report on abuses and conflict-related crime in Yemen.

Key Issues

A key issue is how the Council can press the parties to the conflict, in particular the Yemeni government and its allied Saudi-led coalition, to engage in negotiations, avert what would probably be a bloody and destructive offensive on Sana'a and obtain a ceasefire.

Yemen's humanitarian crisis remains an additional immediate concern.

Other issues include the risk of the country's north-south partition, expansion of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula and the emerging presence of ISIS.

Options

The Council may undertake a visiting mission to the region, including to Saudi Arabia and Oman, in support of mediation efforts, reminding the parties that resolution 2216 calls on the sides to resume and accelerate UN-brokered negotiations and highlighting that resolution 2216 can be implemented gradually.

The Council may consider adopting a new resolution that:

- calls on all sides to engage in UN-brokered negotiations without preconditions;
- requests an immediate cessation of hostilities;
- expresses its intention to establish a UN-monitoring mechanism in case of a ceasefire and any political agreement to verify compliance; and
- re-states the Council's resolve to impose sanctions on those who impede humanitarian access.

It could also express disappointment that the Yemeni government continues to place preconditions on negotiations in contradiction to the Council's calls and express serious concern about the escalation of airstrikes on Sana'a and Saada and civilian casualties.

Another option is to hold a meeting on civilian casualties and the humanitarian situation to consider how the Council can more fully uphold its responsibility to protect and to address the war's toll on civilians.

Council and Wider Dynamics

The Yemeni government and the Saudi-led coalition, which appear to be most responsible for impeding negotiations and determined to defeat the Houthis militarily, have repeatedly cited resolution 2216 as justifying their actions. They have characterised their intervention as enforcing the Council's demands in

Yemen (con't)

the resolution (though no enforcement measures were created by resolution 2216 other than those related to the arms embargo). They have further framed their potential participation in negotiations as being only to discuss the implementation of resolution 2216, having stated previously that they will not engage in talks unless the Houthis withdraw from seized territory and begin disarming. Jordan, a member of the Saudi-led coalition, champions these positions. It was the penholder for resolution 2216, which some members have privately expressed regret over having adopted.

Yemeni government and coalition positions overlook the fact that resolution 2216 called on the parties to resume and accelerate UN-brokered negotiations. It is a point that the Council has recalled in its press

statements while calling on the parties to engage in UN-brokered negotiations “without preconditions”. The US has said during consultations that resolution 2216 should not be a precondition for negotiations and can be implemented gradually.

However, despite members’ agreement on the need for a political solution and concern about the humanitarian crisis, the Council has not put significant pressure on the government and coalition to negotiate without preconditions or publicly correct their interpretation of resolution 2216. This appears to be due to many members’ relationship with Saudi Arabia and other coalition members, and a desire to not be too critical of coalition countries who are traditional allies. Russia has been the most willing to challenge the

coalition, most recently proposing a press statement expressing deep disappointment in the failure for the latest announced talks to materialise, but then withdrawing the text after it claimed the message was watered-down by Jordan’s amendments.

Members have been discussing a possible visit to the region, proposed by the UK, the penholder on Yemen. Lithuania has sought to use the 2140 Committee as a forum to address issues that have been difficult to discuss in the Council due to political sensitivities. Oman is the lone Gulf Cooperation Council member that did not join the coalition and has been facilitating negotiations with the Houthis and the GPC.

Israel/Palestine

Expected Council Action

In October, the Council will hold its quarterly open debate on the Middle East, with a focus on the situation in Israel/Palestine.

Key Recent Developments

On 20 July, Security Council members Jordan and Malaysia convened an Arria-formula meeting on Gaza, intended to draw attention to the fact that since “Operation Protective Edge”, the 51-day Israeli offensive against Gaza last year, little or no recovery or reconstruction has taken place, and the situation of civilians in Gaza is unsustainable. The situation remains dire with the UN Conference on Trade and Development warning on 1 September that Gaza might become uninhabitable by 2020 if current political and economic trends continue. Eight years of effective bans on most exports, three major conflicts and tight restrictions on materials entering Gaza have “shattered its ability to export and produce for the domestic market, ravaged its already debilitated infrastructure, left no time for reconstruction and economic recovery, and accelerated the de-development” of the Gaza Strip, a statement said.

On 31 July, Council members issued a

press statement that expressed outrage and condemned the “vicious terrorist attack” earlier that day, which killed an 18-month-old Palestinian child and injured his family members in the West Bank village of Duma. The child’s mother and father subsequently died from injuries sustained during the arson attack on their home, which was apparently committed by extremist Jewish settlers. Israel placed a number of Jewish extremists suspected of belonging to a network that had encouraged acts of arson under administrative detention. The government, however, imposed a news blackout on the investigation into the attack, so it remains unclear if any of those in detention are suspected of participation in it.

On 7 September, a conference of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) that had been scheduled for 14-15 September was indefinitely postponed amid planned boycotts by some political factions and disagreements about the agenda and structure of the meeting. The PNC has not had a regular session since 1996. Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Mahmoud Abbas, who is also president of the Palestinian Authority, along with ten of the executive committee’s 18 members, was to

submit his resignation, which could only take effect with a meeting of the PNC.

On 10 September, the General Assembly passed a resolution allowing the flags of non-member observer states to fly at UN headquarters in New York. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 119 in favour, eight against (including the US) and 45 abstentions (including Council members Lithuania and the UK). Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah commented after the vote that he strongly believes this marks another step towards recognition of Palestinian statehood. Israel opposed the decision, claiming the international body is biased in favour of the Palestinians. US Ambassador Samantha Power expressed concern that flying the flag will only create more tension between Israelis and Palestinians. The Palestinian flag was raised on 30 September, coinciding with Abbas’s address to the General Assembly.

The Security Council last met on Israel/Palestine on 15 September when Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Nickolay Mladenov briefed. He remarked that frustration, fear and violence have continued to spiral, undermining belief in finding a

UN DOCUMENTS ON ISRAEL/PALESTINE Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7521 (15 September 2015) was the regular monthly briefing. **Security Council Press Statements SC/12052** (17 September 2015) expressed grave concern regarding escalating tensions in Jerusalem, including clashes in and around the Haram al-Sharif compound, and called for upholding the compound’s historic status quo. **SC/11994** (31 July 2015) condemned the vicious terrorist attack earlier that day in the village of Duma in the West Bank, which killed a Palestinian child and injured his family members.

Israel/Palestine (con't)

way out of the impasse. The situation on the ground remains precarious despite efforts by Israel in recent months to ease some restrictions in the West Bank and Gaza, he said. Sporadic rocket and missile exchanges between Israel and Gaza continue, as do clashes between Palestinians and Israeli settlers in the West Bank. August saw the highest number of demolitions since June 2010, with 142 Palestinian-owned structures demolished and more than 200 Palestinians displaced.

Mladenov also voiced serious concern over violence of varying intensity in the Old City of Jerusalem, sparked by clashes between Palestinians and Israeli police that began on 13 September at the Al-Aqsa mosque in the Al-Haram Al-Sharif compound in Jerusalem. Jordan (the historic custodian of the compound) circulated a draft Council press statement on the situation in Jerusalem on 14 September; it was only issued three days later after substantial revisions by the US. On 18 September, Israeli officials increased security and restricted access to the Al-Aqsa mosque, while Palestinian leaders called for a “day of rage” protest. On 22 September, Abbas warned that there was a risk of a new Palestinian intifada, or uprising, erupting if violence at the mosque did not ease and peace talks with Israel did not resume.

On 22 September, Human Rights Watch released a report saying that since July 2013, the Egyptian military has arbitrarily and in violation of international law carried out mass home demolitions and forced eviction of about 3,200 families in the Sinai Peninsula on the border with Gaza, ostensibly to eliminate the threat of smuggling tunnels. Egypt’s official plan for the so-called buffer zone calls for clearing about 79 square kilometres on the Gaza border, including all of Rafah, a town of about 78,000 people. Meanwhile, the US has reportedly increased the number of troops deployed to the Multinational Force and Observers peacekeeping operations in the Sinai Peninsula after four US soldiers were wounded in a roadside bomb attack.

On 30 September, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon chaired a meeting of the Middle East Quartet—comprising the EU, Russia, the UN and the US—in New York, on the margins of the General Assembly. The Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and the foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia were invited to join the meeting.

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 3 July, the Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted a resolution on ensuring accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (A/HRC/RES/29/25). The resolution (adopted with 41 votes in favour, five abstentions and the US voting against) welcomed the report of the independent commission of inquiry on the 2014 Gaza conflict; deplored Israel’s non-cooperation with the commission; stressed the need to pursue practical steps towards accountability; called upon the parties concerned to cooperate fully with the preliminary examination of the International Criminal Court; and requested a report at its 31st session on the implementation of the resolution and the commission’s recommendations.

The UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories conducted its annual fact-finding visit to Amman from 4 to 8 August. According to the committee’s 10 August statement, a large number of representations by civil society groups expressed alarm over the escalating violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Other issues raised included increasing human rights violations against women and children; poor conditions prevailing in prisons; the expulsion of Bedouins by Israeli authorities; and the slow pace of reconstruction in Gaza.

On 14 September, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein during his opening statement of the HRC’s 30th session, expressed profound dismay over the persistence of serious human rights issues in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. He noted the spike in killings of Palestinians in incidents involving Israeli security forces in the West Bank over the past two months, which raise concern about excessive use of force, and the murderous arson of a Palestinian home in the West Bank village of Duma. He also raised concern over the increasingly restrictive atmosphere in Israel, including for those who are critical of Israeli occupation policies and practices, and over legislation that enables financial penalties to be enforced against those who advocate for boycotts of Israeli settlements.

Key Issues

The overarching issue is determining how to move forward on a two-state solution in light of the April 2014 breakdown of US-brokered negotiations.

Other key issues include:

- escalating tension and incidents of violence between Israelis and Palestinians;
- Israel’s settlement expansion in the West Bank, which undermines prospects for peace;
- reconstruction in Gaza, which needs to be facilitated and accelerated; and

- alleged war crimes committed in Gaza during last summer’s conflict, which need to be investigated, with measures to ensure accountability.

Options

The Council has limited options on the Middle East peace process, and it is likely that the open debate will again feature the reiteration of previously stated positions—such as support to establish conditions for the parties to return to realistic and meaningful negotiations, while encouraging parties to refrain from undertaking actions that could threaten the viability of such negotiations.

An option is to revisit the idea of adopting a resolution outlining parameters for a final status agreement, an initiative that has been brewing behind the scenes among some Council members for a while.

Another option would be to explore other Council outcomes that could help advance prospects for a negotiated settlement and to invite the Quartet to report back to the Council on its meeting in New York and ongoing efforts.

Council Dynamics

Some Council members, such as France, Jordan and the UK, have been involved since late last year in efforts to negotiate a resolution that sets parameters for a final status agreement. On 30 December 2014, a draft resolution calling for an end to the Israeli occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territories by the end of 2017 failed to pass. Since the start of this year, movement on any further outcome has been stalled because of US insistence that the Council should not act until after Israel’s election and subsequently the conclusion of the Iran nuclear deal. It seems that despite the completion of both these processes, Council dynamics on the issue remain unchanged and do not signal a shift towards action on the issue at this time. Instead, it seems members such as France, are seeking to focus on creating the necessary atmosphere conducive to resuming talks outside of the Council. Separately, developments in Sinai may gain prominence in relation to the impact on Gaza, and with Egypt expected to become a member of the Council in January 2016.

It is generally accepted that the fate of any Council outcome on Israel/Palestine lies ultimately with the US.

Lebanon

Expected Council Action

In October, Council members expect to receive the semi-annual briefing from Special Envoy Terje Rød-Larsen on the latest report on the implementation of resolution 1559. Adopted in 2004, resolution 1559 urged the disarmament of all militias and the extension of government control over all Lebanese territory. In addition to issues related to the implementation of resolution 1559, the discussion is expected to focus on the political situation in Lebanon and the immense impact of the Syrian crisis on the country.

Key Recent Developments

Notwithstanding Lebanon's official position of disassociation from the Syrian conflict, Lebanese militants continue to engage in the conflict, in violation of resolution 1559.

Hezbollah has been involved alongside the Syrian army in heavy fighting against rebel groups in the Qalamoun region in south-west Syria, particularly around the rebel-controlled towns of Zabadani and Madaya. Zabadani is positioned on a strategically important corridor between Damascus and Lebanon. On 20 September, a ceasefire was agreed in Zabadani and Madaya, as well as Fouaa and Kafraya, two of the last government-controlled villages in Idlib province, in northern Syria. According to the Lebanese media, Hezbollah announced plans to end its offensive operations in Syria after it secures control of Zabadani.

In late August, rival armed Palestinian groups engaged in intense fighting in Ain al-Hilweh, a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon. Armed groups led by the Fatah party on one side and the radical Islamist Jund al-Sham group on the other clashed for several days, leaving six people dead, dozens injured and several thousand displaced. The situation in the camp remains tense, and sporadic clashes continue despite a ceasefire reached on 26 August.

The ongoing political crisis—including the vacancy of the presidency for more than a year now—continues to hinder the ability of the government to respond to the numerous challenges it now faces. On 23 and 24 August, thousands of protesters took to the streets of Beirut in “You Stink” demonstrations,

highlighting the government's inability to resolve the garbage-disposal crisis. Close to 100 members of the security forces and around 60 demonstrators were injured and one died during violent protests in Beirut.

Following the 24 August clashes, Special Coordinator for Lebanon Sigrid Kaag urged restraint and called on Lebanese leaders to be politically accountable and respond to the needs of its citizens. Kaag briefed Council members on 2 September under “any other business”. Following the meeting, Council members issued press elements reiterating their unity in support of “the sovereignty, stability and independence of Lebanon and its people”, while urging the parliament to elect a president as soon as possible. That same day, the Lebanese parliament failed in its 28th attempt to elect a president, further deepening the political crisis. The presidency has been vacant since May 2014.

The “You Stink” protests continued throughout September and broadened to include calls for an end to corruption and sectarianism. On 10 September, the government adopted an action plan to resolve the garbage crisis. The protesters, however, rejected the plan, calling it vague and insufficient. Demonstrations in Beirut continued, with renewed clashes with the police on 21 September, when protesters called for parliament members to resign. The current parliament was elected in 2009, and it has extended its mandate on two occasions, citing security concerns.

On 15 August, Lebanese authorities arrested radical Sunni cleric Ahmad al-Assir, who has been a fugitive since 2013. Assir was responsible for stirring up sectarian tensions in Lebanon, especially after the outbreak of the Syrian crisis and the subsequent involvement of Hezbollah in Syria. Assir is alleged to have incited scores of radical Lebanese Sunnis to fight against Hezbollah in Syria. In 2013, Assir's followers attacked a Lebanese Army checkpoint in Sidon, killing 17 and injuring more than 30 soldiers. Since this incident, Assir has been on the run, but he was finally arrested in the Beirut airport, trying to leave the country with falsified travel documents.

On 18 September, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon dismissed charges of

obstructing justice against local TV network Al-Jadeed. However, the Tribunal convicted the network's deputy director, Karma Khayat, of obstructing a court order to remove confidential information about the witnesses from the network's website. The jurisdiction of the Tribunal extends to attacks that occurred between 1 October 2004 and 12 December 2005 in connection with the 14 February 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Five Hezbollah members have been indicted and tried in absentia for the Hariri assassination in 2005.

Key Issues

The ongoing crisis in Syria and Hezbollah's involvement on the side of the regime remains the overarching issue. These circumstances have had a negative effect on Lebanon and continue to stall efforts to fully implement resolution 1559.

A related issue is that Hezbollah and other non-state actors continue to maintain weaponry that directly hinders the government's exercise of full authority over its territory, poses a threat to Lebanon's sovereignty and stability and contravenes its obligations under resolutions 1559 and 1701.

Another issue is the threat to the political stability of Lebanon posed by the current anti-government protests, together with the inability of Lebanon to elect a president, which has in turn paralysed the country's parliament.

Options

Considering that earlier this year the Council issued a comprehensive presidential statement outlining the main issues on which the Council stands united in its support of Lebanon, reiterated by press elements issued on 2 September, a likely option for the Council is to receive a briefing and take no further action.

In view of the deterioration of the political situation in the country due to anti-government protests and the paralysis of the parliament on the issue of electing a president, the Council could consider issuing a statement encouraging the political actors in Lebanon to elect a president and address the concerns of its citizens.

UN DOCUMENTS ON LEBANON [Security Council Resolution S/RES/1559](#) (2 September 2004) urged the disarmament of militias and the extension of the Lebanese government's control over all Lebanese territory. [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2015/7](#) (19 March 2015) addressed the vacancy in the presidential office and the effects of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon. [Secretary-General's Report S/2015/258](#) (16 April 2015) was the most recent 1559 report.

Lebanon (con't)

Council Dynamics

The Council continues to demonstrate unity in support of Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial

integrity and security and to support Lebanon in its efforts to insulate itself from the damaging effect of the Syrian conflict.

France is the penholder on Lebanon.

Counter-Terrorism

Expected Council Action

In October, the Council is expected to receive a briefing from Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen (New Zealand) as chair of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee. The briefing is expected to focus on two recent reports of the Monitoring Team of the Committee: on the financing of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and Al-Nusra Front in Iraq and Syria, and on the terrorism threat in Libya.

Background

On 12 February, the Council adopted resolution 2199 at the initiative of Russia. The resolution focused on how illegal oil exports, trafficking of cultural heritage, ransom payments and external donations finance the operational capacity of ISIS and Al-Nusra. The resolution, adopted under Chapter VII, expressed concern that vehicles—including aircraft, cars and trucks—departing from or going to ISIS- or Al-Nusra-held areas of Syria and Iraq could be used to transfer oil and oil products, cash and other valuable items, including natural resources, for sale on international markets or barter for arms. Such activity is a violation of the assets freeze. It encouraged member states to take appropriate steps in accordance with international law to prevent and disrupt activity that would result in violations of the already existing measures (asset freeze and targeted arms embargo), and required member states to report to the 1267/1989 Committee within 30 days of any interdiction in their territory.

The Committee discussed a recent report by the Monitoring Team featuring an assessment of the impact of these new measures on 11 and 24 August. The report suggests that the measures against the illegal oil trade have so far had a limited impact, given the ability of ISIS to extract benefits at

the different stages of the value chain, from selling crude oil at the well-head to levying fees at checkpoints, exchanging crude oil for refined products and selling the latter to the local population.

Noting with concern that ISIS and Al-Nusra are generating income from engaging directly or indirectly in the looting and smuggling of cultural heritage items, resolution 2199 imposed a new legal obligation on member states to take appropriate steps to prevent the trade in Syrian cultural property and other items of archaeological, historical, cultural, rare scientific and religious importance illegally removed from Syria since 15 March 2011. (The resolution also recalled the validity of a similar ban on antiquities illegally removed from Iraq since 6 August 1990.) While acknowledging the difficulties in proving the provenance of cultural artefacts, a February report by the inter-governmental body Financial Action Task Force identifies the two main ways by which ISIS makes money from antiquities: through selling looted artefacts and through taxing traffickers moving items across ISIS-held territory.

Some humanitarian actors, such as OCHA, have raised concerns regarding the unintended consequences of some of the measures described above for the local population, including the reluctance of some organisations to operate in those areas because of fears of legal consequences if humanitarian supplies are inadvertently diverted to a listed entity.

On 27 March, the Council adopted resolution 2214, which emphasised the importance of providing support and assistance to the government of Libya in countering terrorism, including by providing it with the necessary security and capacity-building assistance. The resolution came after representatives from the government in Tobruk,

as well as other regional actors, asked the Council to lift the arms embargo on the government or consider exemption requests for the transfer or supply of arms and related materiel for its use against ISIS. Despite language in the resolution regarding expeditious consideration of such requests, several Council members ruled out Council action in this regard, as they were wary of the implications of such a decision in the light of the current conflict between militias affiliated with two rival governments.

In the past, the Monitoring Team has reported on the terrorist threat in Libya, highlighting the increasing activities of ISIS, Ansar al-Sharia and other Al-Qaida affiliates in Libya and their impact on Tunisia and other countries in the region through the flow of weapons and foreign terrorist fighters. These groups continue to clash with the two parties to the conflict in Libya and control towns including Sirte and Derna. Contingency planning for fighting terrorism in Libya once a government of national accord is sworn in is ongoing. France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the UK and the US, in discussion with the UN and the EU, are discussing possible deployment of a security assistance mission to train Libyan forces in countering terrorism if requested by a government of national accord.

Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is to ensure overall implementation of the Al-Qaida sanctions regime, including through targeting those violating the regime by helping terrorist groups improve their operational capabilities.

Mitigating the humanitarian impact of these measures is a key issue to ensure their effectiveness.

Developing an alternative plan to counter terrorism in Libya in the absence of a

UN DOCUMENTS ON COUNTER-TERRORISM Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2214 (27 March 2015) focused on counter-terrorism efforts in Libya. S/RES/2199 (12 February 2015) was on ISIS's and Al-Nusra's illicit funding via oil exports, trafficking in cultural heritage, ransom payments and external donations. S/RES/2161 (17 June 2014) renewed the measures targeting Al-Qaida-associated individuals and entities.

USEFUL ADDITIONAL RESOURCE *Financing of the terrorist organization Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant*, Financial Action Task Force, February 2015.

Counter-Terrorism (con't)

government of national accord is an urgent issue for the Council.

Options

Although no outcome is anticipated at this point, the Council could issue a statement that:

- calls on all member states to ensure overall implementation of the Al-Qaida sanctions regime, threatening those violating it with secondary sanctions;
- encourages further listings of individuals

and entities engaging in activities constituting support for Al-Qaida affiliates; and

- calls on member states to be mindful of the potential humanitarian impact of sanctions on the civilian population.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Despite some divergences over the politicisation of the issue in the Middle East, counter-terrorism continues to be one of the issues with overall unanimous support among Council members, as well as high visibility for

Council action. Efforts to continue curbing the capabilities of Al-Qaida affiliates, whether in Syria, Iraq or Libya, seem to be a priority for Council action. However, on Libya, Council members have until now considered the formation of a government of national accord as a prerequisite for counter-terrorism assistance. It is unclear how Council members would change their approach if efforts to form a unified government fail.

Sudan (Darfur)

Expected Council Action

In October, the Council will receive a briefing, followed by consultations, on the Secretary-General's quarterly report on the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet is expected to brief. At press time, no outcome was anticipated.

The mandate of UNAMID expires on 30 June 2016.

Key Recent Developments

Darfur remains mired in a security, humanitarian and political crisis, with ongoing inter-communal violence and widespread impunity and displacement. There are currently 2.6 million displaced people in the region, including 104,000 who have been displaced so far in 2015. While inter-communal violence this year has claimed several hundred lives and fighting has continued between government and rebel forces, progress on the political front remains elusive.

On 9 September, Human Rights Watch released a report titled "Men With No Mercy" on the activities of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a government militia formed in 2013 that has conducted brutal counter-insurgency operations in Darfur. Using research undertaken from May 2014 to July 2015, the report found that the RSF had committed "egregious abuses against civilians... [including]... torture, extrajudicial killings and mass rapes" in the region.

On 27 September, unidentified assailants killed one UNAMID peacekeeper and wounded four others in an attack near Mellit, North Darfur. Later that day, Council members condemned the attack in a press statement.

The content and direction of Sudan's "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—continues to be contested by the government and the opposition. The government has maintained its commitment to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) as the primary path toward peace in Darfur, but the rebel movements that have not signed the DDPD reject this approach, preferring that the peace process be pursued through a holistic, national process leading to Sudan's democratic transformation.

On 14 September, the Sudan Revolutionary Front rebel alliance released its "road map on the way forward", in which it called for "an inclusive National Constitutional Dialogue process" to be initiated with the holding of a pre-dialogue meeting in Addis Ababa. The meeting would discuss procedural elements of the dialogue involving its timeframe, participants, facilitators, observers and other issues. This position is in keeping with the AU Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) 25 August communiqué, which reiterated a call for "an urgent pre-National Dialogue meeting of all relevant parties,

at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa". However, the government has rejected the convening of such a meeting outside Sudan, apparently because of concerns about external interference in the process.

On 29 June, the Council adopted resolution 2228 renewing UNAMID for an additional year with the same force structure and the same core mandate, focusing in particular on protection of civilians, humanitarian access and support for the political process. The resolution stresses that any refinement of UNAMID 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".

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 26 August, Ambassador Rafael Ramírez (Venezuela), the chair of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee, provided the quarterly briefing to Council members on the Committee's work. Ramírez summarised the midterm update of the Panel of Experts. He noted that the Panel had identified violations of the arms embargo, including the presence in Darfur of ammunition produced post-2005, the year the embargo was expanded to include all parties to the conflict. Ramírez recounted the Panel's finding that two training bases had been spotted in South Sudan that belong to the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), a Darfuri rebel group. He relayed the Panel's concern that former Janjaweed commander Musa Hilal, who is subject to a travel ban, visited Egypt in July.

UN DOCUMENTS ON DARFUR [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2228](#) (29 June 2015) renewed the mandate of UNAMID for one year. [Security Council Press Statement SC/12058](#) (27 September 2015) condemned an attack against an UNAMID convoy that resulted in the death of one peacekeeper. [Secretary-General's Report S/2015/729](#) (25 September 2015) was on UNAMID.

Sudan (Darfur) (con't)

Human Rights-Related Developments

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released on 21 August a report on impunity and accountability in Darfur. The report covers human rights violations and abuses documented by UNAMID in 2014 and highlights sources of widespread impunity. In 2014, UNAMID documented 411 cases of violations and abuses of the right to physical integrity affecting 980 individuals, committed by all parties to the conflict, of which very few were investigated or resulted in arrest. These included abductions, physical assaults and armed attacks against civilians, particularly internally displaced persons, causing injury or death. Of these, 127 involved the use of sexual violence. These 411 cases are illustrative of a much broader pattern of violence and impunity, the report states.

The Human Rights Council considered the report of the independent expert on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, Aristide Nonansi, during its 30th session (A/HRC/30/60).

Key Issues

The underlying issue for the Council is the continuing instability of the security and humanitarian environment in Darfur, with no progress on the political front. The evidence of JEM rebels operating out of South Sudan contributes to insecurity in the region, and exacerbates relations between Sudan and South Sudan.

Also a key issue is the future of UNAMID. According to resolution 2228, the Secretary-General is expected to provide recommendations on the exit strategy to the Council, which it will consider “in due course.” However, a complicating factor appears to be the differences of perspective between the UN and the AU, on the one hand, and the government of Sudan on the other hand, on the exit strategy. The government has tended to emphasise the need for a timely completion of the exit strategy, while the AU Chairperson and the UN Secretary-General have espoused a more cautious approach. In a 16 August press release, AU Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma stated that the “strategy should be conceived and implemented in

a manner that does not jeopardize the gains made since the deployment” of UNAMID. In his 26 May report, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated that the exit strategy would “require satisfactory security, humanitarian and early recovery arrangements for the protection of civilians,” as well as the need to “address intercommunal conflict.”

An additional important matter is the restrictions imposed on UNAMID’s access and movement, as well as delays and refusals in issuing visas to mission personnel.

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

Options

Options for the Council include:

- extending the arms embargo to all of Sudan, as arms and related materiel, appear to be entering the region from other parts of Sudan;
- demanding that the government of Sudan issue visas in a timely fashion and that all parties to the conflict end restrictions on humanitarian access; and
- requesting briefings from the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs on the human rights and humanitarian challenges in Darfur.

Given the poor performance of the 1591 sanctions regime, the chair of the Committee might consider undertaking a visiting mission to the region and reporting back to the Committee with recommendations for strengthening the regime.

The Council might also consider holding an informal interactive dialogue with the AU PSC to learn about its 19-23 August visiting mission to Khartoum and Darfur.

Council Dynamics

Darfur remains a divisive issue in the Council.

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

Divisions likewise exist with regard to the exit strategy for UNAMID. When the Council negotiated the renewal of the mission’s mandate in June, the P3 wanted to note that the exit strategy is tied to the mission’s benchmarks, which focus on issues such as the protection of civilians, humanitarian access and the prevention and mitigation of communal conflict. However, Russia, supported by the African members of the Council, preferred not to emphasise the conditionality of the exit strategy, while also wanting to highlight the role of the tripartite Working Group on the exit strategy—consisting of the AU, the UN and the government of Sudan—in providing suggestions to inform the Secretary-General’s recommendations to the Council. As a compromise, resolution 2228 “looks forward to the Secretary-General’s recommendations, including by building on any agreed recommendations of the Joint Working Group”. In this way, the resolution emphasised the Secretary-General’s authority to provide recommendations on the exit strategy, while also noting that the Working Group has an important role to play in feeding into those recommendations.

The UK is the penholder on Darfur.

Notable Dates for October

REPORT DUE	REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION IN OCTOBER	REQUESTING DOCUMENT
31 August	SG report on MINUSTAH (Haiti) (S/2015/667)	S/RES/2180
17 September	SG annual report on women, peace and security, including recommendations from the Global Study on implementation of resolution 1325 (S/2015/716)	S/RES/1325 S/RES/2122
18 September	Emergency Relief Coordinator report on Somalia (S/2015/731)	S/RES/2182
23 September	1267/1989 Al-Qaida Monitoring Team report on the threat of terrorism in Libya to the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee	S/RES/2214
24 September	OPCW report on the implementation of resolution 2118 (Syrian chemical weapons) (S/2015/737)	S/RES/2118
25 September	SG report on UNAMID (Darfur) (S/2015/729)	S/RES/2228
25 September	SG report on the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC	S/RES/2211
28 September	SG report on MINUSMA (Mali) (S/2015/732)	S/RES/2227
29 September	SG report on MONUSCO (DRC)	S/RES/2211
30 September	SG strategic review of UNSOA (Somalia)	S/RES/2232
30 September	SG report on the support package to the Somali National Army	S/RES/2232
7 October	SG report on the implementation of resolution 1559 (Lebanon)	S/PRST/2004/36 S/RES/1559
21 October	SG report on the humanitarian situation in Syria	S/RES/2139

MANDATES EXPIRE

		RELEVANT DOCUMENT
15 October	MINUSTAH (Haiti)	S/RES/2180
24 October	Somalia sanctions	S/RES/2182
30 October	Somalia partial arms embargo	S/RES/2182
30 November	751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Monitoring Group (mandate expires in November but will be renewed in October)	S/RES/2182

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Security Council Report Staff

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Executive Director

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Deputy Executive Director & Director of Research

Amanda Roberts
Coordinating Editor & Senior Research Analyst

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What's in Blue Editor & Senior Research Analyst

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Design Point Five, NY

Security Council Report
One Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza
885 2nd Ave at 48th St, 21st Floor
New York NY 10017

Telephone +1 212 759 6394
Fax +1 212 759 4038
Web securitycouncilreport.org
whatsinblue.org

