

Monthly Forecast

November 2005 – November 2015



Welcome to the first publication of Security Council Report

We are at an exciting moment—the launch of an entirely new organisation dedicated specifically to the United Nations Security Council.

This initiative responds to a need for consistent, high quality and publicly-available information and analysis about the Council's activities—and those of its subsidiary bodies. It reflects the belief that the lack of such information is a consistent barrier to the effective performance of the Council and a major handicap for UN member states at large, and the wider public.

Security Council Report will publish a *Monthly Forecast Report*. The report will be freely available, on our website www.securitycouncilreport.org, and can be distributed in hard copy, email and fax. It will be:

- A preview of issues coming up in the Security Council
- A source of both analysis and detailed background information
- Independent and objective
- Available towards the end of each month covering the issues likely to arise the following month

Security Council Report has support from the Governments of Canada and Norway, and the Rockefeller, MacArthur and Hewlett Foundations. It is incorporated as a not-for-profit organisation and operates in affiliation with Columbia University.

We have also benefited significantly from advice and suggestions arising from consultations with a wide range of potential users at Missions to the UN, in the UN Secretariat and among NGOs.

We hope that readers will find this new publication informative and helpful. We look forward to input and insights for future months and feedback about style and substance. Please feel free to contact us at any time. It will be our privilege to work with you.

Colin Keating
Executive Director

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Editorial Approach

In time our *Monthly Forecast Report* will cover the full range of issues on the Council agenda and will include not only background information, but also in-depth analysis. For the first issue, however, we have selected only a few key topics for more detailed treatment. Progressively, we will expand both the range of issues and the analytical depth.

Also, it is important to note that, at the time this Forecast went to press, the Council was still to consider a number of important issues at the end of October. Accordingly, while this report addresses a number of those issues, it has not been possible to incorporate all October outcomes.

Our regular *Monthly Forecast Report* will be supplemented by *Update Reports* as needed and by occasional in-depth *Research Studies*. We also intend, on our website, to maintain a progressively expanding archive of:

Ten years ago, the creation of Security Council Report was announced in its first publication, the *Monthly Forecast* for November 2005, the front page of which is reproduced here.

We are using our anniversary not as a time for self-congratulation—although we appreciate the many affirmations of the usefulness of SCR. We invite you to tell us how we can do better by responding to our Reader Survey (www.surveymonkey.com/r/SCRreport2015), if you have not done so already. And it is a time to thank all our funders, especially those who have maintained great generosity throughout the ten years—most notably, the Government of Norway and the MacArthur Foundation—and the many member states who have been open and transparent with us, as well as the twenty from all regions who now make financial contributions.

There is no doubt that the work of the Security Council is now more transparent than it was ten years ago. But SCR's founding belief was that better information would help overcome barriers to the effective performance of the Council—and it is hard to see ten years of progress in effectiveness. So as we go into our eleventh year, and publish our 120th *Monthly Forecast*, and the Council nears its seventieth birthday, we are asking ourselves—and you, our readers—how effective the Council is today, and what more SCR can do to contribute to its effectiveness in a world which confronts it with new and heavy challenges.

Ian Martin
Executive Director

Overview

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The United Kingdom will hold the Council's presidency in November. An open debate on the maintenance of international peace and security with a focus on [peaceful societies and conflict prevention](#) has been planned. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is expected to brief and the UK Secretary of State for International Development, Justine Greening, will preside. A briefing on the [UN Assistance Mission in Somalia \(UNSOM\)](#) as well as [piracy issues off the coast of Somalia](#), by Ban and his Special Representative and head of UNSOM, Nicholas Kay, is expected to be presided over by UK Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond, and Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud is expected to participate.

A debate is planned on [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) with a briefing by High Representative Valentin Inzko.

Briefings are expected on:

- the [Libya-related work of the ICC](#), by its Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda;
- the [humanitarian situation in Syria](#), by Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien;
- the work of [the police components of peace operations](#), by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Hervé Ladsous and senior police officers from three peace operations: Greg Hinds, Police Commissioner of the UN Mission in Liberia, Pascal Champion, Police Commissioner of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Charles Bent, Deputy Police Commissioner of the UN Mission in South Sudan;
- the implementation of the UN integrated strategy for the Sahel, by Special Envoy Hiroute Guebre Sellassie;
- the implementation of the [UN integrated strategy for the Sahel](#), by Special Envoy Hiroute Guebre Sellassie;
- recent developments in and the latest Secretary-General's report on [Kosovo](#), by Zahir Tanin, the recently appointed Special Representative and head of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, with both Serbia and Kosovo likely to participate at high-level; and
- the Secretary-General's report on [the implementation of recommendations from the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations](#), most likely by the Secretary-General.

Briefings, followed by consultations, are expected on:

- the work of the [UN Assistance Mission for Iraq \(UNAMI\)](#) and recommendations from the strategic assessment mission conducted by the Secretariat in April, by UNAMI's head, Ján Kubiš; and
- the situation in the [Middle East](#) by Special Coordinator Nikolay Mladenov, via video teleconferencing (VTC).

Briefings in consultations are planned on:

- the work of the 1591 [Sudan Sanctions Committee](#) by its chair, Ambassador Rafael Dario Ramirez Carreño (Venezuela);
- the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of [resolution 1701](#) regarding a cessation of hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel in 2006, by Special Coordinator for Lebanon Sigrid Kaag, via VTC;
- the work of the 1718 [Democratic People's Republic of Korea Sanctions Committee](#) by its chair, Ambassador Román Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain);
- the latest Secretary-General's report on [chemical weapons in Syria](#), by Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo;
- Sudan/South Sudan issues, by Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan Haile Menkerios (via VTC); and
- developments regarding the [UN Interim Security Force for Abyei](#), most likely by Ladsous.

Formal sessions will be held to adopt resolutions to renew:

- the anti-piracy measures for Somalia; and
- the authorisation for the EU-led multinational [stabilisation force in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), EUFOR ALTHEA.

Council members will hold their customary annual private meeting with the president of the [International Court of Justice](#), Ronny Abraham (who succeeded Peter Tomka in this post in February 2015).

Throughout the month members will be following closely developments in [Burundi](#), [Central African Republic](#), [Libya](#), [Ukraine](#), [Western Sahara](#), and [Yemen](#), and additional meetings may be scheduled.

The 15 current Council members and the incoming five (Egypt, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay) will participate in the annual "[Hitting the Ground Running](#)" workshop outside of New York City, organised by the Mission of Finland.

Status Update since our October Forecast

Mali

On 6 October, Special Representative and head of MINUSMA, Mongi Hamdi, briefed (S/PV.7528) the Council on the latest MINUSMA report (S/2015/732).

Burkina Faso

On 6 October, Council members discussed developments in Burkina Faso under “any other business”. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, the head of UNOWA, briefed via video teleconference from Dakar.

DRC

On 7 October, the Secretary-General’s exiting head of MONUSCO, Martin Kobler, briefed the Council on the latest MONUSCO report (S/2015/741), for the last time before leaving his post (S/PV.7529). The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to the Great Lakes Region, Said Djinnit, briefed on the latest report on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement (S/2015/735). On 28 October, the Chair of the 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Dina Kavar (Jordan), briefed Council members in consultations on the midterm report of the Group of Experts (S/2015/797). Separately, the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations met on 19 October to discuss MONUSCO.

Central African Republic

On 7 October, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefed Council members under “any other business” on the deteriorating security and political situation in the CAR. On the same day, Council members condemned an attack on a MINUSCA convoy which resulted in the death of one Burundian peacekeeper the day before (SC/12070). On 20 October, the Council adopted a presidential statement expressing its deep concern about the recent upsurge of violence and instability and reiterating the importance of holding the constitutional referendum and first rounds of presidential and legislative elections by the end of 2015 (S/PRST/2015/17).

Haiti

On 8 October, the Council held its semi-annual debate on Haiti (S/PV.7530), with Special Representative and head of MINUSTAH, Sandra Honoré, briefing. Honoré said

she was encouraged by the ongoing preparations for the remaining two rounds of elections and the actions taken by the Provisional Electoral Council to address shortcomings. She also highlighted the achievements of the Haitian National Police and its important role in maintaining security during the elections, while stressing the need for continued support to strengthen its capacity. On 14 October, the Council adopted resolution 2243, extending the mandate of MINUSTAH for one year while maintaining its authorised troop strength at 2,370 military personnel and 2,601 police, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his 31 August report (S/2015/667). It also expressed its intention to consider the possible withdrawal of MINUSTAH and transition to a future UN presence no sooner than 15 October 2016 and requested the Secretary-General conduct a strategic assessment mission that would present recommendations to the Council on the future presence, within 90 days after the expected inauguration in February 2016 of a new Haitian president.

Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling in the Mediterranean

On 9 October, the Council adopted resolution 2240 authorising the interdiction of vessels used for migrant smuggling or human trafficking on the high seas off the coast of Libya (S/PV.7531).

South Sudan

On 9 October, the Council adopted resolution 2241, adjusting the mandate of UNMISS to support implementation of the “Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan” (S/PV.7532). The vote was 13 in favour with two abstentions from Russia and Venezuela.

1988 Afghanistan Sanctions Committee

On 12 October, the 1988 Committee held informal consultations focused on the impact of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham in Afghanistan and Taliban financing through the trade in narcotics.

Boko Haram

Council members issued a press statement on 12 October condemning the 10 and 11 October terrorist attacks by Boko Haram in Baga Sola, Chad and Kangeri, Cameroon (SC/12075).

Women, Peace and Security

On 13 October, the Security Council adopted resolution 2242 with 73 co-sponsors, the most of any previous women, peace and security resolution. The resolution addressed women’s roles in countering violent extremism and terrorism, improving the Council’s own working methods in relation to women, peace and security and taking up gender recommendations made by the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and the Global Study. The annual open debate was held on 13 and 14 October and served as the Security Council’s High-Level Review on the implementation of resolution 1325. Spain circulated a concept note asking member states to focus their interventions on how the international community can better deliver on women, peace and security commitments (S/2015/749). It was the most subscribed open debate in the Council’s history with 113 speakers (S/PV.7533 and Resumption 1). The Secretary-General and the head of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, briefed on the Secretary-General’s latest report on the issue, which included recommendations from the Global Study on implementation of resolution 1325 (S/2015/716). Two civil society representatives also participated: Yanar Mohammed, who is president of the Organization of Women’s Freedom in Iraq, and Julienne Lusenge, who heads Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégral—a coalition of 40 women’s organisations in the eastern DRC.

Security Council Elections

On 15 October, the General Assembly elected five non-permanent members to serve on the Security Council for the 2016–2017 term: Uruguay (Group of Latin American and Caribbean States); Ukraine (Eastern European Group); Japan (the Group of Asia and the Pacific Small Island Developing States); and Senegal and Egypt (African Group).

Israel/Palestine

On 16 October, at Jordan’s request, the Council was briefed by Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Tayé-Brook Zerihoun on the escalation of tensions and violence in the West Bank, Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, including the killing of Israelis and Palestinians (S/PV.7536). The occupation and diminishing prospects for achieving Palestinian statehood had transformed simmering

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

Palestinian anger into outright rage, Zerihoun said, compounded by dire economic circumstances and expanding settlement activities. On 21 October, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon briefed Council members in consultations via video teleconference from Amman in an emergency meeting on the situation and his visit to the region, which included meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. On 22 October, Spain's foreign minister José Manuel García-Margallo presided over the ministerial-level quarterly open debate on the Middle East (S/PV.7540 and Resumption 1). Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson briefed saying that 47 Palestinians and seven Israelis had been killed, and more than 5,000 Palestinians and 70 Israelis injured since the beginning of October. The crisis would not have erupted, he said, if Palestinians had hope of a viable state of their own. The de-escalation of violence together with urgent and real progress towards a negotiated two-state solution are crucial, he said.

Working Methods

On 20 October the Security Council held its sixth open debate on working methods (S/PV.7539 and Resumption 1). Spain circulated a concept paper focusing on how the Council can improve its efficiency and transparency in its relationship with non-Council members, including the General Assembly and ECOSOC, as well as with the Secretariat (S/2015/793). The president of the General Assembly, Mogens Lykketoft, Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Sven Jürgenson (Estonia), vice-president of ECOSOC, briefed. Besides Council members, 42 member states participated. A number of joint statements were delivered by both Council members and groups of member states. Among the key issues that emerged were the importance of working methods, the implementation of presidential notes on working methods, the use of the veto, the importance of transparency, cooperation with regional organisation and the appointment of the Secretary-General. At the end, Spain said it would provide a summary of recommendations that were made during the debate. On 30 October, the Council adopted its first-ever presidential statement on its own working methods (S/PRST/2015/19).

Annual Report of the Security Council to the General Assembly

On 20 October, the Council adopted the introduction to its annual report, drafted this year by New Zealand. Addressing the Council prior to the adoption, Ambassador Gerard Van Bohemen (New Zealand) pointed out that, at the request of Council members, the drafters strove to provide an accessible summary of the Council's activities and the introduction was half the length of the introductions in recent years. He also noted that discussions have continued in the Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions on the approach to the report in the future, and that New Zealand supported these efforts (S/PV.7538).

Iran

On 21 October, at the request of the US, Council members discussed Iran's 11 October launch of a new long-range ballistic missile under "any other business". The US and other like-minded members said the launch was a clear violation of resolution 1929 that should be looked into by the 1737 Iran Sanctions Committee and its Panel of Experts. Other Council members emphasised the importance of not undermining the 14 July Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between Iran and the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the UK and the US). That same day the US along with France, Germany and the UK sent a letter to the Committee about the missile launch, explaining why it was a violation of resolution 1929 and asking the Committee to take action.

Burundi

On 21 October, at the request of France, Council members were briefed in consultations on the situation in Burundi, by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman. On 28 October, the Council adopted a presidential statement taking note of the recent 17 October AU communique on Burundi (PSC/PR/COMM.(DLI)), expressing its concern about the growing insecurity in Burundi and continuing violence, condemning human rights abuses and calling for dialogue between all stakeholders (S/PRST/2015/18).

Counter-Terrorism

On 21 October, Spain and the US co-hosted an Arria-formula meeting on victims of

terrorism and their role in countering violent extremism. Council members heard from Javier Lesaca, visiting fellow at George Washington University; Maria del Mar Blanco, a victim of the Basque terrorist organisation ETA; Pari Ibrahim, a victim of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham; and Saudatu Mahdi, a representative from the "Bring Back Our Girls" campaign. The meeting also included a short video presented by Leon Shahabiyan, President of Loyalina Productions Inc., a Washington, DC based non-profit media organisation that seeks to bridge the gap between the US and the Arab world. On 27 October, Ambassador Gerard van Bohemen (New Zealand) briefed the Council as chair of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee (S/PV.7544). The briefing focused on two recent reports of the Monitoring Team of the Committee: one on the financing of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham and Al-Nusra Front in Iraq and Syria, and another on the terrorism threat in Libya.

Yemen

On 23 October, the Special Envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed and the chair of the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė (Lithuania), briefed the Council (S/PV.7542). Ould Cheikh Ahmed reported on the recent decisions by the sides to engage in direct talks. Murmokaitė reviewed the work of the 2140 Sanctions Committee since her last briefing in December 2014. Following the meeting, Council members issued a press statement welcoming the Special Envoy's announcement of the upcoming talks and reaffirming their call for the parties to attend the talks without preconditions (SC/12096). On 28 October, Council members discussed humanitarian relief efforts in Yemen in an Arria-formula meeting organised by Jordan. OCHA head Stephen O'Brien and Abdullah Al-Rabiah, the chairman of the Saudi-based King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center and adviser to the Royal Court briefed. Earlier in the month, on 9 October, the 2140 Sanctions Committee met to discuss the findings of the Panel of Experts on financial sanctions and international humanitarian law issues, which were circulated in a letter to Committee members ahead of the meeting. The Committee issued a press release on 19 October on the meeting (SC/12085).

Syria

Expected Council Action

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

Two new elements this month include a political briefing by the Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, and updates regarding the UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM), established to determine responsibility for the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

Key Recent Developments

On 7 October, 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. During those consultations, there was also discussion of a Russian draft resolution that included elements from a draft presidential statement on countering terrorism in the Middle East, which Russia had wanted the Council to adopt at the 30 September ministerial-level open debate on the same topic. (30 September was also the day that Russian airstrikes commenced in Syria.) The draft statement was not adopted due to the lack of agreement from the US. Apparently the US believed that adoption of such a text would be perceived as (1) a requirement for the US-led coalition against the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) to cooperate with the Syrian government, and (2) a signal of Council approval of Russian military activity in Syria. For the same reasons, the P3 and a number of other Council members refused to negotiate the subsequent draft resolution. It was never tabled for a vote as Russia could not garner the necessary nine votes.

The US avoids clashes with Syrian airpower through “de-confliction” that occurs because the Iraqi government acts as a liaison between the two forces. On 20 October, the US signed an air-to-air conduct agreement with Russia to similarly “de-conflict” US and Russian airstrikes in Syria. However, the US-led anti-ISIS coalition does not conduct joint strikes with Syria or Russia against ISIS.

On the day Russian airstrikes began in Syria, Russia said its military goal was to combat terrorism and support the forces of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, a broader

scope of activity than earlier assertions that its military activity would be focused on ISIS. On 2 October, the Secretary-General met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and stated the UN’s position that the military campaign should only target terrorist groups specified by the Security Council (i.e., Al-Qaida, ISIS and Al Nusra Front). He also said the use of indiscriminate weapons, such as barrel bombs, should immediately cease. At the 22 October open debate on the Middle East, France, Spain and the UK signalled their intent to draft a resolution on indiscriminate attacks, in particular the indiscriminate use of barrel bombs.

Reuters reported on 21 October that 80 percent of Russia’s declared targets have not been in ISIS-controlled areas but rather are targeting armed opposition groups opposed to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad—in some cases groups backed by the US and its allies. Regarding the US, media reports indicate that US Secretary of State John Kerry revived the idea of the US leading the establishment of no-fly zones or safe zones in Syria, but that continues to be an option not highly favoured by US President Barack Obama. The US policy remains focused on a negotiated political transition and backing opposition groups fighting ISIS.

On 4 October, Assad said that the US-led anti-ISIS coalition had been counterproductive but that a coalition of Syria, Russia, Iran and Iraq could achieve real results. On 15 October, Syrian government forces, the Iranian-backed Lebanese militia Hezbollah, and Iranian and Iraqi Shi’a militia forces, with close air support from Russia, launched an offensive against rebel-held areas of Aleppo and the surrounding countryside. Regime forces, reportedly backed by Russian airstrikes, have also carried out attacks in Homs, Idlib, Hama, Dera’a and the Damascus countryside. The UN estimates that 120,000 people have been displaced as a result of this recent surge in fighting. The Syrian Civil Defence, or White Helmets, reports that of the 436 civilian deaths in the two-week period after 30 September, over half are attributable to Russian airstrikes.

Regaining control of Aleppo, together with large swathes of territory in northwestern

Syria and major supply routes, would be a significant victory for the regime. Some analysts view the offensive as an attempt to solidify government gains before any possible negotiations regarding a political transition.

In his first known trip outside Syria since the civil war began, Assad met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in a surprise visit to Moscow on 20 October, the same day the US and Russia signed their agreement on air-to-air conduct. He thanked Russia for its military support, and the leaders agreed on the need for a political transition. The US responded that the “red carpet” welcome for Assad was at odds with Russia’s stated commitment to a political transition.

On 22 October, a Bloomberg interview of an unnamed Russian official reported that as part of a political transition deal Russia is seeking early parliamentary and presidential elections in Syria and that Assad would decide himself whether to run for the office. In a 27 October statement, the Syrian government reiterated that any political initiative would only be possible after terrorism was dealt with—a position held by the regime since before terrorism was an actual dynamic in the Syrian conflict. The statement did not reference Russia’s proposal for early elections.

On 23 October, US Secretary of State Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov met in Vienna to discuss Syria. This was followed by another meeting with their counterparts from Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Ahead of the meeting, Putin said he foresaw talks between the Syrian government and the “full spectrum of the Syrian opposition”—but did not specify which opposition groups should be included. After the meeting, Kerry said that some ideas surfaced which he hoped could change the dynamic.

Reportedly nine countries, including Iran, Turkey and the US, have signalled preliminary support for Assad to serve as the head of a transitional administration on condition of his departure after six months. This is an idea that has been circulating for well over a year. The new element is whether Iran and Russia will use their leverage to impose this solution on Assad. An unanswered question is where control of the security forces will remain during any transition—with the current regime,

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 Meeting Record S/PV.7543 (27 October 2015) was on the humanitarian situation. Secretary-General’s Reports S/2015/813 (22 October 2015) was on the humanitarian situation. S/2015/737 (24 September 2015) was on chemical weapons.

Syria (con't)

which is larger than Assad alone, or with the transitional body. The Geneva Communiqué calls for security to be under the control of the transitional government.

The UN, permanent Council members France and the UK and regional power Iran were not invited to the 23 October Vienna talks. However, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the US reconvened in Vienna on 29 October and met with an expanded set of participants including the UN and the EU; the remaining P5 members China, France and the UK; regional countries Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar and the UAE; and European countries Germany and Italy. This will be the first time that Iran has participated in international talks aimed at finding a common position on a political solution to the war in Syria.

OCHA head Stephen O'Brien briefed the Security Council on 27 October and presented the latest Secretary-General's report on the humanitarian situation in Syria. The report reiterated the Secretary-General's call during the 70th General Assembly for the Security Council to refer Syria to the ICC. It also included information on Russian airstrikes and the toll on civilians. On the issue of medical neutrality, it included documentation of six attacks against medical facilities carried out by the government in September. Separately, there were media reports that Russian airstrikes also hit several field hospitals in October. On 15 October, the ICRC sent a letter to the Security Council on the ethical principles of health care in times of armed conflict and other emergencies (S/2015/794).

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 1 October, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on Syria (A/HRC/RES/30/10) with 29 votes in favour, six against (including Security Council members Russia, China and Venezuela) and 12 abstentions, including Nigeria. The resolution condemns the continued systematic, widespread and gross violations and abuses of human rights and all violations of international humanitarian law by the Syrian authorities and affiliated militias; terrorist acts and violence committed against civilians by ISIS, including the gross and systematic abuse of women's and children's rights; the Syrian authorities' use of heavy weapons, cluster munitions and aerial bombardments, including any indiscriminate use of ballistic missiles and barrel bombs; and attacks on medical facilities and the starvation of civilians as a method of combat. It also recommends that the General Assembly submit reports of the International Commission of

Inquiry on Syria to the Security Council for appropriate action. A similar request was included in the Human Rights Council's March resolution which renewed the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry on Syria. However, no such action seems to have been taken.

On 13 October, the Secretary-General's Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect expressed alarm about the escalation of incitement to violence in Syria on religious grounds. In particular, they condemned calls by clerics in Saudi Arabia for Sunni Muslims and their states to support a "holy war" against Shi'a Muslims and Christians in Syria. They similarly expressed concern that Russian Orthodox clerics had referred to Russia's participation in the conflict as a "holy battle" against terrorism.

Key Issues

The essential 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, including 4 million refugees—is to find ways to exert effective leadership, particularly in supporting a cessation of violence and resuscitating meaningful 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 to maintain international peace and security in the case of Syria.

The increasing militarisation of the conflict, with four of the P5 and elected member Jordan having carried out airstrikes, leaves extremely limited room for Council members to take forward any new initiative on Syria.

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

Council and Wider Dynamics

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 Syrian situation. That dynamic has only hardened subsequent to Russia's military activity in support of the Assad regime. The possibility that the Council might take any action on the French, Spanish and UK 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, now seems ever more remote.

A few Council members believe that the Russian military involvement could be the event that tips the conflict toward a political solution; the question then is what that solution might look like.

Russia, Syria and Iran have signalled support for a political transition but are reiterating well-known positions that power-sharing can only occur in the context of a united effort against "terrorism", elections and talks with a "healthy" opposition. Iran and Russia have also publicly stated that they are not wedded to Assad but have not yet noticeably used their leverage to significantly rein in the government's behaviour.

The P3 and some regional states have modified 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, the UN's position is laid out in the Secretary-General's latest humanitarian report. It said a credible political process should be based on the Geneva Communiqué, in particular the agreed principles and guidelines for a Syrian-led transition. These principles and guidelines clarify that members of the transitional government shall not have blood on their hands. This will be an impossible litmus test if, indeed, the West shifts its position on Assad's role in a transition.

The Council's failure to take meaningful action to end the Syrian crisis and the four joint vetoes cast by China and Russia since 2011 on Syria, are commonly seen as the impetus behind the French initiative for veto restraint and the support exhibited by 104 UN

Syria (con't)

member states on 23 October for the ACT group's code of conduct on the use of the veto. (The code of conduct is supported by nine of the current 15 Council members: Chad,

Chile, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain and the UK. Three of the incoming members also support the code of conduct: Japan, Ukraine and Uruguay.)

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.

Sudan (Darfur)

Expected Council Action

In November, Ambassador Rafael Ramírez (Venezuela), the chair of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee, is expected to provide the quarterly briefing to Council members on the Committee's work. No outcome was anticipated at press time.

Key Recent Developments

Darfur remains mired in a security and humanitarian crisis, with ongoing inter-communal violence and widespread impunity and displacement. There are currently 2.6 million displaced people in the region. This includes 104,000 people who have been newly displaced this year, with "unconfirmed reports that an additional 69,000 persons have been displaced, most of whom are in inaccessible areas in and around the Jebel Marra," according to the Secretary-General's 25 September report.

On 27 September, unidentified assailants killed one AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (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.

Both the government of Sudan and the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), an umbrella group of Sudanese rebel movements from the Darfur region and from South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, have recently indicated a willingness to cease hostilities. During a conference on Sudan's "national dialogue", Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir said on 10 October that his government would consider expanding a cessation of hostilities that he announced in September into a comprehensive ceasefire if the rebel groups "choose peace over war and... join the dialogue". On 18 October, the SRF announced a unilateral cessation of hostilities for six months, beginning on 19 October.

Despite their pronouncements, the level of commitment of both sides to stop hostilities remained unclear at press time.

High-level meetings on the exit strategy for UNAMID were recently held in New York. On 29 September, Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, Deputy Chair of the AU Erastus Mwencha and Sudanese Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour convened to discuss the exit strategy on the margins of the opening session of the General Assembly. On 2 October, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also met with Ghandour in New York. According to a UNAMID press release, Ban "looked forward to further discussions on the exit strategy..., under the guidance of the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council."

It is unclear how much progress the recent discussions made, but there have been different perspectives regarding the exit strategy. On one hand, the government of Sudan has urged the development of a timetable for the mission's withdrawal. On the other hand, the Secretary-General said in his May report 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". Furthermore, in a 16 August press release, AU Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma said that the "strategy should be conceived and implemented in a manner that does not jeopardize the gains made since the deployment" of UNAMID.

Talks between UN, AU and Sudanese government officials on the exit strategy are expected to continue in early November, according to Ali al-Sadiq, a spokesman for Sudan's foreign ministry.

On 14 October, Council members received a briefing under "any other business" from

Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, at the request of the UK, regarding obstacles imposed on UNAMID by the government of Sudan. Ladsous told members that Sudan continued to block the transport of 190 cargo containers of food and other supplies intended for UNAMID in Port Sudan, some for as long as 84 days. He further stated that because of Sudan's delays in issuing visas there were high vacancy rates in certain sections of the mission, including those related to human rights (50 percent), protection of civilians (40 percent) and security posts (30 percent). He noted as well that the mission's access to certain areas continued to be restricted.

Council members decided at the meeting that Ambassador Román Oyarzun of Spain, in his capacity as president of the Security Council, should meet with Sudan permanent representative to the UN, Ambassador Omer Dahab Fadl Mohamed, and request that the containers be transported to Darfur. If the shipments were not commenced within three days, members determined that they should consider issuing a press statement, although some were less supportive of pursuing a statement than others.

Later that day, Oyarzun met with Mohamed and expressed the Council's concerns. In a letter to the Council on 15 October, Mohamed said that "the competent Sudanese authorities [had] granted customs clearance for the UNAMID containers". He reiterated the claim from his meeting with Oyarzun, namely that the "delay was caused by the failure of UNAMID to fulfil customs clearance requirements, including the prior submission of detailed lists of items...to be imported".

On 28 October, the Council held a briefing, followed by consultations, on

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. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7545](#) (28 October 2015) was a briefing on Darfur. [Secretary-General's Report S/2015/729](#) (25 September 2015) was on UNAMID. [Sanctions-Related Document S/2015/31](#) (16 January 2015) was the final report of the Sudan Sanctions Committee Panel of Experts.

Sudan (Darfur) (con't)

UNAMID. Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet told the Council that the security situation in Darfur remained “precarious and unpredictable.” He said that a meeting between the government and the rebel groups on the cessation of hostilities is currently planned for 18-19 November in Addis Ababa under the auspices of the AUHIP.

The appointment of Martin Ihoeghian Uhomobhi (Nigeria) as Joint Special Representative for Darfur and head of UNAMID was announced on 27 October by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and AU Commission Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 2 October, the Human Rights Council adopted without a vote a resolution on technical assistance and capacity-building to improve human rights in Sudan (A/HRC/RES/30/22). The resolution expresses serious concern at the excessive use of force, including the lethal shooting of demonstrators in September 2013 and March 2014, and calls on the government to institute an independent public inquiry and ensure accountability. Among other things, it also expresses concern at reports of the closure of some non-governmental organisations and restrictions on the media; condemns violations or abuses of international human rights and humanitarian law reported in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, including sexual and gender-based violence, the indiscriminate bombing of humanitarian facilities, and the killing of civilians and humanitarian aid workers; urges the government to investigate allegations of human rights violations in the camps for internally displaced persons; and renews the mandate of the independent expert on the situation of human rights in Sudan for one year.

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 26 August, Ramírez provided the most recent quarterly briefing to Council members on the Sudan Sanctions Committee's work. He summarised the midterm update of the Panel of Experts. He noted that the Panel of Experts 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 identified 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.

Key Issues

One key issue for the Council is how to enhance the effectiveness of the Sudan sanctions regime, which is plagued by ongoing violations of the arms embargo and of the travel ban against designated individuals.

In terms of the Council's working methods, another issue is how holding the briefings of the Sudan Sanctions Committee in a closed session (i.e., consultations) creates a lack of transparency in the Council's work, inhibiting ideas from the wider membership and civil society for improving the effectiveness of the sanctions regime.

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

A crucial issue is the future of UNAMID, given the different views about the mission's exit strategy and timing.

Options

Options for the Council with regard to the 1591 Sanctions Committee 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; and
- requesting the chair of the Sanctions Committee to undertake a visiting mission to the region and report back to the Committee with recommendations for strengthening the regime.

The chair of the Committee might also consider holding the briefing in an open

session, rather than in closed consultations, to enhance the transparency of the Committee's work. When Argentina chaired the Sudan Sanctions Committee in 2013-2014, it held its final quarterly briefing on the Committee's work in a public meeting on 24 November 2014, before Council members discussed the issue in closed consultations. However, Venezuela, as committee chair, has reverted to having the quarterly briefings in a closed session.

Options for the Council on Darfur more generally include:

- demanding that the government of Sudan issue visas in a timely fashion to UNAMID staff 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.

Council Dynamics

During the 14 October meeting, there was widespread concern and disapproval within the Council regarding the government of Sudan's delay in permitting food to be delivered to Darfur for UNAMID. However, some members were more critical of the Sudanese government than others. With regard to the delays in the delivery of food, the P3 argued that this represented a clear violation of the mission's Status of Forces Agreement and that the Council should issue a press statement to send a clear message to Sudan, in addition to the meeting of the Sudanese ambassador with the Council president. However, Chad and Russia believed that issuing such a press statement would only worsen the situation. Russia also argued that the Council has not paid appropriate respect to the position of the government of Sudan with regard to UNAMID's exit strategy.

The UK is the penholder on Darfur.

DPRK (North Korea)

Expected Council Action

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

Key Recent Developments

In August, tensions increased between the DPRK and the Republic of Korea (ROK) following an incident on 4 August in which two ROK soldiers were seriously injured by landmines in the demilitarised zone separating the two countries. In an 18 August letter to the Security Council, the ROK alleged that the DPRK had planted the mines recently. The DPRK, however, said in a letter to the Council on 21 August that the incident was "totally fabricated". It also sent three other letters to the Council in August protesting the ROK-US joint military exercises held from 17 to 28 August and reiterating its request for the exercises to be placed on the Council's agenda in accordance with articles 34 and 35 of the UN Charter. Tensions seemed to ease somewhat, however, following talks between the DPRK and the ROK from 23 to 25 August, which led to an agreement to resume family reunions in October.

On 10 October, the DPRK marked the 70th anniversary of the founding of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea with a large military parade and other celebratory events. According to media reports, DPRK leader Kim Jong-un said in a speech that his country was ready to respond "to any kind of war the American imperialists want". There had been concerns that the DPRK would use the occasion to conduct another long-range missile launch following announcements by Pyongyang in September that it was preparing to send a satellite into orbit. When this did not happen, some observers suggested technical issues had caused delays, but international pressure was also seen as a factor. The only high-level foreign official present at the military parade was a Chinese communist party leader.

Following a meeting on 16 October in Washington, DC between US President Barack Obama and ROK President Park

Geun-hye, Obama reiterated that the US was open to negotiating the easing of sanctions with the DPRK if the latter showed willingness to discuss the dismantling of its nuclear capabilities. But he added that he had seen no signs of such willingness. The DPRK confirmed in a statement on 17 October that it was not interested in nuclear talks; it wanted instead to negotiate a peace treaty with the US.

At a 7 October event organised by the Atlantic Council, a US think tank, Admiral Bill Gortney, commander of the US Northern Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command, said the US believed that the DPRK had the ability to miniaturise a nuclear weapon and put it on a missile that could reach the US. On 20 October, the ROK national intelligence service apparently said at a briefing to ROK parliamentarians that the DPRK was preparing for a nuclear test, although it was not imminent. The intelligence service seemingly did not believe, however, that the DPRK was able to miniaturise a nuclear weapon.

The family reunions agreed in August went ahead as planned from 20 to 26 October, with some 640 individuals participating from the ROK side and an unknown number from the DPRK. The last such reunions were held in February 2014. As the reunions were coming to a close, the ROK fired warning shots at a DPRK patrol boat that crossed the disputed maritime border between the two countries, referred to as the northern limit line. The DPRK said the boat was on a routine patrol and characterised the shots as a deliberate provocation.

At press time, China, Japan and the ROK were scheduled to hold a trilateral summit meeting in Seoul on 1 November, with the DPRK nuclear issue expected to be on the agenda. It would be the first such meeting since 2013.

Sanctions-Related Developments

The Sanctions Committee last met on 4 September to consider its Panel of Experts' midterm report, which mostly dealt with investigations of older cases. (Unlike the final reports, the midterm reports are normally not made public.) Also, at the time of writing, it seems the Committee had just agreed on a letter to the ICRC confirming that a

demining project in the DPRK would not violate any of the sanctions provisions, while a similar letter to UNIDO was under silence.

Human Rights-Related Developments

The special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK, Marzuki Darusman, visited Seoul from 6 to 10 September. In a 9 September statement, he welcomed the positive developments with regard to family reunions and noted that unification was paramount, while also emphasising that it was time to consider concrete measures that could be taken to ensure accountability for the crimes documented in the February 2014 Commission of Inquiry's report and to set up a broader process of transitional justice. He said that during the visit his attention was repeatedly drawn to the issue of DPRK nationals who were subjected to forced labour by their government; the situation of women; and alleged abductions of ROK and other nationals, including cases of detention, by the DPRK. Darusman is scheduled to visit the ROK again in late November and will present a report to the Human Rights Council in March 2016.

At press time, Darusman was scheduled to brief the General Assembly's Third Committee on 29 October on his report on the human rights situation in the DPRK. The report, which was submitted in accordance with last year's General Assembly resolution on the DPRK, calls for the Security Council to hold regular briefings on the situation in the DPRK with the participation of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other relevant experts, including the special rapporteur, and also reiterates the recommendation for the Council to refer the situation to the ICC.

Key Issues

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

An additional issue is what kind of action the Council should consider on the human rights situation in the DPRK.

At the Sanctions Committee level, a key issue remains whether to implement any of the Panel of Experts' latest recommendations.

Options

For the Committee, the main option is to implement the Panel of Experts' recommendations, which include designating additional individuals and entities and issuing additional guidance to member states.

Another option is for the Committee chair

UN DOCUMENTS ON THE DPRK Security Council Letters S/2015/658 (21 August 2015) and S/2015/642 (18 August 2015) was an exchange of letters between the DPRK and the ROK's on the landmine incident. S/2015/637 (14 August 2015), S/2015/638 (17 August 2015) and S/2015/650 (19 August 2015) were DPRK letters on the joint ROK-US military exercises. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7353 (22 December 2014) was the first ever Council briefing on the human rights situation in the DPRK. Sanctions Committee Document S/2015/131 (23 February 2015) was the most recent Panel of Experts' report. Other A/70/362 (8 September 2015) was the report to the General Assembly of the special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK. A/HRC/25/63 (7 February 2014) was the Commission of Inquiry report on the DPRK.

Useful Additional Resource *Nuclear North Korea: How Will It Behave?* US-Korea Institute at SAIS, October 2015

DPRK (North Korea) (con't)

to convene an open briefing for UN member states, as it is now more than a year since the last such briefing in July 2014.

With regard to the human rights situation, one possible option for the Council is to organise a briefing by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the special rapporteur.

Council and Wider Dynamics

There seems to have been little progress in the Sanctions Committee on the Panel of Experts' recommendations. Discussions have focused on those related to the Ocean Maritime Management Company (OMM), which China at the outset appeared open to consider. (The Committee designated OMM as subject to sanctions in July 2014 for its involvement in the Chong Chon Gang case. The Panel has proposed additional measures to better target OMM's activities.) However, China and Russia have so far been reluctant to move forward

on any of the recommendations. In particular, it seems China argued ahead of the 10 October anniversary that the Committee must avoid any action that could provoke Pyongyang.

Beyond the Council, China is continuing to push for the resumption of the six-party talks involving also the DPRK, Japan, the ROK, Russia and the US, and hosted an international seminar on 19 September commemorating the tenth anniversary of the September 2005 joint statement of the six parties. (In this statement, the DPRK promised to abandon its nuclear program and return to the Non-proliferation Treaty and IAEA safeguards.) Speaking at the seminar, the Chinese foreign minister, Wang Yi, said that China believed the joint statement should be "reactivated" as soon as possible to pave the way for the resumption of the talks. He also said that "the tremendous military pressure" the DPRK had faced over the years must be taken seriously and

its legitimate security concerns be addressed. He added that it was essential to conclude a peace treaty "among parties concerned" to replace the Korean Peninsula armistice, thus lending support to one of the DPRK's principal demands. This view was echoed by the Russian ambassador in Seoul in a 22 October interview with a major ROK news agency.

With regard to the human rights situation, momentum appears to be building for the Council to hold a meeting as a follow-up to the December 2014 briefing when this issue was first discussed as a separate Council agenda item. It seems the US is expected to propose a briefing during its presidency in December, possibly with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the special rapporteur.

The US is the penholder on the DPRK.

Libya

Expected Council Action

In November, ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda will deliver her semi-annual briefing on recent developments concerning cases in Libya.

Bernardino León, the Special Representative and head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), and Ambassador Ramlan Ibrahim (Malaysia), the chair of the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee, are also likely to brief the Council, followed by consultations.

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

Key Recent Developments

Following the partial initialling of an agreement on 11 July, León included some amendments to the draft in an effort to respond to demands by the Tripoli-based General National Congress (GNC), including on the mandate and membership of the State Council, a consultative body in which most GNC members are expected to participate. These were rejected by the Tobruk-based House

of Representatives. Delegates of the parties attended a high-level meeting in New York on 2 October aimed at increasing international pressure to sign the agreement, but hardliners on both sides continued to undermine the efforts of the factions within the parties more willing to compromise. On 8 October, León proposed names for the six-member presidency council of the government of national accord. In a 9 October press statement, the Security Council welcomed León's announcement of the proposed names and urged all parties to endorse and sign the agreement.

Pressure from the Council and other international actors intensified in the weeks leading to 20 October, when the House's mandate was to expire. On 17 October, the Council stressed that the agreement offered a real prospect for resolving Libya's political, security and institutional crises, and threatened spoilers with sanctions. On 19 October, a statement by the foreign ministers of Algeria, France, Germany, Italy, Morocco, Qatar, Spain, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the UK, the US and the EU called on all parties to "immediately approve

the hard-fought political compromise set forth in the political agreement". At press time, both the House and the GNC had so far failed to support the agreement.

The security situation continues to be critical, particularly in Benghazi. UNSMIL has repeatedly condemned the indiscriminate shelling of residential areas there by all parties. In the last few months, there have been various local ceasefire initiatives, including between Zintan and Misrata-based armed groups, but violence persists in the west as well. In the south, after several attempts, a ceasefire between Tabu and Zwai tribes seemed to be holding.

Fractures in the main military coalitions became increasingly apparent. In June, Salah Badi, a commander of Libya Dawn split from the Tripoli-based coalition and established an alternative alliance named Jabhat al-Somood, which opposes the political process. General Khalifa Haftar, who was appointed Supreme Commander of the armed forces by the House, has publicly criticised efforts to reach an agreement, and press reports suggest he seeks to head a military council with executive

UN DOCUMENTS ON LIBYA Security Council Resolutions [S/RES/2240](#) (9 October 2015) authorised the interdiction of vessels on the high seas off the coast of Libya that are being used for migrant smuggling or human trafficking from Libya. [S/RES/2238](#) (10 September 2015) renewed the mandate of UNSMIL. [S/RES/2214](#) (27 March 2015) focused on counter-terrorism efforts. [S/RES/2213](#) (27 March 2015) renewed UNSMIL and the 1970 Libya Panel of Experts. [Security Council Press Statements SC/12084](#) (17 October 2015) urged all Libyan parties to endorse and sign the Political Agreement, as presented on 8 October. [SC/12074](#) (9 October 2015) welcomed León's announcement of the proposed names for the Presidency Council of the Libyan Government of National Accord. [SC/12027](#) (27 August 2015) condemned the terrorist attacks in Sirte.

Libya (con't)

powers in the absence of a political settlement.

The increasing presence of terrorist groups continues to be a threat to Libya and the region. Recently, the Monitoring Team of the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee reported on the terrorist threat in Libya, highlighting the increasing activities of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), as well as 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. The report also highlights that ISIS in Libya is the only affiliate that benefited from support and guidance by ISIS' core in Iraq and Syria. At press time, the chair of the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee was expected to brief the Council on Libya on 27 October.

Contingency planning to support counter-terrorism in Libya once a government of national accord is sworn in has been ongoing by France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the UK and the US, in discussion with the UN and the EU. One of the key issues in the negotiations that led to the adoption of resolution 2238 and the renewal of UNSMIL's mandate was whether to refer to UNSMIL's role in planning assistance for a government of national accord and for security arrangements. In the end, a pre-ambular paragraph of the resolution recognises the need to plan assistance for a government of national accord and for security arrangements.

A September report published by OCHA stated that an estimated 2.44 million people are in need of protection and some form of humanitarian assistance in Libya. This includes internally displaced persons, the non-displaced conflict-affected population, refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants. On 9 October, the Council adopted resolution 2240, which authorised the interdiction of vessels used for migrant smuggling or human trafficking on the high seas off the coast of Libya.

On 28 July, Saif Al-Islam Qaddafi, son of deposed leader Muammar Qaddafi, was sentenced to death by a court in Tripoli that tried him along with 36 other Qaddafi-era officials accused of serious crimes during the 2011 revolution. Qaddafi has been tried in absentia since he is being held in a militia-controlled jail in the town of Zintan. UNSMIL and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights criticised the trial as not meeting international standards for a fair trial.

On 10 December 2014, the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber issued a decision on the non-compliance of Libya with the Court on the

case against Qaddafi, by which the matter was referred back to the Council. Although the ICC decision was noted in resolution 2213, so far the Council has failed to follow up on this issue and has not met to discuss it. On 30 July, Bensouda requested that the Pre-Trial Chamber order Libya to refrain from carrying out Qaddafi's sentence, surrender him to the Court and officially inform the Council of the sentence, which she describes as an irreversible manifestation of Libya's failure to cooperate with the Court. Resolution 2238 notes both the decision by the Pre-Trial Chamber and the request by the Prosecutor, in addition to calling on the Libyan government to cooperate fully with the ICC and the Prosecutor and provide them with any necessary assistance. On 20 August, Libya responded to the Prosecutor's request stating that Qaddafi's judgement was not final given that he was tried in absentia, and stressing that he cannot be surrendered to the ICC because he is not in custody of the Libyan government.

Sanctions-Related Developments

The interim report of the Panel of Experts, circulated in September, highlights how violators of human rights and peace spoilers continue to act with total impunity, especially in the absence of a formal security sector and international hesitancy to intervene, including through the adoption of targeted sanctions. León has repeatedly emphasised the usefulness of sanctions to target hardliners and advance the political process, and Council statements have repeatedly threatened spoilers. However, no names have been submitted since a proposal by France, Spain, the UK and the US to impose sanctions on two individuals affiliated with each of the warring coalitions was put on hold by Russia and China in early June.

Human Rights-Related Developments

During its 30th session, the Human Rights Council (HRC) considered the report on Libya of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (A/HRC/30/16). The report sets out 202 conclusions and recommendations. Among them, the report calls on Libya to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, and to cooperate fully with international human rights procedures and institutions, including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' fact-finding mission on Libya, established by HRC resolution 28/30 on 27 March. On 14 September, High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein remarked in his opening statement at the HRC's 30th session that indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian objects through the use of imprecise weaponry in densely populated areas continues in Libya, along

with summary executions, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment. He added that impunity is nearly absolute, and migrants, refugees, female human rights defenders, the internally displaced and religious minorities are intensely vulnerable to violations.

Key Issues

An overarching issue is isolating spoilers on both sides and maintaining the engagement of the parties in the political process, while ensuring the support of all regional and international actors for the political dialogue.

A key issue is ensuring that military actors are brought into the political process to address the implementation of the ceasefire and other security arrangements provided for in the agreement. Stopping continual violations of international humanitarian law by the parties is a related issue.

The growing threat in Libya of terrorist groups with regional reach is an urgent issue.

Options

Options for Council members on Libya include:

- visiting Libya to hold discussions with the parties and regional stakeholders with the objective of breaking the current deadlock over the political process;
- authorising interdiction of vessels suspected to be involved in violations of the arms embargo;
- establishing a mechanism to ensure the independence and neutrality of the Central Bank of Libya; and
- imposing sanctions on spoilers.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members generally support the mediation efforts by León and have repeatedly stated that there can be no military solution to the crisis in Libya. There is also a feeling of urgency among Council members given the growing threat of ISIS in Libya and the 20 October expiration of the House's mandate. Disagreements over how to support mediation efforts, including the use of UN sanctions, have hindered the Council's engagement on Libya. Until now, Council members have 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.

The UK is the penholder on Libya.

Somalia

Expected Council Action

In November, the Council will be briefed on the Secretary-General's reports on the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSO) and piracy, with participation by UK Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond and Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.

The Council is scheduled to adopt a resolution renewing anti-piracy measures. A resolution regarding the UN Support Office for the AU Mission in Somalia (UNSOA) and the Somali National Army (SNA) support package is also a possibility in November.

Key Recent Developments

On 14 October, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support Atul Khare briefed the Council on the Secretary-General's letter of 7 October regarding the strategic review of UNSOA and the feasibility of extending the SNA support package. Khare emphasised that while UNSOA had made a meaningful contribution in Somalia, it remains significantly under-resourced. It has provided operational support not only for its principal client, the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), but also for the SNA and UNSOM, in addition to supporting the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region and the Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group. Khare recommended reducing its client base to three (AMISOM, SNA and UNSOM), changing its name and management structure, refining its mandate and increasing funding by \$60 million per year (with an additional \$13 million required as a one-off expenditure).

Operation Jubba Corridor, a joint AMISOM-SNA military offensive against Al-Shabaab, has continued in southern Somalia. On 7 October, the Chairperson of the Commission of the AU, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, appointed Ambassador Francisco Caetano José Madeira (Mozambique) as the new AU Special Representative for Somalia and head of AMISOM. On 19 October, the EU and AU signed an agreement for the EU to provide 165 million euros (\$187 million) to cover AMISOM's operational costs from June through December 2015.

On 21 October, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, convened a pledging conference with the EU in Brussels to support the voluntary return of refugees to Somalia. There are an estimated 967,000 Somali refugees in neighbouring countries and an additional 1.1 million internally displaced persons in Somalia. The UN Refugee Agency announced that the conference raised \$105 million. Meanwhile, a recent report by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit of the Food and Agriculture Organization indicates a decline in remittances from the Somali diaspora to families in urban areas, which constitute a core source of funds for Somalis to meet basic needs, during the first six months of 2015.

Counter-piracy is one area where international efforts have been successful thus far. As reported by the Secretary-General, it has been more than two years since a large commercial vessel has been hijacked and held for ransom by Somali pirates. There has also been a decline in the overall number of incidents caused by Somali-based pirates. According to the International Maritime Organization, there were 12 in the most recent reporting period compared with 78 in 2007, when piracy was far more prevalent. However, as the Secretary-General notes, the efforts of multinational naval forces and the self-protection measures of the shipping industry continue to be required as the underlying causes of piracy and the latent capabilities of pirates remain a threat.

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 9 October, the 751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Sanctions Committee held informal consultations to discuss the Monitoring Group's final reports on Somalia and Eritrea. Regarding Somalia, the Monitoring Group found: corruption continues to impede the statebuilding process; Al-Shabaab's income from the charcoal trade has been reduced; Al-Shabaab continues to pose a significant security threat in Somalia and the region; there has been an increase in inter-communal conflict which Al-Shabaab has exploited; there remains a need for an adequate regulatory framework on natural resources; government management of arms and ammunition requires further progress; civilians continue to be targeted by all armed groups in violation of human rights and humanitarian law; and constraints remain on

humanitarian access. On Eritrea, the key findings of the Monitoring Group include: there was no evidence found of support by Eritrea for Al-Shabaab, but links to other armed groups in the region persist; and there is a lack of public financial transparency, including with respect to mining revenue.

On 23 October, the Council adopted resolution 2244, renewing the partial lifting of the arms embargo, maritime interdiction of illicit arms imports and illegal charcoal exports, the humanitarian exemption and the mandate of the Monitoring Group. Venezuela, which chairs the 751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Sanctions Committee, abstained, raising an objection to not being consulted further by the penholder during the late stages of negotiations on the draft resolution. In its explanation of vote, Venezuela also raised concerns regarding the content on Eritrea in resolution 2244.

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 2 October, the Human Rights Council adopted without a vote a resolution on assistance to Somalia in the field of human rights (A/HRC/RES/30/20). The resolution strongly condemns the serious and systematic violations and abuses perpetrated by Al-Shabaab against members of the civilian population, including women, children, journalists, parliamentarians and human rights defenders. It also, among other things, calls on the government to finalise and adopt a federal Constitution, and to hold credible, transparent and inclusive elections in 2016; and it renews the mandate of the independent expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia for one year.

Key Issues

One confirmed issue the Council will address in November concerns Somali piracy. Ongoing challenges include: a lack of national and regional capacity to arrest, prosecute and detain pirates; and the underlying causes of piracy, such as high youth unemployment, the economic impact of illegal fishing and weak national governance.

The Council may also revisit issues raised in the Secretary-General's 7 October letter and Khare's 14 October briefing, particularly the limited resources available to UNSOA and the adverse implications for its support to AMISOM, the SNA and UNSOM. This in turn negatively affects counter-insurgency efforts and the ability to extend the statebuilding project to the federal regions. Related points concern the threat posed by Al-Shabaab in Puntland and the weak institutional capacity of the Somali police.

UN DOCUMENTS ON SOMALIA AND ERITREA Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2244 (23 October 2015) renewed the partial lifting of the arms embargo, maritime interdiction of illicit arms and charcoal, the humanitarian exemption and the mandate of the Monitoring Group. S/RES/2184 (12 November 2014) renewed for one year measures to fight piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia. Security Council Letter S/2015/762 (7 October 2015) concerned the strategic review of UNSOA and concepts for the extension of the SNA support package. Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7541 (23 October 2014) concerned the adoption of resolution 2244. S/PV.7535 (14 October 2015) was a briefing on the strategic review of UNSOA and an assessment regarding a possible extension of the SNA support package. Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/776 (12 October 2015) was on piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia. S/2015/702 (11 September 2015) was on UNSOM. Sanctions Committee Documents S/2015/802 (9 October 2015) transmitted the final report on Eritrea of the Monitoring Group. S/2015/801 (9 October 2015) transmitted the final report on Somalia of the Monitoring Group.

Somalia (con't)

Options

With respect to piracy, the most likely option for the Council is to reauthorise for another year the naval counter-piracy measures specified in resolution 2184. The Council could additionally include provisions for increasing the national and regional capacity building for anti-piracy courts and combatting illegal fishing in Somalia.

Regarding UNSOA and the SNA support package, the Council could defer taking action on the matter in November, or it could adopt a resolution drawing upon the recommendations made in the Secretary-General's 7 October letter to the Council that would:

- define UNSOA's clients as AMISOM, UNSOM and the SNA;
- rename UNSOA to reflect its actual client base and endorse the appointment of a head at the level of Assistant Secretary-General;
- provide a "single and clear mandate focused on the provision of support to, but operationally separate from, its core clients";

- extend the SNA support package to Puntland forces, but preferably through a UN mechanism other than UNSOA; and
- establish a support package for the Somali National Police, which could potentially be implemented through UNSOA channels.

Council and Wider Dynamics

There is a broad consensus among Council members regarding naval counter-piracy measures for Somalia. Not only are Somalia counter-piracy reauthorisations routinely adopted by consensus, but two-thirds of current Council members are represented directly or indirectly through the EU Naval Forces Somalia (EUNAVFOR) Operation Atalanta, NATO Operation Ocean Shield, the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) Combined Task Force 151 and the national naval deployments of China and Russia.

Regarding the UNSOA strategic review and the Secretary-General's

recommendations to improve its support to AMISOM in particular, these followed an AU-UN joint review of UN peacekeeping benchmarks, the AMISOM troop surge and future military strategy. Considerable common policymaking ground regarding Somalia—both conceptually and politically—has developed between the AU and UN during the last couple of years. How AU-UN relations continue to evolve within this context will depend in part on the next steps taken by the Council to improve UN support for AU forces deployed in Somalia. Perhaps indicative of how the penholder may proceed on this issue in November, on 27 September UK Prime Minister David Cameron announced the UK would deploy 70 troops to assist AMISOM with logistics, engineering and medical aid.

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

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Expected Council Action

In November, the Council is expected to hold its semi-annual debate on Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and to renew the authorisation of the EU-led multinational stabilisation force (EUFOR ALTHEA) for a year. High Representative Valentin Inzko is expected to brief on recent developments and his office's latest report to the Council.

The current authorisation for EUFOR ALTHEA expires on 11 November.

Key Recent Developments

Tensions surfaced in BiH and the region ahead of the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, in which about 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were killed by Bosnian Serb forces after they captured Srebrenica in July 1995. Divisions were sparked, in particular, over a proposed Security Council resolution referring to the massacre as genocide. Leaders of Republika Srpska—the primarily Bosnian Serb entity of BiH—and Serbia appealed to

Russia to block its adoption, claiming events did not constitute genocide and that the proposed Council resolution would stigmatise Serbs and destabilise the region. (The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Court of Justice determined in 2004 and 2007 respectively that the mass murder at Srebrenica amounted to an act of genocide.) On 8 July, Russia vetoed the draft resolution. At the official commemoration three days later in Srebrenica, protesters attacked Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić, who had lobbied against the resolution, throwing stones and bottles at him and causing him to leave the ceremony early.

On 22 July, in a bid to contain the fallout from recent events, BiH's three-member presidency visited Serbia and met Vučić. After the meeting, both Bakir Izetbegovic, the Bosniak member of the BiH presidency, and Vučić made statements indicating that they would be able to maintain good relations. On 10 September, Serbia charged eight Bosnian

Serbs who had been arrested in March for their participation in the killing of 1,300 Bosniak men at a warehouse during the Srebrenica genocide. Serbian officials said the charges demonstrated their commitment to hold accountable those responsible for the crimes committed at Srebrenica.

BiH, though, has been gripped by another political crisis. On 15 July, the Republika Srpska National Assembly (RSNA) adopted a decision to hold a referendum on whether BiH's state-level judiciary could have jurisdiction over the entity. Members of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, the US, the EU, the European Commission and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference) said in a statement, issued a day before the RSNA decision, that such a referendum would violate and pose a direct challenge to the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP), which ended the 1992-1995 war. The statement stressed that matters of state judicial institutions fall

UN DOCUMENTS ON BIH Security Council Resolution S/RES/2183 (11 November 2014) renewed the authorisation for the EU-led multinational stabilisation force. **Reports of the High Representative S/2015/300** (29 April 2015) was on BiH. **Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7481** (8 July 2015) was a briefing and the vote on a draft resolution for the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide. **S/PV.7440** (12 May 2015) was a Council debate on BiH. **S/PV.7308** (11 November 2014) was a Council debate on BiH and vote to renew EUFOR ALTHEA's authorisation. **Other** Special Report from the High Representative to the Secretary-General, 4 September 2015, http://www.ohr.int/other-doc/hr-reports/default.asp?content_id=49202 **S/2015/508** (8 July 2015) was a draft resolution on the Srebrenica genocide.

Bosnia and Herzegovina (con't)

within the constitutional responsibilities of the state and not the entities. It also noted that the referendum sought to challenge the authority of the High Representative, which Republika Srpska could not do since this was established by the GFAP and international law. Notably, Russia, which is on the Steering Board, refrained from joining the statement.

As the issue remained unresolved, Inzko submitted a special report to the Security Council in September, informing it of his determination that Republika Srpska was in violation of the GFAP, in particular Annexes 4 and 10. According to Inzko, the planned referendum, in conjunction with a call in April by the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (Republika Srpska's ruling party) to hold a referendum on secession in 2018 if its demands on redistributing state and entity powers were not met, "represents one of the most serious violations of the GFAP... and puts under serious threat peace implementation since then".

The issue of EU integration continued to be important to political developments. On 27 July, BiH adopted a reform plan to address socio-economic issues. In a statement, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini and Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn said progress towards implementing the reforms is a precondition for BiH's membership application. On 12 October, the EU Foreign Affairs Council adopted conclusions deciding to maintain EUFOR ALTHEA under renewed UN authorisation. The conclusions reiterated the importance of BiH's achieving meaningful progress in implementing the July reform agenda for its membership application to be considered. It also highlighted that the planned referendum in Republika Srpska on the state-level judiciary risks undermining EU integration.

Key Issues

The key issue for members is renewing the authorisation of EUFOR ALTHEA. Agreeing how to address in the resolution issues such as Euro-Atlantic integration or the planned referendum are likely to be contentious issues.

November marks the 20th Anniversary of the GFAP, also known as the Dayton Agreement, and will provide an occasion to review the challenges to the full implementation of the agreement, including ethnic divisions among Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs and secessionist rhetoric by Republika Srpska officials, as well as more recently the planned referendum.

Options

The Council may re-authorise EUFOR ALTHEA under Chapter VII and update the resolution to reflect recent developments, including concern over Republika Srpska's intention to hold a referendum on the jurisdiction of BiH's state-level judiciary, while stressing the continued obligation of BiH parties to implement the GFAP.

Alternatively, it could renew EUFOR ALTHEA in a streamlined resolution that removes references to political and socio-economic issues, such as EURO-Atlantic integration, which has appeared in the past 10 resolutions renewing the authorisation.

The Council could additionally stress the importance of reconciliation in light of divisions demonstrated by the 20th anniversary of Srebrenica and welcome steps taken since then by BiH and Serbia in this regard.

Council Dynamics

Negotiations last year on the resolution to reauthorise EUFOR ALTHEA were more divisive than usual and introduced a new

Council dynamic. Russia abstained on the resolution—the first time since 2000 that a Council resolution on the international presence in BiH was not adopted by consensus.

In particular, Russia raised concerns over language referring to BiH's Euro-Atlantic integration, claiming that such references were imposing this decision externally on BiH, and that it was not the Council's place to weigh in on internal political choices. Western countries countered that this was one of the few issues that BiH's often divided political class agreed on. Russia also opposed EUFOR ALTHEA's authorisation under Chapter VII, which Ambassador Vitaly Churkin stated could be viewed as a tool to accelerate BiH's EU and NATO integration. Since it had accepted such references in prior resolutions on BiH, it seemed that Russia's position was fallout from the Ukraine conflict. Negotiations this summer on the Srebrenica draft resolution and Russia's subsequent veto showed deepened divisions among Council members when considering BiH.

For this year's authorisation renewal, Russia is the penholder. It is likely to seek a streamlined text reauthorising EUFOR that is similar to the counter-draft it proposed during negotiations last year, which excludes political issues. Western members are likely to want to maintain references to the broader political context. Despite these differences, both Russia and western countries agree on the need to reauthorise EUFOR.

The Contact and Drafting Group, which drafts decisions on BiH, consists of France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the UK and the US, together with elected Council members from the Western European and Other Group and the Eastern European Group. The penholder rotates monthly in English alphabetical order.

Iraq

Expected Council Action

In November, Special Representative Ján Kubiš will brief on the Secretary-General's report on the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) that will include recommendations from the strategic assessment mission

conducted by the Secretariat in April. Kubiš will also brief on Iraq's compliance with resolution 1284 regarding the repatriation or return of Kuwaiti missing persons or property.

UNAMI's mandate expires on 31 July 2016.

Key Recent Developments

The takeover of Mosul by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in June 2014 has left the Iraqi government without control of approximately one-third of its territory and has led to a widespread protection crisis. On

UN DOCUMENTS ON IRAQ Security Council Resolution S/RES/2233 (29 July 2015) renewed UNAMI for a year. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7489** (22 July 2015) was the regular quarterly briefing on Iraq. **Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/819** (26 October 2015) was the UNAMI report. **S/2015/518** (9 July 2015) was the Iraq/Kuwait missing persons and property report.

Iraq (con't)

21 October, OCHA reported that 3.2 million people have been internally displaced since January 2014 and 8.6 million people require assistance.

Meanwhile, Russia's increasing military involvement in Syria has also created a new dynamic around anti-ISIS strikes in Iraq. On 27 September, the creation of a "coordination cell" in Baghdad was announced for intelligence sharing between Iran, Iraq, Russia and Syria. The announcement came three days before Russia commenced its own airstrikes in Syria and at a time when Iranian militias, and possibly some Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'a militias, had been deployed in support of the Syrian regime's offensive in northwest Syria. Some elements of the Iraqi government have called on Russia to strike ISIS in Iraq, but the US has received assurances that Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has made no formal request for a Russian intervention. Some analysts believe that the public rhetoric about Russian airstrikes in Iraq is less about inviting a new military power into the mix and more about pressuring the US to ramp up its strikes against ISIS in Iraq. There is ongoing tension between Baghdad and Washington over anti-ISIS strategies. In particular, the US fears that Iraq's use of Shi'a militias in Sunni areas stokes sectarian tension, deepens the distrust of the Shi'a-led government among Sunni leaders in the western provinces and entrenches support for ISIS.

When Kubiš last briefed the Council on 22 July, he said that for military advances against ISIS to hold, the government would have to restore civilian authority in areas liberated from ISIS—a reference to the Sunni western provinces, which have a strained relationship with the Shi'a-led government in Baghdad. He added that the government's effort to stabilise and, in cooperation with the UN, restore services in these areas was commendable but that more needed to be done. At that time, the government offensive had liberated Tikrit. In the months since, the suburbs around Ramadi have also been cleared of ISIS elements and there have been gains around Baiji. However in July, the Iraqi government stopped all government wages and pensions in ISIS-controlled territory. The government argues this measure was taken to cut off ISIS funding since the group extorts money from state employees and pensioners. However, this decision has been criticised as

causing unnecessary hardship and leaving the civilian population ever more convinced that the government has abandoned them.

Also discussed at the 22 July briefing was Iraqi reconciliation, and the legislation related to de-Baathification and a proposed national guard. In February, the Iraqi parliament approved the draft national guard law—envisioned as a way for the government to arm Sunni fighters against ISIS—but the exclusion of former Baath party members from public service has stalled the legislation. In response to this deadlock, Qatar hosted the "Doha Congress" for Iraqi reconciliation in September. The Doha meeting stirred controversy in Baghdad, with assertions from Shi'a politicians that the conference was a vehicle for the still illegal Baath party to reassert itself in Iraqi politics. Others said it was a platform to seek unity among Iraqi Sunni leaders. Nonetheless, because of the backlash, Kubiš is likely to argue that it is not the time for Iraq to push this legislation forward.

On 11 August, the Iraqi parliament approved another set of reform packages aimed to address corruption and ease sectarian tension, including the gradual devolution of some powers from Baghdad to provincial governments. More controversially, this set of reforms also included the elimination of three vice-presidencies and deputy premierships and is widely understood to be an attempt to abate the influence of former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. The affected officials are challenging the constitutionality of these reforms and sixty parliamentarians aligned with Maliki threatened to withdraw their support for Abadi's reform packages.

Kubiš has also emphasised that an effective partnership between Baghdad and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) based in Erbil is critical to Iraq's stability and to the fight against ISIS. A December 2014 agreement between Baghdad and Erbil on oil exports and revenue sharing was perceived at the time as a major victory by Prime Minister Abadi that would set the stage for Iraqi cohesion in the face of ISIS. However, an impasse was reached in June 2015, with Baghdad claiming that the KRG did not export a sufficient amount of oil through the central government and the KRG claiming that they did not receive their expected share of the federal budget. At press time, the situation remained stalemated and the KRG had

resumed the autonomous exportation of oil via Turkey. Complicating the already fragile stability in Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region is the political uncertainty after President Massoud Barzani's presidential term ended on 20 August. He remains in office. Separately, there are reports that civilians have been killed in Turkish airstrikes against PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) bases in northern Iraq. Both Barzani and Abadi have condemned the Turkish strikes.

Iraq has suffered a fiscal setback due to plummeting global oil prices, the impasse over Kurdish oil exports and the cost of fighting ISIS. As a result, Iraq requested that its final reparation payment to Kuwait, due in 2015, be postponed. The UN Compensation Commission had already agreed previously to postpone the payment until 2016. On 27 October, Iraq announced that Kuwait had agreed to a further postponement until 2017.

On 29 October, 23 residents of Camp Hurriyah were reportedly killed in the first rocket attack to hit the camp since 2013. The camp houses members of the Iranian dissident group Mujahedin-e-Khalq. The attack was claimed by an Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'a militia, Jaysh al-Mukhtar, whose stated mission is to protect Iraq's Shi'a population and aid the government in fighting Sunni extremist groups. The US said it would work with the UN to relocate the remaining camp residents outside of Iraq.

Human Rights-Related Developments

During its 30th session, the Human Rights Council considered the report of the High Commissioner on technical assistance provided in the promotion and protection of human rights in Iraq (A/HRC/30/66). The report documents numerous reports of gross violations and abuses of human rights and serious violations of international humanitarian law perpetrated by ISIS and associated armed groups against civilians, which in some instances may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide. ISIS continues to target members of different ethnic and religious communities, intentionally subjecting them to a range of abuses and violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. The ability of women to enjoy the full range of human rights has deteriorated considerably and children suffer from violence and trauma, bearing the brunt of displacement, the report says. The report also covers the need to strengthen the administration of justice, including by improving respect for due process and fair trial standards through comprehensive legal and institutional reforms.

Iraq (con't)

Key Issues

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

Another issue is how to address the mutually destabilising impact of the war in Syria and the Iraq crisis.

Options

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

associated armed groups (an indirect reference to Shi'a militias).

Such a statement could also call on the government to cooperate with UNAMI in areas that may require enhanced mission activities such as human rights, rule of law, electoral assistance, security sector reform, stabilisation activities in areas liberated from ISIS and best practices for child protection and gender policies.

Council Dynamics

Council members uniformly support UNAMI. However, when UNAMI was last renewed in July, many Council members—such as France, New Zealand and the UK—thought it was time for the Council to have a more considered response to the situation in Iraq. (Despite ISIS's control over a third of Iraqi territory, the mandate had not changed since the adoption of resolution 1770 in 2007.) This is why resolution 2233 requested the Secretary-General to submit a set of recommendations emanating from the Secretariat's strategic assessment mission of UNAMI conducted in April. Many Council members expect these recommendations will reiterate the need for the Secretariat, in consultation with the Iraqi government, to periodically

review and determine the mission's priorities.

However, Council members now seem to feel that the UNAMI mandate is broad enough and flexible enough to allow Kubiš to fulfil the mission's good offices role and they no longer seem to contemplate the need for any significant changes in the mandate. Nor do they anticipate Kubiš will ask for any mandate changes.

Except through the lens of counter-terrorism, Council members have been unable to approach the connected crises in Iraq and Syria holistically. It is likely that they will continue to treat the two situations as discrete issues. Condemning the Tehran-backed regime in Damascus is difficult to reconcile with supporting the Tehran- and US-backed government in Baghdad.

Similarly, the Council has been largely disengaged from grappling with the underlying political divisions among Iraq's Shi'a, Sunni and Kurdish populations except for bland calls for an inclusive government. For example, Council members have yet to directly condemn violations by Iraqi security forces or militias.

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

Peaceful Societies and Conflict Prevention

Expected Council Action

In November, the UK is planning to hold an open debate on maintenance of international peace and security with a special focus on peaceful societies and conflict prevention. The debate is expected to be at the level of development ministers; Justine Greening, UK Secretary of State for International Development, will preside.

Background

The last time the UK held the Council presidency, in August 2014, the issue of conflict prevention also loomed large on its agenda.

The UK organised a debate on conflict prevention, after which the Council adopted resolution 2171. The resolution strove to reinforce the role of the Council in conflict prevention, stressing the importance of early warning systems, effective use of Chapter VI in peaceful settlement of disputes, accountability as a preventive measure and cooperation with other regional organisations in accordance with Chapter VIII. It requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on actions taken by him to strengthen conflict prevention tools within the UN system.

This month, the UK will revisit the issue

of prevention by organising a debate focusing on the relationship of development and peaceful societies to conflict prevention. The interlinkages between conflict prevention and development have been increasingly prominent in Council deliberations. In the last several years, the Council held two debates in which the interrelationships between specific aspects of development and conflict prevention were considered. During its presidency in February 2011, Brazil organised a debate addressing interdependence between security and development, and in January, Chile held a debate on inclusive development.

UN DOCUMENTS ON CONFLICT PREVENTION **Security Council Resolution S/RES/2171** (21 August 2014) requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Council on actions taken to "promote and strengthen conflict prevention tools within the United Nations system" by 31 August 2015. **Security Council Presidential Statements S/PRST/2015/3** (19 January 2015) underlined that "security and development are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing and key to attaining sustainable peace". **S/PRST/2011/18** (22 September 2011) was on preventive diplomacy, reaffirming, *inter alia*, the responsibility of states to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. **Secretary General's Reports S/2015/730** (25 September 2015) was on conflict prevention outlining the actions taken by the Secretary-General to promote and strengthen conflict prevention tools within the UN system. **S/2015/682** (2 September 2015) was on the future of peace operations. **S/2015/490** (29 June 2015) was the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Peacebuilding Architecture. **Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7361** (19 January 2015) was a ministerial-level open debate on inclusive development. **S/PV.7247** (21 August 2014) was an open debate on conflict prevention, during which the Council adopted resolution 2171. **Other S/2015/446** (17 June 2015) was the report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.

Peaceful Societies and Conflict Prevention (con't)

The UK's decision to consider the relationship of development and peaceful societies to conflict prevention during its presidency comes at a time when there seems to be a renewed interest in these issues within the Security Council and the wider UN architecture. In September, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, comprising 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as targets to be achieved by 2030. The development framework set by the SDG emphasised, among other things, the promotion of peaceful societies, justice and good governance, as outlined in goal 16. The previous development framework, operating from 2000 to 2015, the Millennium Development Goals, focused primarily on overall development and poverty reduction. By adopting the SDGs, an overwhelming majority of the UN membership has recognised the special role of promoting peaceful societies in enhancing development. This could create an opportunity for greater cooperation between the Security Council, as the body responsible for maintaining international peace and security, and other UN bodies responsible for the development agenda.

Also in September, the Secretary-General published a report on conflict prevention as requested by resolution 2171. Another three important documents published this year have devoted particular attention to conflict prevention: the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Peacebuilding Architecture; the report by the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO); and the Secretary-General's report responding to the HIPPO recommendations.

In his report on conflict prevention, the Secretary-General took note of the changing landscape and nature of conflicts due to the increasingly active role of non-state actors and their use of evolving tactics. The Secretary-General pointed to the increasing number of active conflicts throughout the world, with civilians bearing the heaviest burden in regard to the number of casualties and displaced persons. The report also provided an overview of the ongoing efforts by the UN to strengthen prevention tools and examined key challenges and opportunities in conflict

prevention. Relevant to the context of the debate, the Secretary-General recognised an important correlation between the SDGs, especially goal 16, and prevention, stating that "peaceful, inclusive and just societies are more likely to achieve their development goals, while development fosters peace and promotes inclusion".

In its emphasis on conflict prevention, HIPPO's report recommended early engagement by the Council in addressing emerging threats while encouraging the Secretary-General to bring to the Council's attention issues that could threaten international peace and security. In addition, the panel recommended bolstering the Secretariat's mediation and prevention capacity as well as establishment of a forum that would bring in a range of actors from outside the UN system for the purpose of sharing ideas and knowledge about conflict prevention.

In outlining his agenda for implementing HIPPO's recommendations, the Secretary-General reiterated the primary importance of strengthening the UN's capacities for conflict prevention, specifically through engagement via regional offices, reinforcing the capacities of UN country teams, the Human Rights up Front initiative and early deployment of flexible teams that can enhance the effectiveness of an already existing UN presence.

The relevance of promotion of peaceful societies and correlation between conflict prevention and development was also emphasised in the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Peacebuilding Architecture. The report highlighted the relevance of goal 16 of the SDGs, by recommending that the UN ensures that goal 16 "forms a basis against which to access global and country progress towards sustaining peace".

Key Issues

The main issue for the debate is the interconnectedness between the maintenance of peace and security and development through promotion of peaceful societies.

A related issue is how the Council can improve its conflict-prevention capacities and make more effective use of the Chapter VI tools at its disposal.

Options

An option for the Council would be to adopt a presidential statement reaffirming its commitment to conflict prevention while recognising the role development plays in prevention.

The Council could also consider enhancing its cooperation with other UN Charter bodies such as the Peacebuilding Commission and the Economic and Social Council, which could contribute to better understanding of development issues and their interlinkages with conflict prevention.

Council Dynamics

Conflict prevention is an issue for which all Council members have expressed their support. However, the Council's recent track record on prevention, evident from recent failures in the cases of Syria, Mali, South Sudan, Yemen and the Central African Republic, among others, does not seem to match the thematic support. The indecisiveness of the Council in prevention stems from the resistance of member states to early international engagement and to political divisions, in particular among the P5, which tend to block action by the Council in cases where national interests could be at stake.

There have also been differences among members on what situations belong on the Council's agenda and what measures might be appropriate. Some members, notably Russia, seem to be wary of the Council's taking on issues that they perceive as beyond the Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security. During the working methods debate on 20 October, the Russian ambassador said that any discussion of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and specifically goal 16 is not a matter for the Council. Furthermore, he said that Russia "cannot support such initiatives in the Security Council, as they gravely undermine the Charter prerogatives of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council". This signals clear opposition from Russia even to holding this debate, which would also imply its opposition to any form of outcome.

Lebanon

Expected Council Action

In November, Special Coordinator for Lebanon Sigrid Kaag and Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet will brief Council members in consultations on the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of resolution 1701, which called for a cessation of hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel in 2006.

The mandate of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) expires on 31 August 2016.

Key Recent Developments

Lebanon continues to face vast challenges in its domestic political situation as well as external threats. For 16 months now, Lebanon's parliament has not been able to elect a new head of state. A power vacuum and increasing sectarian divisions have impaired Lebanon's capacity to deal with the political and social challenges it is facing. Furthermore, fighting along the border with Syria and an inflow of more than 1.2 million registered refugees place additional burdens on the country's stability.

A ministerial-level meeting of the International Support Group for Lebanon (ISG) chaired by the Secretary-General was held on the margins of the General Assembly debate on 30 September. In addition to Lebanese Prime Minister Tammam Salam, the representatives of China, France, Russia, the UK, the US, Germany, Italy, the EU and the League of Arab States participated in the meeting. In the summary issued following the meeting, the ISG reiterated the importance of Lebanon's stability and security. At the same time, the group expressed concern over the prolonged vacancy in the presidency, which has affected the government's ability to deal with mounting security, economic and humanitarian challenges. Another aspect of the situation in Lebanon addressed by the group was the impact of the Syrian crisis on the security situation, including the threat of extremist groups and other non-state actors. In that regard, the group highlighted the important role of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and the need for it to establish full control over the territory

of Lebanon. In conclusion, the ISG restated that the effectiveness of international support for Lebanon depends on determined action by Lebanese leaders to resolve the current political stalemate.

Since June, when the last report on the implementation of resolution 1701 was published, the security situation in UNIFIL's area of operations has remained relatively calm with only minor violations. This could be attributed to Hezbollah's increased involvement in and focus on fighting alongside government forces in Syria. Aside from its involvement in Syria, Hezbollah launched a rocket attack within Lebanese territory on 16 October. The attack occurred in the Bekaa Valley in northern Lebanon, and killed five militants of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS). The Bekaa Valley has often been penetrated by various Sunni Islamic groups from Syria that have clashed with the LAF as well as with Hezbollah.

On 18 October, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said that the group's presence in Syria "is larger than ever before—qualitatively, quantitatively and in equipment, because we are in a critical and definitive battle". Earlier in October, senior Hezbollah commander Hassan al-Haj was killed in Idlib province in northwest Syria while fighting alongside government forces.

UNIFIL Force Commander Major General Luciano Portolano held a regular tripartite meeting with representatives of the LAF and Israel Defense Forces on 8 October. Following the meeting, Portolano commended both sides on their positive engagement, noting that the situation in UNIFIL's area of operation has remained calm, which is in sharp contrast with the increasingly precarious security situation in the region.

On 14 October, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) announced that the trial of the Lebanese newspaper al-Akhbar and its chief editor, Ibrahim al-Amin, will commence on 16 January 2016. Both al-Akhbar and al-Amin are charged with contempt of court after revealing confidential information about STL witnesses. In September, the Tribunal convicted and fined Karma Khayat, deputy director of the Al-Jadeed television

network, for the same actions. 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.

During the meeting of the ISG held on the margins of the General Assembly, the US announced that it would double its military assistance to the LAF, to approximately \$150 million. In addition, the US provided the LAF with another \$59 million for border-security assistance. On 9 October, the US delivered 50 Hellfire missiles and 560 artillery rounds worth about \$8.6 million. This materiel provides the LAF with precision long-range attack capabilities.

The political crisis in Lebanon caused by the inability of the parliament to elect a president was further heightened by ongoing anti-government demonstrations. The so-called "You Stink" campaign, aimed at highlighting the government's inability to resolve a garbage-disposal crisis, has taken a violent turn on several occasions in recent months. On 8 October, demonstrators clashed with security forces, resulting in injuries to dozens of protesters and several policemen.

Key Issues

The main issue for the Council remains the impact of the Syrian conflict on the situation in Lebanon, especially in the context of Russian military involvement in Syria, which could have further destabilising effects on Lebanon.

An increasingly worrying issue is the paralysis of the Lebanese parliament and its inability to elect a president, which in turn further threatens Lebanon's stability and could aggravate sectarian tensions within the country.

An ongoing issue for the Council is the increasing involvement of Hezbollah and other non-state actors in the Syrian conflict, as well as Lebanon's burden in hosting more than 1.2 million registered refugees from Syria.

Options

Considering the deterioration of the political situation in Lebanon due to anti-government protests and the paralysis of the parliament on the issue of electing a president, the

UN DOCUMENTS ON LEBANON [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2172](#) (26 August 2014) extended the mandate of UNIFIL for one year. [S/RES/1559](#) (2 September 2004) urged withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and extension of the Lebanese government's control over all Lebanese territory. [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2015/7](#) (19 March 2015) addressed the vacancy in the presidential office and the effects of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon, including the challenges posed by hosting nearly 1.2 million refugees, and expressed support for the LAF, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and the International Support Group for Lebanon. [Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/764](#) (7 October 2015) was the most recent 1559 report. [S/2015/475](#) (25 June 2015) was the most recent 1701 report. [Security Council Press Statement SC/11766](#) (4 February 2015) condemned the killing of a UNIFIL peacekeeper.

Lebanon (con't)

Council could consider issuing a statement encouraging the political actors in Lebanon to elect a president and address the concerns of its citizens.

Receiving the briefing and taking no action is another option.

Council Dynamics

The Council has been united in its position

that UNIFIL contributes to stability between Israel and Lebanon, especially considering the current Syrian crisis. A comprehensive presidential statement of 19 March outlined the main issues on which the Council stands united in support of Lebanon. Though the statement was issued more than eight months ago, the range of concerns remains the same, with some becoming more pronounced, such

as the ongoing vacancy in the presidency. Other issues on which the Council remains united are its support for Lebanon's territorial integrity and security, its condemnation of acts of terrorism on Lebanese territory and its recognition of the crucial role of the LAF in responding to security challenges.

France is the penholder on Lebanon.

Kosovo

Expected Council Action

In November, the Council is expected to hold a briefing on Kosovo. Zahir Tanin, the newly appointed Special Representative and head of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), will brief on recent developments and the latest Secretary-General's report. Both Serbia and Kosovo are likely to participate at high-level.

Key Recent Developments

Farid Zarif briefed the Council for the last time in his role as Special Representative during the debate on 21 August. Zarif emphasised the considerable progress since he assumed the position in 2011, most notably regarding normalisation of relations between Belgrade and Pristina and the integration of the Serb minority in local and central institutions. On 19 August, the Secretary-General announced the appointment of Zahir Tanin, former permanent representative of Afghanistan to the UN, as Special Representative.

The EU-facilitated high-level dialogue on normalisation of relations between Belgrade and Pristina resumed in Brussels on 25 August. After lengthy negotiations, prime ministers Aleksandar Vučić of Serbia and Isa Mustafa of Kosovo finalised the agreements on four key issues: energy, telecommunications, establishment of the Association/Community of Serb Municipalities (ASM/CSM) in northern Kosovo and freedom of movement on a bridge dividing the town of Mitrovica.

Of the four, the agreement on the ASM/CSM remains the most contentious, and both sides seem to provide differing interpretations of the agreement itself. Following

the high-level meeting, Vučić told the media that the ASM/CSM will have wide-ranging powers and will be able to make decisions on issues such as health care, education, urban/rural planning and economic development. On the other hand, Mustafa said that the ASM/CSM will not have executive powers and that it will not contradict Kosovo laws by creating another tier of government. The opposition in Kosovo has been vocal in its disapproval of the agreement, fearing that the ASM/CSM would eventually challenge the sovereignty of Kosovo and pose risk of secession. The agreements have to be approved by the parliaments in both Serbia and Kosovo.

Amid mounting pressure from the international community, the Kosovo Assembly adopted on 3 August a constitutional amendment necessary for the establishment of a special court for war crimes committed during the Kosovo war. Facing substantial opposition in the legislature, the government managed to establish the court, despite several delays of the vote and one failed attempt to obtain the two-thirds majority necessary to amend the constitution. An already significant rift between the government and the opposition widened further after the 25 August agreement on the establishment of the ASM/CSM.

On several occasions in September and October, opposition parties—the Self-Determination party, the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo and the Initiative for Kosovo—were persistent in obstructing the functioning of the Kosovo Assembly. On 1 October, the opposition parties blocked the work of the Assembly by physically preventing its speaker, Kadri Veseli, from beginning the session. The

opposition, led by the Self-Determination party, demanded that Prime Minister Mustafa annul the agreement on the ASM/CSM. On 8 October, the formal session had to be suspended again after some members of the opposition set off two smoke bombs in the Assembly chamber.

On 13 October, the unrest spilled over onto the streets around the police station in Pristina after Kosovo police arrested Albin Kurti, the leader of the Self-Determination party. Kurti was questioned by the police because of his alleged involvement in the Assembly smoke-bomb incident. Following the arrest, Kurti's supporters clashed with the police, who used tear gas to disperse them. According to media reports, 15 policemen were injured. After Kurti was released from police custody later that day, he joined the remaining demonstrators. The opposition has since called for more anti-government protests and further resistance to the agreement on the ASM/CSM.

Despite mandatory security checks imposed on all members of the Assembly after the first incident, opposition representatives set off three smoke bombs on 15 October, preventing another session of the Assembly. The Assembly session scheduled for 23 October was postponed again after opposition representatives set off smoke bombs in the chamber on two occasions the same day. Following the incident, Kosovo police clashed with several hundred protesters gathered outside the Assembly building after some of them started throwing Molotov cocktails at the police and the Assembly.

On 13 October, EU High Representative Federica Mogherini hosted in Brussels

Kosovo (con't)

an informal meeting with Vučić and Mustafa. Both sides reviewed progress and restated their commitment to implementing agreements within the framework of the EU-facilitated dialogue. Though not yet confirmed, the next round of high-level dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina is expected to take place in November.

Kosovo submitted its application for membership in the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in August. On 21 October, the UNESCO executive board voted in favour of recommending admission of Kosovo to the organisation. The final vote on Kosovo membership will be in November when a general conference of UNESCO's 195 members is scheduled to vote on the issue. Membership approval requires a two-thirds majority vote of the general conference.

Key Issues

Maintaining stability in Kosovo remains the main issue for the Council, especially amid the recent renewed political turmoil.

Implementing the existing agreements between Belgrade and Pristina and what role UNMIK could play to that end is a related issue.

Exacerbated by the recent political crisis in Kosovo, an increasingly important issue for the Council will be the uninterrupted functioning of the special court for war crimes and the cooperation of Kosovo authorities with the court.

Options

Should the current political crisis in Kosovo continue or escalate, the Council could consider issuing a statement urging political actors in Kosovo to engage in constructive dialogue to resolve the issues.

The Council could explore what role UNMIK could play in facilitating the implementation of the latest agreements reached on 25 August.

Looking ahead, if the current political turmoil subsides and the accords between Pristina and Belgrade hold, the Council could consider modifying UNMIK's mandate, possibly with an eye to reducing its presence.

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

Council Dynamics

Kosovo has been an issue of relatively low intensity for the Council during the past

several years. This is in part due to the fact that other regional organisations, primarily the EU, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, play more active roles in Kosovo.

The Council's dynamics on Kosovo remain unchanged. Permanent members France, the UK and the US recognise Kosovo, while China and Russia do not and remain supportive of Serbia's position. The split between Russia and the P3 has become more evident in the context of Russia's recent vetoes on other Europe-related issues, namely the resolutions on the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide and the tribunal for the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight 17.

Several Council members, most notably the P3 and Lithuania, have previously suggested lengthening the reporting cycle for the Secretary-General's reports on Kosovo due to the relatively stable situation on the ground. Russia is still strongly opposed to any alteration of the reporting cycle or of UNMIK's mandate. In reinforcing this view, Russia is likely to cite the most recent political crisis to highlight the volatility and instability of Kosovo.

Sudan/South Sudan

Expected Council Action

In November, Council members will hold consultations on Sudan/South Sudan and the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan Haile Menkerios is expected to brief on Sudan/South Sudan issues via video teleconference, while it remained unclear at press time who would brief on UNISFA.

UNISFA's mandate expires on 15 December.

Key Recent Developments

In recent weeks, there appears to have been some progress with respect to border security arrangements outlined in the 27 September 2012 cooperation agreements between Sudan and South Sudan. On 6 October, the

AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smail Chergui, convened the fourth meeting of the AU Joint Boundary Commission, which is intended to focus on demarcating the Sudan/South Sudan border. Sudan and South Sudan were represented by State Minister of the Presidency El-Rashid Haroun and by Minister of Information and Broadcasting Michael Makuei, respectively. According to an AU press release issued on the day of the meeting, Chergui was "encouraged by the positive atmosphere of the meeting and the genuine cooperation the two parties are extending to the AU Commission, including the determination of their respective governments to demarcate the common boundary" between them. The parties agreed to develop a plan for the

demarcation, produce a budget for the process and expedite the creation of an account to fund it.

The Joint Political and Security Mechanism (JPSM), the instrument employed by Sudan and South Sudan to discuss security matters of mutual concern, convened on 13-14 October in Addis Ababa. At the conclusion of the meeting, Sudan and South Sudan agreed to accept the centre line proposed by the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) for the Safe Demilitarised Border Zone (SDBZ), a buffer zone along the Sudan-South Sudan border. With an agreed centre line, the boundaries of the buffer zone are established, which should facilitate the work of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism

UN DOCUMENTS ON SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2230 (14 July 2015) renewed the mandate of UNISFA for five months until 15 December. S/RES/2046 (2 May 2012) was on Sudan/South Sudan relations.

Sudan/South Sudan (con't)

(JBVMM) agreed to by the parties in the September 2012 accords. In the past, South Sudan had been reluctant to accept the centre line, which is straddled by disputed territory, because of its concern that the line could become the de facto boundary between Sudan and South Sudan.

On 14 September, the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), an umbrella group consisting of several major rebel movements in Sudan released its “road map on the way forward”, in which it called for “an inclusive National Constitutional Dialogue process” to be initiated with a pre-dialogue meeting in Addis Ababa. The meeting would include 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 (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 of Sudan rejected the convening of a pre-dialogue meeting outside Sudan, apparently because of concerns about external interference in the process.

On 10 October, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir held a “national dialogue” conference in Khartoum. The Popular Congress Party was the only notable opposition party to attend. The other major opposition parties boycotted the meeting because of their longstanding questions about the government’s commitment to genuine reform. They have also expressed concerns about ongoing repression in spite of government promises to create an enabling environment for the dialogue.

While briefing the Council on Darfur on 28 October, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet announced that the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) was convening a meeting on the national dialogue in Addis Ababa, planned for 16-17 November. Bashir has reportedly expressed support for the national dialogue committee to meet with rebel groups and the National Umma Party, an influential opposition party.

At the 10 October meeting, Bashir promised to allow freedom of the press and to permit political parties to operate freely in Sudan, commitments previously made in the context

of the national dialogue and, in the view of many observers, broken by the government. Bashir said that the government would consider expanding the cessation of hostilities that he announced in August into a comprehensive ceasefire if the rebel groups “choose peace over war and...join the dialogue”. On 18 October, the SRF announced a unilateral cessation of hostilities for six months, beginning on 19 October. At press time, the level of commitment of both sides to stop hostilities remained unclear, although a meeting between the government and the rebel groups on the cessation of hostilities is scheduled for 18-19 November in Addis Ababa under the auspices of the AUHIP.

Council members last met to discuss Sudan/South Sudan and UNISFA during consultations on 17 September. Menkerios briefed on Sudan/South Sudan, and Ladsous briefed on UNISFA. Menkerios emphasised that the signing of a cessation of hostilities between Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) would facilitate humanitarian access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, noting that access was being blocked by both government and rebel forces. In keeping with the Secretary-General’s 11 September 2015 UNISFA report, Ladsous noted that the mission could benefit from acquiring aircraft with digital cameras, which could improve the effectiveness of the JBVMM by taking images for later analysis. As the Secretary General noted in his recent report on UNISFA, “Improved imagery would assist in determining the need for follow-up verification and investigation patrols, and would help to avoid disagreements between the parties resulting from unclear imagery of personnel and hardware on the ground.”

Key Issues

One key issue is whether the Council can be effective in supporting the small signs of progress in Sudan/South Sudan relations. A significant test for Sudan and South Sudan is whether they follow through on their commitments to accept the centre line of the buffer zone and begin planning to demarcate undisputed areas of the border.

Whether and how Sudan and the SRF translate pledges for a cessation of hostilities into reality is another important matter for the Council.

An ongoing issue is the need to promote constructive dialogue between the Ngok-Dinka and the Misseriya communities in Abyei. Relations between the two groups have been particularly strained since the killing of the Ngok-Dinka paramount chief, Kuol Deng Kuol, by a Misseriya gunman in May 2013.

Options

The Council could consider adopting a resolution that:

- commends the recent agreement on the centre line of the buffer zone and the decision to begin planning to demarcate parts of the Sudan/South Sudan border;
- requests regular meetings of JPSM and the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, which provides administrative oversight of Abyei in the absence of temporary administrative units;
- urges Sudan and the SRF to follow through on their pledges of a cessation of hostilities; and
- urges the government to create an enabling environment, free of repression and intimidation, for national dialogue.

Another option could be holding an open debate in near future on the humanitarian situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile to ensure that attention to this issue does not wane.

Council Dynamics

Council members have long been frustrated by the lack of progress in bilateral relations between Sudan and South Sudan. Given this, members will most likely be encouraged by the recent developments with regard to border security, including the decisions taken at the recent meetings of the AU Joint Boundary Commission and the JPSM.

The lack of humanitarian access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile has been a significant concern of the Council since 2011, although divisions among the permanent members have rendered the Council incapable of playing an effective role in addressing this challenge. Traditionally, the US and a number of others have been critical of Sudan for preventing access to SPLM-N-controlled areas, while Russia has not been inclined to pressure the government to remove barriers to access and has emphasised that Sudan has a right to protect itself against rebels.

A number of Council members view the

Sudan/South Sudan (con't)

relaunching of the national dialogue process as a step in the right direction, although some emphasise that the process must be inclusive and free of repression. Russia has

stated that the national dialogue is not a matter addressed in resolution 2046, which is the basis for the Secretariat's reporting to the Council on Sudan/South Sudan, and has

therefore argued that this issue should not be a part of the briefings.

The US is the penholder on Sudan/South Sudan and UNISFA.

Sahel

Expected Council Action

In November, the Special Envoy for the Sahel, Hiroute Guebre Sellassie, is expected to brief the Council on the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the UN's integrated Sahel strategy. The Council may adopt a presidential statement.

Key Recent Developments

The Sahel region, including the core countries identified in the UN's Sahel Strategy (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger), continues to be beset by challenges posed by terrorist groups and other non-state actors, as well as political instability.

Following successes by Nigeria and its neighbours in regaining territory seized by Boko Haram in Nigeria's north-east, the terrorist group has increased the use of asymmetrical attacks. This includes expanding attacks in Chad and Niger, both of which sent forces to Nigeria earlier in the year to fight Boko Haram and have committed forces to the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) being formed by Lake Chad Basin Commission countries (LCBC) and Benin. On 15 June, Boko Haram conducted its first attack on Chad's capital N'djamena, when suicide bombers attacked two police facilities, killing at least 25 people. Boko Haram also continues to raid communities around Lake Chad. Attacks on 10 October by five suicide bombers in the Chadian village of Baga Sola and a nearby camp hosting Nigerian refugees killed at least 37 people.

Niger placed its south-eastern state of Diffa under a 15-day state of emergency on 14 October, following Boko Haram-related violence that killed more than 40 people in preceding weeks. (Diffa was placed under a similar state of emergency in February.) OCHA reported that as of 4 October, there have been at least 57 attacks by or clashes with

Boko Haram in Diffa this year. The MNJTF's headquarters opened in N'djamena in May, and on 20 October, the force commander, Nigerian General Tukar Buratai, said the force had commenced operations.

In Burkina Faso, a coup was carried out on 16 September by the Republican Security Regiment (RSP), an elite military unit created under former President Blaise Compaoré. The coup occurred less than a month before scheduled presidential and legislative elections meant to conclude Burkina Faso's political transition, which the AU, Economic Community of West African States and UN helped broker in November 2014 after Compaoré's resignation. On 23 September, the coup was reversed when the transitional government was reinstated. The RSP was subsequently disbanded by a government decree. Members of the regiment who refused to disarm were captured in a raid on their main base on 30 September by the Burkina Faso army, which apart from the RSP remained loyal to the transitional government. On 14 October, the transitional authorities agreed to reschedule the elections for 29 November.

Mali and Libya continued to be plagued by violence and political instability negatively impacting the region. Worrying trends have been the expansion of attacks by extremist groups into central and southern Mali, such as a 7 March terrorist attack in Bamako, which killed five people, and a 7 August attack at a hotel in Sèvre, killing 13 (including four UN contractors). Trafficking networks of migrants through the Sahel to Libya have generated increased attention, amidst the influx of migrants and refugees to Europe and the dangers and exploitation they face. According to the International Organization for Migration, migrants arriving in Europe by sea from Libya in 2015 numbered almost

140,000 as of 23 October, with more than 2,800 deaths.

Meanwhile, the Group of Five Sahel (G5)—the regional organisation established last year by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger—has made progress in implementing initiatives for improved security cooperation and regional development, which the Special Envoy has sought to support. On 27 September, a meeting was held during the UN's high-level week in New York involving G5 foreign ministers, G5 Sahel Permanent Secretary Najim Elhadj Mohamed, the Special Envoy, Political Affairs Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman and the heads of the UN Office for West Africa and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. Participants took stock of developments and welcomed cooperation under the coordination of Sellassie, according to the joint communique.

Key Issues

The presence of terrorist groups and regional and bilateral efforts to combat them remains a key issue. Related to this is the destabilising impact on the region of violence in Mali, north-eastern Nigeria and Libya.

The impact and results of projects of UN agencies in the Sahel to address root causes of instability, such as poor governance and under-development, is a key issue, together with the coordination of these efforts under the umbrella of the UN Sahel strategy with other regional and multilateral initiatives.

The role of organised crime networks in drug, arms and human trafficking, which undermines reforms and is a potential funding source for terrorist and armed groups, is a related issue.

Upcoming elections in Burkina Faso, amidst its political tensions, is an ongoing issue.

UN DOCUMENTS ON THE SAHEL [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2014/17](#) (27 August 2014) encouraged greater cooperation among stakeholders to implement the UN's Sahel strategy. [Security Council Press Statements SC/12075](#) (12 October 2015) condemned the 10 and 11 October terrorist attacks by Boko Haram in Baga Sola, Chad, and Kängaleri, Cameroon. [SC/12057](#) (24 September 2015) welcomed the reinstatement of Burkina Faso's transitional authorities and called for resuming the transition process without delay. [SC/11927](#) (15 June 2015) condemned the 15 June terrorist attack by Boko Haram in N'djamena, Chad, which killed at least 25 people. [Secretary-General's Report S/2014/397](#) (6 June 2014) was on the implementation of the UN's Sahel strategy. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7335](#) (11 December 2014) was a briefing by Special Envoy Hiroute Guebre Sellassie.

Sudan/South Sudan (con't)

Options

The Council may adopt a presidential statement that:

- welcomes the cooperation between the Special Envoy and the G5 Sahel;
- expresses continued concern over the activities of extremist and armed groups, organised crime, and youth radicalisation in the region;
- reaffirms the importance of the international community remaining committed to a regional approach to address the root causes of instability in Sahel countries, such as the need for governance reforms and enhanced economic development;
- looks forward to the recommendations of the UN strategic review of the Special Envoy's office to be conducted in December; and
- establishes a new reporting cycle for the Secretary-General.

The statement could additionally address regional initiatives, such as by commending

efforts to fully operationalise the MNJTF with assistance from the international community, or highlighting initiatives of the AU's Nouakchott process to enhance security cooperation among Sahelo-Saharan states.

Council Dynamics

This will be the Council's first meeting to consider the Sahel as a region since last December. Overall, members seem to recognise that addressing the region's security challenges requires a holistic approach that entails improving governance and promoting development, the lack of which produces discontent, distrust of authorities or radicalisation that attracts populations to extremist groups or organised crime. Members, though, have previously expressed concern that the strategy's implementation has been slow and in this upcoming meeting are keen to see concrete results. Some members also had concern last year about a lack of cooperation between the G5 Sahel and the Special Envoy's Office, which was expressed in their

27 August 2014 presidential statement by encouraging the UN office and G5 countries to work more closely. This relationship seems to have since improved.

Chad, as a core Sahel State and part of the G5 Sahel, is the penholder. It has been active in contributing its military to efforts in Mali and in combatting Boko Haram. Nigeria's north is also part of the Sahel region, but Nigeria has often been sensitive to the Council addressing the Boko Haram threat. Among other members, France, which has longstanding relations with Sahel states, maintains forces in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Chad as part of its counter-terrorism Operation Barkhane.

The region's problems may have added new significance for European members in light of the attention to its migrant crisis, since the Sahel is a source and transit point for many migrants making their way to Europe.

Notable Dates for November

REPORT DUE	REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION IN NOVEMBER	REQUESTING DOCUMENT
16 June	Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (S/2015/446)	N/A
2 September	SG report on the implementation of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations' recommendations (S/2015/682)	N/A
25 September	SG report on conflict prevention (S/2015/730)	S/RES/2171
11 September	SG report on UNSOM (Somalia) (S/2015/702)	S/RES/2232
12 October	SG report on piracy off the coast of Somalia (S/2015/776)	S/RES/2184
26 October	OPCW report on the implementation of resolution 2118 (Syrian chemical weapons)	S/RES/2118
28 October	SG report on Iraq/Kuwait missing persons and property	S/RES/1284
29 October	SG report on UNAMI (Iraq) (S/2015/819)	S/RES/2233
30 October	SG report on UNMIK (Kosovo)	S/RES/1244
3 November	High Representative's Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina	S/RES/2183
9 November	SG report on UNIFIL & implementation of resolution 1701 (Lebanon)	S/RES/2236
12 November	SG report on the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel	S/PRST/2014/17
13 November	SG report on UNISFA (Abyei)	S/RES/2230
18 November	SG report on the humanitarian situation in Syria	S/RES/2139

MANDATES EXPIRE		RELEVANT DOCUMENT
11 November	Authorisation of EUFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina	S/RES/2183
11 November	Authorisation of anti-piracy measures in Somalia	S/RES/2184

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