

Monthly Forecast

- 2 In Hindsight: The Security Council in 2015: High Activity, Less Consensus
- 3 Status Update since our January Forecast
- 4 Yemen
- 6 UNRCCA (Central Asia)
- 7 South Sudan
- 9 Sudan (Darfur)
- 10 DPRK (North Korea)
- 12 Syria
- 13 Iraq
- 15 Sudan/South Sudan
- 16 Guinea-Bissau
- 18 Kosovo
- 19 Lead Roles within the Council in 2016: Penholders and Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies

Insert

Security Council Statistics in 2015 and Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies and Penholders for 2016

Overview

Venezuela has planned two open debates during its presidency of the Security Council in February. One will be at ministerial-level and will focus on the [UN Charter](#), with the Secretary-General among the briefers and Venezuela's Foreign Minister presiding. The second will be on post-conflict [peacebuilding](#) and the review of the peacebuilding architecture.

Venezuela has also organised a debate on [Security Council working methods](#) with an emphasis on sanctions committees. Other sanctions-related activities this month are briefings by:

- Senegal as the chair of the 2206 [South Sudan](#) Sanctions Committee ahead of the renewal of the sanctions regime and the Panel of Experts;
- Venezuela as the chair of the 1591 [Sudan](#) Sanctions Committee ahead of the renewal of the Panel of Experts;
- Venezuela as the chair of the 751/1907 [Somalia-Eritrea](#) Sanctions Committee;
- Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman on the Secretary-General's strategic report on UN efforts in support of member states in [countering ISIS](#), as requested by resolution 2253 that created the 1267/1989/2253 ISIL and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee;
- Spain as the chair of the 1718 [DPRK](#) Sanctions Committee—separately, the Council may adopt a resolution in response to the DPRK's 6 January nuclear test; and
- Japan as the chair of the 2140 [Yemen](#) Sanctions Committee ahead of the renewal of the sanctions regime and the Panel of Experts.

African issues on the Council's programme of work include briefings by:

- Special Representative Miguel Trovoada on [Guinea-Bissau](#) ahead of the renewal of UNIOGBIS;

- Special Representative Margrethe Løj on UNMISS in [South Sudan](#); and
- Special Envoy Haile Menkerios on [Sudan/South Sudan](#) issues.

On the Middle East, the Council is expected to consider:

- [Iraq](#), with a briefing by Special Representative Ján Kubiš on UNAMI;
- [Israel/Palestine](#), with the regular briefing by Feltman;
- [Syria](#), with a briefing by Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura on the political process, as well as briefings later in the month on the humanitarian and chemical weapons tracks; and
- [Yemen](#), with a briefing by Special Envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed.

Regarding other regions:

- Special Representative Petko Draganov will brief on the activities of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia ([UNRCCA](#)).
- There will be a briefing by Special Representative Zahir Tanin on UNMIK in [Kosovo](#).
- Developments regarding the establishment of a new political mission in [Colombia](#) to monitor and verify the bilateral ceasefire between the government and FARC-EP will likely require attention.

While not confirmed at press time, a briefing by the Chairperson in Office of the [Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe](#) seemed likely.

Finally, a technical resolution extending the term of the prosecutor for the [International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals](#) is expected to be adopted in February.

29 January 2016

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In Hindsight: The Security Council in 2015: High Activity, Less Consensus

Deteriorating crises and a more wide-ranging focus on countering terrorism resulted in the Council maintaining the high activity levels of 2014. Although there were no new issues that received the Council's attention, situations already on the agenda, such as Burundi and Yemen, required greater attention. Terrorism was tackled from several angles, including the financing of terrorism and its impact on migration.

Overall, the number of Council decisions—resolutions and presidential statements—mirrored that of 2014, but there was a slight decrease in both public meetings and consultations. The Council adopted 90 decisions, sustaining the higher number of decisions in 2014 following several years of a downward trend. There was one more resolution (64) and two fewer presidential statements (26). In addition, 128 press statements were issued, ten fewer than in 2014, but still significantly higher than in previous years. The generally low numbers of presidential statements and the high number of press statements continues a practice of using press statements as the quickest response, especially for specific violent incidents, although they are not formal decisions of the Council.

There was a small drop in both formal and informal meetings, with 228 public and 17 private meetings, and 151 consultations. This can be partly attributed to a decrease in activity on Ukraine, which had 26 formal and informal meetings in 2014, but only nine last year, and Israel/Palestine, which returned to its regular monthly meetings, following an uptick during the Gaza Conflict in 2014. The decrease in private meetings was largely due to “wrap-up” meetings moving from private to public formats. All but one of the private meetings in 2015 were meetings with troop-contributing countries.

The deterioration in the peace and security environment in Burundi, Libya and Yemen contributed to an increased number of meetings and decisions. In contrast, the somewhat improved situation in relation to Ebola led to fewer meetings and decisions on this issue as well as on Liberia. Decreased activity was seen on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire. Activity on Sudan/South Sudan was similar to 2014,

with the addition of a sanctions committee on South Sudan.

Council activity on Syria was focused on the humanitarian and chemical weapons tracks with monthly briefings on both aspects. There were resolutions on the use of chlorine as a weapon, as well as one renewing the authorisation for cross-border aid delivery. Meetings on political developments were less common, with only two taking place. At the end of the year the Council adopted a resolution on the road map for a peace process which had been largely negotiated outside the Council.

Non-proliferation issues were routinely addressed in the DPRK and Iran sanctions committees. The most significant development in this area was the adoption of a resolution endorsing the agreement on Iran's nuclear programme and setting up the termination process of Council sanctions, which was negotiated in Geneva.

There was a marked increase in the use of “any other business” (AOB) during consultations to get updates on deteriorating situations or have issues of concern brought discreetly to the Council's attention. There were 56 substantive discussions under AOB covering a range of issues including Burkina Faso, Burundi, CAR, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Myanmar, Syria, Yemen and the Secretary-General appointment process. These country AOBs have involved substantive briefings from a range of UN officials and have occasionally led to a press statement. Arria-formula meetings saw a significant increase going from seven in 2014 to 17 in 2015, the highest number since 1996.

Regarding regional breakdown of the different meetings, Europe saw the largest change from 16.6 percent to 10.2 percent of meetings as a result of decreased activity on Ukraine. The Middle East registered the largest increase as a result of greater activity on Yemen, while Asia and Africa remained very much the same.

Countering terrorism was a key theme cutting across a number of agenda items as the Council followed up the strengthened counter-terrorism framework set in place in 2014, including by adding new reporting obligations on member states and emphasising

the importance of disrupting financial flows to terrorists. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) was determined to be an “unprecedented threat” to international peace and security and its name was added to the name of the Al Qaida Sanctions Committee, while the terrorist threat was a key focus in country-specific issues such as Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen. Open debates addressed countering terrorism including among youth, in the settlement of conflicts in the Middle East and in relation to human trafficking. While Council activity on countering terrorism tended to focus on ISIL, African members worked together to have Boko Haram discussed under the agenda item “threat to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts”, which resulted in two presidential statements and one briefing.

There were signs of greater willingness to accept non-consensual decisions, and to vote on divisive issues. Eight resolutions were adopted without a unanimous vote, the highest number since 2000. There were two vetoes, both by Russia, which also saw a number of members abstaining. The first was on a draft resolution commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica, and the second on setting up an international tribunal on the downing of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17. Venezuela abstained on six adopted resolutions as well as on the two vetoed resolutions. Russia abstained on five resolutions. China abstained on one adopted and one vetoed resolution. A rare procedural vote was taken over whether to discuss a situation already on the Council's agenda when China objected to a meeting on the human rights situation in the DPRK. There were nine in favour, four against (Angola, China, Russia and Venezuela) and two abstentions (Chad and Nigeria). This item had been added to the Council's agenda in 2014 through a procedural vote.

In 2015, the Council kept a close eye on deteriorating situations, using both formal and informal means to keep up-to-date. The high number of non-consensual decisions suggests that some members are putting a premium on stronger resolutions, while others are willing to express their views through abstention.

Status Update since our January Forecast

Central African Republic

On 5 January, Council members were briefed under “any other business” on the situation in the CAR by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous. On 27 January, the Council adopted resolution 2262 renewing the CAR sanctions regime until 31 January 2017. Ahead of the renewal, Council members considered the final report of the 2127 Sanctions Committee’s Panel of Experts (S/2015/936). At press time, it seemed likely that the Council would adopt another resolution to authorise an increase in the number of corrections officers in MINUSCA.

Libya

On 8 January, Council members issued a press statement condemning the terrorist attacks claimed by a group with an allegiance to ISIS. On 15 January, Special Representative and head of UNSMIL Martin Kobler, briefed Council members by video teleconference under “any other business” on challenges to the implementation of the peace agreement in Libya. On 20 January, Council members issued a press statement welcoming the announcement by the Presidency Council of the formation of the Government of National Accord and looking forward to the House of Representatives endorsing the Government of National Accord (SC/12214).

Mali

On 11 January, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefed the Council (S/PV.7600) on the latest MINUSMA report (S/2015/1030). On 12 January, Council members issued a press statement urging the government of Mali, the Platform and Coordination armed groups to prioritise the implementation of key provisions of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali in order to bring concrete peace dividends to the populations of Mali (SC/12198).

Côte d'Ivoire

On 13 January, the Council was briefed by Special Representative Aïchatou Mindaoudou Souleymane (S/PV.7601) on the latest UNOCI report (S/2015/940). In light of the successful October 2015 presidential election, the report recommended a drawdown of UNOCI’s military component from 5,437 to 4,000 troops. On 20 January, the Council

adopted resolution 2260 that approved the proposed troop reduction.

Cyprus

On 13 January, the Council held a meeting with the troop- and police-contributors to UNFICYP. On 15 January, Council members were briefed in consultations by Special Representative Lisa Buttenheim and Special Adviser Espen Barth Eide. Buttenheim briefed on the latest UNFICYP report (S/2016/11). Eide reported on the ongoing unification talks and presented the report of the Secretary-General’s good offices mission (S/2016/16). On 28 January, the Council adopted resolution 2263, extending UNFICYP’s mandate for six months.

Counter-Terrorism

On 14 January, Council members issued a press statement condemning the terrorist attacks claimed by ISIS in Jakarta (SC/12202).

UNOWA/Sahel

On 14 January, Special Representative Mohammed Ibn Chambas briefed the Council on the latest UNOWA report (S/2015/1012). Following the briefing and consultations, Council members issued a press statement that stressed the importance of the upcoming elections in Niger, Benin, Cabo Verde, Ghana and the Gambia to be free, fair and peaceful (SC/12207). The press statement also highlighted issues such as the political tensions in Guinea-Bissau and efforts to combat Boko Haram. On 25 January, Council members discussed under “any other business”, the Secretary-General’s 14 January letter proposing the merger of the Office of the Special Envoy of the Sahel with UNOWA, which would rename the two offices the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 14 January, the Council was briefed by Special Representative Sambo Sidikou (S/PV.7603) on the latest MONUSCO report (S/2015/1031). The meeting was followed by consultations.

Somalia

In a 15 January press statement, Council members condemned the attack by Al-Shaabab

against the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (SC/12205). In a 22 January press statement, they condemned another Al-Shabaab attack in Mogadishu in which at least 14 people were reported to have been killed (SC/12216). On 28 January the new head of UNSOM, Michael Keating, and the new head of AMISOM, Francisco Caetano José Madeira, briefed the Council via video teleconference (S/PV.7614). Keating presented the latest Secretary-General’s report on Somalia (S/2016/27). At time of writing, a press statement was expected. In addition, Somalia was briefly discussed at a meeting held in Addis Ababa with the AU on 23 January during the Council’s 21-23 January visiting mission to Africa.

Iran

On 16 January, the IAEA submitted a report to the Council confirming that Iran had taken the steps required under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action for nuclear related sanctions to be lifted, thus marking the arrival of the plan’s implementation day (S/2016/57). In accordance with resolution 2231, previous Council resolutions on Iran were automatically terminated and the 1737 Iran Sanctions Committee disbanded. A note by the president of the Council issued that same day outlined the practical arrangements and procedures for how the Council would carry out the tasks related to the implementation of the new provisions that came into effect on implementation day (S/2016/44). On 17 January, Council members issued a press statement announcing the removal of Bank Sepah and Bank Sepah International from the UN sanctions list related to Iran, now referred to as the 2231 List (SC/12209). On 26 January, the Council received a letter from Federica Mogherini, in her capacity as coordinator of the JCPOA’s joint commission, relating to the procurement channel established in accordance with the agreement.

Burkina Faso

On 16 January, Council members issued a press statement condemning the terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, during which at least 29 people were killed and many more injured, and for which Al-Mourabitoune, a terrorist group affiliated to Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, claimed responsibility (SC/12208).

Status Update since our January Forecast (con't)

Protection of Civilians

On 19 January, the Security Council held an open debate on the protection of civilians (S/PV.7606). Uruguay, which held the presidency for the month, prepared a concept paper in preparation for the debate (S/2016/22), highlighting themes underscored in the Secretary-General's most recent report on the protection of civilians (S/2015/453), as well as the report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (S/2015/446) and the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the High-Level Panel's recommendations (S/2015/682). Briefers included Deputy-Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, ICRC Vice-President Christine Beerli and Oxfam Senior Humanitarian Policy Advisor Eveline Rooijmans. Statements were made by 64 member states and two regional organisations.

Afghanistan

On 21 January, Council members issued a press statement in which they condemned a terrorist attack carried out by the Taliban on 20 January (SC/12215).

Security Council Visiting Mission

Council members went on a visiting mission to Burundi and the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia between 21 and 23 January. Angola, France and the US served as co-leads on the Burundi leg of the mission, the highlight of which was a meeting with Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza, and Egypt led the Addis Ababa portion of the trip, where Council members held an informal meeting with the AU Peace and Security Council. The Council was briefed on the visiting mission on 29 January (S/PV.7614).

Colombia

On 25 January, the Council adopted resolution 2261 establishing a political mission to monitor and verify the laying down of arms and the bilateral ceasefire and cessation of hostilities between the Government of Colombia and the FARC-EP (S/PV.7609). The adoption follows a 19 January letter to the Council from Colombia that included the Joint Communiqué issued by the government and FARC-EP in Havana on 19 January (S/2016/53).

Israel/Palestine

On 26 January, the Secretary-General briefed the Council at a ministerial-level open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine (S/PV.7610).

Arria-Formula on Missing Persons

On 27 January, the UK hosted an Arria-formula meeting open to UN member states, UN entities, civil society and the media on the "The Global Challenge of Accounting for Missing Persons from Conflict, Human Rights Abuses, Disasters, Organized Crime, Migration and other Involuntary Causes." Brief introductory remarks were made by Ambassador Matthew Rycroft (UK) and Ambassador Thomas Miller, the Chair of the Board of Commissioners of the International Commission on Missing Persons. Panelists included Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, the High Commissioner for Human Rights; Sister Consuelo Morales, the President of CADHAC, a Mexican human rights organisation; Giuseppina Maria Nicolini, the Mayor of Lampedusa, Italy; and David Tolbert, the President of the International Center for Transitional Justice.

Yemen

Expected Council Action

During February, the Council is expected to adopt a resolution renewing the 2140 Yemen sanctions regime and the mandate of the Panel of Experts. Special Envoy Ismael Ould Cheikh Ahmed is also expected to brief.

Current sanctions expire on 26 February, and the mandate of the Panel expires on 25 March.

Key Recent Developments

A new round of peace talks between the Yemen government and a joint delegation of the Houthis, a Zaydi Shi'a rebel group, and the General People's Congress, former President Ali Abdullah Saleh's party, was held from 15 to 20 December 2015 in Switzerland. To coincide with the talks, the parties, including the Saudi Arabia-led military

coalition supporting the Yemen government, agreed to a cessation of hostilities. From the start of the truce, each side accused the other of violations, with fighting that escalated on 17 December when a pro-government offensive was launched in the north.

On 20 December, the Special Envoy adjourned the talks, which he said had been hindered by the fighting. Still, according to a communiqué he issued, the sides agreed on confidence-building measures, including the release of prisoners upon a permanent ceasefire, creation of a "de-escalation committee" and facilitating humanitarian access. They also agreed on a negotiating framework based on resolution 2216. The Special Envoy said that he would return to the region to secure a ceasefire before the next round of talks, which the sides agreed would start on 14 January.

Plans to resume peace talks were soon set back after the Saudi-led coalition announced that it was ending the ceasefire on 2 January, blaming the Houthis for repeated violations. The announcement came amidst a developing diplomatic crisis between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which Saudi Arabia alleges supports the Houthis. After Saudi Arabia executed prominent Shi'a cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr on 2 January, Iranian protesters stormed Saudi Arabia's embassy in Tehran and consulate in Mashhad. The next day, Saudi Arabia and several Gulf states cut diplomatic relations with Iran. On 12 January, the UN announced that talks would no longer start in mid-January.

The war continued to take a devastating toll on the civilian population. According to UN officials, both sides show disregard for protecting civilians and indiscriminately target civilian

UN DOCUMENTS ON YEMEN Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2216 (14 April 2015) established a targeted arms embargo on the Houthis and forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh. S/RES/2204 (24 February 2015) renewed financial and travel ban sanctions measures until 26 February 2016 and the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 25 March 2016. S/RES/2140 (26 February 2014) established sanctions against those threatening the peace, security or stability of Yemen. **Security Council Press Statement SC/12184** (23 December 2015) urged all parties to adhere to the cessation of hostilities and exercise maximum restraint if violations emerge and urged Yemeni parties to fulfil commitments made during recent talks. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7596** (22 December 2015) was a briefing by Special Envoy Ould Cheikh Ahmed, High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein and Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Kyung-wha Kang. **Sanctions Committee Document S/2016/73** (22 January 2016) was the final report of the Panel of Experts.

Yemen (con't)

infrastructure in violation of international humanitarian law. Beginning in October 2015, there were increasing commercial imports into Yemen, which since the Saudi-led intervention in late March had sharply declined as a result of coalition restrictions that have amounted to a de facto blockade. Food imports returned to pre-crisis levels by December, and fuel imports increased to 50 percent of pre-crisis levels. Difficulties remained in distributing aid within Yemen. In particular, the Houthis' months-long siege of Taiz continued to leave more than 200,000 people without aid, according to OCHA, despite the agreement announced on 17 December during the talks in Switzerland to allow humanitarian aid to reach the city's besieged residents.

On 22 December 2015, the Council held a rare public session on Yemen. The Special Envoy, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Kyung-wha Kang and High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein briefed. This was Al Hussein's first briefing to the Council on Yemen. He recalled the recommendation of his office's 7 September 2015 report on Yemen for an international investigation into credible allegations of human rights violations by all parties to the conflict, as well as accountability for perpetrators of all crimes. Al Hussein further noted that coalition airstrikes appeared responsible for the disproportionate share of Yemen's destroyed civilian infrastructure. Council members issued a press statement following the meeting that called on all Yemeni parties to resume and accelerate UN-brokered negotiations. Welcoming the commitments made in Switzerland, the statement urged all parties to adhere to a cessation of hostilities and to exercise maximum restraint in case of violations.

In January, Council members received two briefings on Yemen in consultations under "any other business". Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman briefed on 5 January, after Saudi Arabia's announcement that it was ending the ceasefire. Following the meeting, Council members issued press elements, urging the sides to respect a meaningful ceasefire and to resume talks in mid-January. OCHA head Stephen O'Brien briefed members on the humanitarian situation on 11 January.

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 22 January, the Yemen 2140 Sanctions

Committee considered the final report of its Panel of Experts. The report analyses the implementation of financial and travel ban sanctions on designated individuals and the arms embargo against Houthi and Saleh forces, which it describes as having merged into a new hybrid armed group. It further documents violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and the obstruction of humanitarian assistance, offenses that are among the designation criteria. According to the report, all parties to the conflict, including the coalition, are responsible for widespread and systematic violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law, in particular regarding principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution. The report presented 15 recommendations that include proposals to improve the arms embargo's implementation and to address the patterns of international humanitarian law and human rights violations, such as by setting up an international commission of inquiry.

Human Rights-Related Developments

In a 5 January press briefing, the spokesperson for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Rupert Colville, said at least 81 civilians were reportedly killed and 109 injured in Yemen in December 2015, raising the number of civilian casualties recorded between 26 March and 31 December 2015 to 8,119 people, of which 2,795 were killed and 5,324 were wounded. He added that during the month of December, at least 62 civilians were reported to have been killed by airstrikes attributed to the coalition forces. The spokesperson also expressed alarm over information received on the alleged use of cluster bombs by coalition forces in Hajjah governorate. During a field visit to the village of Al-Odair, in Haradh District, an Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) team found remnants of 29 cluster submunitions, and documented the use of cluster submunitions in several other districts, he said. The spokesperson also expressed particular concern over the humanitarian situation in the city of Taiz, where strict control of all entry points into the city by the Popular Committees, affiliated with the Houthis, has resulted in limited access to essential items, including food, and made conditions extremely difficult for the civilian population.

High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein released a statement on 8 January, urging the government of Yemen to reverse its decision the previous day to declare the representative of OHCHR in Yemen, George Abu al-Zulof, persona non grata amid government accusations of bias, saying the decision was unwarranted, counter-productive and damaging. The High Commissioner's statement noted that the expulsion would likely complicate the UN Human Rights Office's ability to implement a Human Rights Council resolution adopted in September 2015, which requested it to provide the government of Yemen with technical assistance and capacity-building. The resolution specifically asked OHCHR to assist a national independent

commission of inquiry in carrying out its work in accordance with international obligations. In this regard, OHCHR was planning to deploy a specially recruited three-person monitoring team in the coming weeks. The Secretary-General also issued a statement condemning the Yemen government's decision to expel al-Zulof. In a letter sent to the Secretary-General on 8 January, the Yemen government communicated a reversal of its expulsion decision, stating it will take more time to review the relationship with OHCHR.

Key Issues

Obtaining a ceasefire that is respected by the parties and advancing peace talks and a political process remain key issues.

Addressing the humanitarian crisis and the war's impact on civilians is another critical issue.

Of ongoing concern is the expansion of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham.

Renewing the sanctions and the mandate of the Panel of Experts will be a key issue in February, including whether and how to modify them.

Options

Regarding the sanctions and the Panel, the Council may:

- renew financial and travel ban measures and the targeted arms embargo on Houthi-Saleh forces for an additional year, as well as the mandate of the Panel of Experts; and
- incorporate recommendations from the Panel's final report, including new guidance and reporting requirements regarding the supply of weapons to security forces under the Yemen government's control; establishing clearer guidance on the submission of inspection reports involving the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism; and stressing that member states conducting military operations in Yemen respect international humanitarian law, in particular principles of distinction and proportionality.

On the political track, the Council may adopt a presidential statement or resolution supporting commitments or agreements by the parties in case of progress in political talks.

If talks continue to stall, the Council may consider adopting a new resolution calling on the parties to implement a cessation of hostilities and to engage in UN-brokered consultations without preconditions.

Yemen (con't)

The Council may also consider organising further public briefings with OCHA and OHCHR to shed more light on the humanitarian situation and human rights dimensions of the conflict.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members are fairly united in calling for a ceasefire and for Yemeni parties to engage in UN-brokered talks without preconditions. They also share concern over the humanitarian situation and the need for the parties of the conflict to uphold their responsibilities to protect civilians. In order to highlight this common view, the US, as Council president in December 2015, organised the Council's public meeting on Yemen—the first time that members publicly discussed the conflict since the outbreak of full-scale war last March. The calls by nearly all members for a ceasefire represented a notable shift since the adoption of resolution 2216 when a number of members, including the P3, opposed Russia's proposal to call for a ceasefire, arguing then that

this would undermine the request of Yemen President Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi for the Saudi-led intervention.

Regarding the upcoming sanctions resolution, several members were unhappy with the Panel of Experts' final report. These members' criticism, expressed at the latest 2140 Sanctions Committee meeting, included that the Panel exceeded its mandate with some of its findings and recommendations regarding international humanitarian law and human rights issues, with one member challenging the thoroughness of the Panel's investigations. In contrast, a number of members believed that the report was balanced. Based on initial reactions, it seems unlikely that Committee members or the Council will agree on the majority of the Panel's recommendations.

Overall, the Council continues to be very much reliant on the Special Envoy's mediation efforts. Members appear to be hoping for progress on a political process that the Council can then support, while being willing to consider a new Council resolution if

the Special Envoy concludes that political talks are at an impasse. A next round of talks seems very much dependent on first securing a cessation of hostilities, which is seen as having been complicated by the latest tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

An important dynamic will be the role of Egypt, which has taken over the Arab seat from Jordan. Jordan had championed the positions of the Saudi-led coalition. It remains to be seen how far Egypt, also a member of the coalition, will play this role. So far, Egypt has seemed similarly supportive of coalition positions. On the other hand, it also seems supportive of a gradual approach to implementing resolution 2216 and has expressed its desire to play a constructive role in addressing the conflict. Senegal is also a coalition member. The US and UK provide the coalition with logistical support.

The UK is the penholder on Yemen. Japan is the chair of the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee, having replaced outgoing member Lithuania.

UNRCCA (Central Asia)

Expected Council Action

In February, the Special Representative and head of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), Petko Draganov, is scheduled to brief Council members in consultations. It is possible that this will be followed by a press statement, as has been the practice in the past.

Key Recent Developments

The last time Council members discussed UNRCCA was on 8 September 2015. It was Draganov's first briefing since taking over the position as Special Representative from Miroslav Jenča on 17 March. Breaking with previous Council practice, there was no press statement following the meeting. Russia, as the penholder, put forward a draft but decided to withdraw the text when some Council members requested changes that it was not willing to accommodate.

Since the last briefing, Draganov has visited several key partners outside Central Asia.

On 29 September, he had meetings in Brussels with the EU and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to discuss recent developments in the region and promote further coordination, especially in the field of preventive diplomacy. On 26-27 October, Draganov visited Beijing, where he met the Chinese deputy foreign minister and the secretary-general of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Discussions focused on political and security dynamics in the region and ways to promote greater cooperation in dealing with key security threats, managing trans-boundary water resources and protecting the environment. On 23-24 November, he travelled to Moscow for meetings with senior Russian officials, including the special envoy of the president for Afghanistan. He also met with the deputy secretary-general of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and the executive secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Among other things, they

discussed how to further strengthen bilateral interaction between UNRCCA, Russia and the regional organisations.

UNRCCA continued its efforts to promote regional cooperation on water resource management. On 23-25 September, the centre co-organised a workshop in Almaty, Kazakhstan, with the Kazakh-German University, titled "The management of trans-boundary water resources in Central Asia and Afghanistan in the context of climate change". The discussion focused on integrated management of water resources and also on prospects for enhanced regional cooperation in the Aral Sea Basin. Also in Almaty, UNRCCA organised a roundtable on 11-12 November with the support of the US government on "Advancing regional dialogue on the efficient application of international law in the management of water resources as a factor for strengthening cooperation and stability in Central Asia". It focused on the evolution of the law, its main norms and principles and

UN DOCUMENTS ON UNRCCA Security Council Press Statement SC/11751 (23 January 2015) was the most recent press statement on UNRCCA. Security Council Letters S/2007/280 (15 May 2007) and S/2007/279 (7 May 2007) concerned the establishment of UNRCCA.

UNRCCA (Central Asia) (con't)

their application in the context of the Aral Sea Basin. It also considered ways to strengthen trust and cooperation among regional states.

In the area of counter-terrorism, Dragonov participated in an SCO conference on 22 October on cooperation against international terrorism and extremism, held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Addressing the conference, he underlined the increasing threat of terrorism and highlighted the role that regional organisations like SCO can play in complementing UN efforts in the field of preventive diplomacy. On the margins of the event, Dragonov met with an SCO official to discuss closer cooperation in promoting implementation of the UN global counter-terrorism strategy.

On the issue of illicit drugs, on 15 October, UNRCCA hosted a meeting in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan of the mini-Dublin group, an informal coordination group of like-minded countries focused on the fight against illicit drugs. Apart from relevant embassies, the meeting was attended by representatives of Turkmenistan law enforcement agencies, several UN entities and the OSCE. Participants shared information about their forthcoming activities related to the fight against illicit drugs in order to better coordinate their efforts.

UNRCCA also organised an international seminar titled “The impact of external factors on security and development in Central Asia”, which was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on 9-10 December in cooperation with various

institutes of strategic studies and the expert community in Central Asia. Participants discussed the problem of external challenges and threats to stability in the region, ways to respond to external negative factors, the prospects for strengthening security cooperation among states and the role of key partner countries and regional organisations. There was a special focus on the threats posed to the region by the expansion of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS).

In addition, on 27 November in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, UNRCCA hosted the annual meeting of deputy foreign ministers from the region aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and discussing how UNRCCA can best assist countries in addressing security threats. Topics discussed included the fight against transnational crime, the situation in Afghanistan, the management of water and energy resources, environmental security and main priorities for cooperation in 2016.

Key Issues

Key issues include the rising threat of terrorism and extremism, ongoing tensions relating to trans-boundary water management and other border-related disputes, and drug trafficking. The regional impact of the situation in Afghanistan also remains a key issue.

With regard to UNRCCA, a key issue is whether UNRCCA's role as a preventive-diplomacy tool could be further developed.

Options

One option for Council members is to issue a press statement, as they have done in the past, reaffirming the importance of conflict prevention, expressing support for UNRCCA's activities in the region and reiterating other key elements from previous statements, such as highlighting the centre's role relating to regional trans-boundary water management, counter-terrorism, drug trafficking and regional engagement with Afghanistan.

Council Dynamics

Council members are generally supportive of the work of UNRCCA and agree that it plays a useful role in conflict prevention. It seems that the absence of a press statement following Draganov's briefing last September was mostly due to the fact that Russia included new, more specific language on cooperation between UNRCCA and regional organisations, including references to SCO, CSTO and CIS. This was unacceptable to other members, however, who saw it as an attempt by Russia to gain greater legitimacy for these organisations through the UN. They therefore asked Russia to instead use agreed language from previous statements referring to cooperation with regional organisations more generally. At press time, it was unclear whether Russia intended to propose a statement following the briefing in February.

South Sudan

Expected Council Action

In early February, Ambassador Fodé Seck of Senegal, chair of the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee, will brief the Council on the Committee's work. The Council will consider adopting a resolution to renew the South Sudan sanctions regime and the mandate of the related Panel of Experts, both of which expire on 2 March. The Council is further expected to consider the latest Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the mandate of the UN

Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), which expires on 31 July 2016.

Key Recent Developments

In late December 2015 and early January, limited progress was made in implementing the August 2015 peace agreement. On 21 December 2015, 15 representatives of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in Opposition arrived in Juba as part of an advance team to discuss fulfilment of the peace agreement and to pave the way for the future arrival

of their leader, Riek Machar. On 7 January, the parties agreed on ministerial positions for the envisioned transitional government of national unity, based on ratios established in the August agreement: Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), 16 positions; SPLM/A in Opposition, ten positions; the former detainees, two positions; and other political parties, two positions.

However, in spite of these modest advances, divisions remain over President Salva Kiir's October 2015 decree to divide South

UN DOCUMENTS ON SOUTH SUDAN Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2252 (15 December 2015) increased the force structure of UNMISS and added tasks to the mandate. S/RES/2241 (9 October 2015) adjusted the mandate of UNMISS to support implementation of the “Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan”. S/RES/2206 (3 March 2015) created the South Sudan sanctions regime. **Secretary-General's Report S/2015/899** (23 November 2015) was on South Sudan. **Sanctions Committee Document S/2015/656** (21 August 2015) was the mid-term report of the 2206 Sanctions Committee Panel of Experts.

South Sudan (con't)

Sudan into 28 states. This was supported by the Jieng Council of Elders, a group of leaders from Kiir's Dinka ethnic community, but has aroused the ire of the Nuer and Shilluk communities in Unity and Upper Nile states, respectively. They view the decision as an effort to confiscate some of their traditional lands for the benefit of the Dinka. The decree further complicates implementation of the August peace agreement, which is based on power-sharing formulas pertaining to the previous ten states. On 17 January, SPLM in Opposition leader Machar withdrew members of his negotiating team from Juba because of the government's unwillingness to reconsider its decision on the establishment of 28 states. He indicated that he needed time for further consultations with his team.

Meanwhile, a humanitarian, economic and security crisis continues to unfold in South Sudan. There are more than 1.69 million internally displaced people in South Sudan, as well as approximately 640,000 refugees who have left for neighbouring countries. Some 200,000 of the internally displaced are sheltered in UN bases across the country. Severe food insecurity confronts more than 2.3 million South Sudanese, about 20 percent of the population, while high inflation has significantly increased the price of food.

On 19 January, Eugene Owusu, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, launched the South Sudan Humanitarian Response plan for 2016. Requesting \$1.3 billion to address South Sudan's humanitarian needs in 2016, Owusu underscored the need for the parties to "fully respect the rights of humanitarians to deliver impartial and independent assistance" in an operating environment that he describes as "complex, dangerous, and difficult."

On 8 January, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) announced that since the beginning of December 2015, more than 15,000 people had been displaced by clashes between the SPLA and local armed groups in Western Equatoria state. Fighting in Western and Central Equatoria has been on the rise in recent months, sparked by tensions between Dinka pastoralists and local communities. UNHCR further reported that almost 200 houses had been burned down in Yambio, a Western Equatorial county, during the clashes.

On 15 January, the Council received the Secretary-General's plan for "appropriate

action to deter and respond to any escalation of violence in and around Juba, in order to effectively protect civilians and to protect critical infrastructure in Juba", in accordance with resolution 2252 on UNMISS. However, the plan, submitted to Council members in the form of a confidential letter, has not been made public.

perpetrated by both sides to the conflict, there are no tangible accountability mechanisms, the report says. It emphasises the need for the immediate cessation of hostilities and establishment of transitional justice and accountability mechanisms that must include comprehensive and credible investigations into the full scope of human rights violations.

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 14 January, the Panel of Experts of the 2006 South Sudan Sanctions Committee briefed the Committee on its final report. The Panel painted a dire picture of the humanitarian situation in the country, while questioning the commitment of the SPLM and the SPLM in Opposition to the peace process. In its final report, which had yet to be made public at press time, the Panel drew a direct link between the decisions of high-level SPLM/A and the SPLM/A in Opposition leaders and the targeting of civilians and violations of international humanitarian and human rights law during the conflict in South Sudan. In the report, the panel recommended:

- targeted sanctions (i.e. an assets freeze and travel ban) on high-level decision-makers responsible for threatening the peace, security and stability of South Sudan;
- an arms embargo on South Sudan;
- adherence by companies doing business in South Sudan to transparency standards, including the principles of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the due-diligence guidelines of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); and
- cooperation with the Panel by humanitarian actors, who are part of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism and Gender-based Violence Information Management System in South Sudan, to work to identify those violating international human rights and humanitarian law.

Media reports indicate that a confidential annex to the report calls for imposing targeted sanctions on Kiir and Machar.

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 21 January, UNMISS and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released a joint report on the state of human rights in South Sudan since the outbreak of hostilities in December 2013. According to the report, the scale, intensity and severity of human rights violations and abuses increased with the continuation of hostilities, particularly during spikes in fighting in the middle and latter part of 2015, including large scale extra-judicial killings, sexual violence, abductions and enforced disappearances, forced displacement, looting, livestock-raiding, forced recruitment (including of children), extensive destruction of civilian property and indiscriminate attacks against civilians. Despite the severity of the human rights and humanitarian law violations

Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is how to exert leverage on the parties to ensure that they fulfil their obligations under the August 2015 peace deal. Since its signing, the implementation of the agreement has been slow, and questions remain regarding the level of commitment of the parties to the agreement.

Another important issue is to how to ensure that UNMISS achieves full operating capacity. It is unclear how long it will take for the additional troops and police authorised by the Council in resolution 2252 to be deployed.

An additional key issue for the Council is whether to make adjustments to the sanctions regime in considering the renewal of its mandate.

Options

One option for the Council is to adopt a resolution or presidential statement that urges the parties to accept the letter and spirit of the peace agreement, and emphasises the ongoing engagement of the Council in supporting the political process. This could be a useful way to express the Council's unity of purpose, especially given the abstentions by Russia and Venezuela on the two most recent resolutions on the UNMISS mandate.

Council members could consider holding a meeting with Festus Mogae, the chair of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (the body overseeing implementation of the peace agreement), to get an update on implementation of the peace agreement and to hear his views on how the Council could most effectively support the process.

Another option for the Council is to dispatch a small emergency mission to South Sudan to discuss implementation of the peace agreement with UNMISS Special Representative Ellen Margrethe Løj, Intergovernmental Authority on Development-plus representatives and Mogae. This visiting mission could include meetings with Kiir and Machar in an effort to promote the agreement's implementation.

South Sudan (con't)

With regard to the 2206 sanctions regime, the most likely option is for the Council to renew the regime and the mandate of its Panel of Experts. In doing so, the Council could consider giving the Panel a specific directive to investigate the sources of corruption in South Sudan and corruption's impact on the stability of the country.

Council Dynamics

The issue of sanctions in South Sudan remains controversial. Several Council members believe that the threat of targeted

measures can play an effective role in pressuring spoilers to comply with the peace agreement. However, members such as Angola, Russia and Venezuela maintain that additional targeted sanctions under current circumstances would be counter-productive and could undermine the limited progress that has been made in the agreement's implementation. There are also divisions on the Council regarding the Panel of Experts' recommendation for an arms embargo.

Regarding the Panel's recommendation calling for businesses to adhere to

transparency standards established by EITI and the OECD, one permanent member reportedly argued in the 14 January Committee meeting that such standards are not accepted by all member states and would therefore violate the sovereign rights of South Sudan.

It appears that members are amenable to the Panel's recommendation regarding collaboration between the Panel and humanitarian actors.

The US is the penholder on South Sudan.

Sudan (Darfur)

Expected Council Action

In February, Ambassador Rafael Ramírez (Venezuela), the chair of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee, will provide the quarterly briefing to the Council on the Committee's work. At press time, the format of the meeting (i.e. whether there will be a public briefing or just consultations) remained unclear. The Council is also expected to adopt a resolution renewing the mandate of the Panel of Experts, which expires on 12 February.

Key Recent Developments

The security and humanitarian situation in Darfur remains dire. There are now approximately 2.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Darfur, and some 233,000 were displaced in 2015 alone. The Secretary-General's 24 December 2015 report on the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), covering the period 25 September to 15 December 2015, said that "incidents of attack, harassment and intimidation of civilians, including IDPs, increased, especially in North and West Darfur", and that in most cases, those responsible were reportedly "armed men associated with nomadic Arab tribes". Inter-communal violence and fighting between government and rebel forces continues, although the UNAMID report states that the number of these clashes had decreased in the reporting period.

On 9 January, an unidentified militia descended on Mouli, a village in West Darfur,

causing the displacement of a significant number of the village's inhabitants. The displaced civilians made their way to the nearby capital of West Darfur, El Geneina, demonstrating at the governor's office on 10 January. Media reports indicate that the protestors set fire to government facilities and clashed with Sudanese security personnel, who fired on them with live ammunition. Several people reportedly died in this incident and in clashes with government security forces during a funeral for the initial victims on 11 January.

On 17 January, UNAMID released a press statement in which it expressed deep concern about clashes near its Neriti team site, in Central Darfur, between Sudanese government forces and armed groups. The mission also reported aerial bombardments in the area.

From 19 to 23 November 2015, the AU High-Level Implementation Panel mediated peace talks in Addis Ababa between the government of Sudan and two Darfur rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minnawi (SLA-MM) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). The talks ended unsuccessfully, as the government reiterated its position that the 2011 Doha Document for Peace in Darfur should be the basis for the negotiations while the SLA-MM and the JEM rejected this approach. As members of the Sudan Revolutionary Front, a broad coalition of rebel groups in Sudan, the SLA-MM and the JEM have instead advocated an inclusive national dialogue process leading to

meaningful democratic reform.

Informal talks were held between the government of Sudan and the SLA-MM and the JEM in Debre Zeit, Ethiopia, from 23 to 25 January. While it does not appear that progress was made in these discussions, the parties agreed to continue their dialogue to resolve their differences.

On 25 January, the Council was briefed on UNAMID by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous. Ladsous expressed concern with the impact of the renewed upsurge in fighting on civilians in the Jebel Marra region of Darfur. He emphasised the difficulties in the political process between the government and the armed groups.

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 18 December 2015, the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee's Panel of Experts briefed the Committee on its final report. The Panel apparently said that small arms and light weapons continued to enter Darfur in violation of the arms embargo. Panel members noted that while there continued to be aerial attacks in Darfur through the first ten months of 2015, the number of attacks had decreased in comparison with the same period in 2014. The Panel reportedly emphasised that gold from the Jebel Amer mine was being used to support the activities of the pro-government Abbala militia.

Key Issues

The underlying issue for the Council is the continuing instability of the security and humanitarian environment in Darfur, without progress on the political front.

UN DOCUMENTS ON DARFUR Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2228 (29 June 2015) renewed the UNAMID mandate. **S/RES/2200** (12 February 2015) renewed the Panel of Experts for one year. **Secretary-General's Report S/2015/1027** (24 December 2015) was the UNAMID report. **Security Council Meeting S/PV.7608** (25 January 2016) was a briefing on UNAMID.

Sudan (Darfur) (con't)

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

Options

One option for the Council is to adopt a resolution renewing the Panel of Experts without significant changes to the language of resolution 2200 (last year's resolution authorising the Panel of Experts).

Another option would be to modify the sanctions regime by:

- requesting the government of Sudan to develop mechanisms to ensure that the profits derived from the sale of minerals, including gold, mined in Darfur are not used to fuel the conflict;
- adding an additional designation criterion focused on individuals and entities

that use income generated from natural resources to undermine security in Darfur; and

- urging the government of Sudan to investigate violations of international humanitarian law committed by pro-government forces (for example, the Rapid Support Forces) during 2015.

Council Dynamics

Darfur remains a divisive issue within the Council. The US and others are very critical of Sudan for human rights abuses, aerial bombardments, lack of compliance with the arms embargo and lack of cooperation with UNAMID. China and Russia, on the other hand, have a more sympathetic view of Sudan, maintaining that the government is doing what it can to promote stability in the region in the face of an ongoing insurgency.

There are also different views regarding the Panel of Experts and its recent report. Several members are supportive of the Panel's work and think that the report was thorough and informative. However, one permanent member maintains that the report was not balanced and that the Panel was biased against the government.

Venezuela has been considering holding the meeting on the work of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee in February in a public session. This would represent the first time since November 2014 that the briefing on the committee's work has been held publicly. However, while several members seemed to support the public format, it appeared that there was some resistance from others.

While Venezuela chairs the 1591 Sanctions Committee, the UK is the penholder on Darfur.

DPRK (North Korea)

Expected Council Action

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

In addition, it is possible that the Council will adopt a resolution in response to the DPRK's 6 January nuclear test.

Key Recent Developments

The DPRK announced on 6 January that it had conducted a successful test of a hydrogen bomb. The test was widely condemned, although the DPRK's claim that it was a hydrogen bomb rather than a regular nuclear bomb was seen as implausible based on readings from seismic stations in the region. Council members were briefed on the incident by Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Miroslav Jenča during consultations that same day. In a subsequent press statement condemning the nuclear test, Council members recalled their determination, as expressed in resolution 2094,

to take "further significant measures" in the event of another test and announced that they would immediately begin to work on a new resolution imposing such measures.

Also on 6 January, the Republic of Korea (ROK) submitted a statement to the Council condemning the nuclear test and calling for additional sanctions measures, while noting that it would maintain "a high readiness posture" against any further provocations. It resumed its propaganda broadcasts by loud speakers across the border with the DPRK on 8 January. On 13 January, ROK President Park Geun-hye said her government would review the need for deployment of the US anti-ballistic missile system referred to as THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) in response to the increased threat. On 22 January, she suggested that the ROK would push for talks of five of the parties involved in the six-party talks, excluding the DPRK. (The other five are China, Japan, the ROK, Russia and the US.) For its part, China on 22 January called for the early resumption of the six-party talks while reiterating that

dialogue and negotiation were fundamental to resolving the nuclear issue.

In an earlier development, the Council on 10 December 2015 held its second meeting on the human rights situation in the DPRK. (The first meeting was on 22 December 2014, when the Council decided to add "the situation in the DPRK" to its agenda as a separate item from the non-proliferation issue, in response to the findings of the February 2014 report of the Human Rights Council commission of inquiry.) High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein and Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman briefed. The US, as president of the Council, convened the meeting in response to a joint request from Chile, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain, the UK and the US itself, presented in a 3 December letter.

As was the case in 2014, China at the start of the meeting asked for a procedural vote on the provisional agenda, after expressing its opposition to intervention by the Council in issues concerning the human rights situation in any country and stressing that the situation in the

UN DOCUMENTS ON THE DPRK Security Council Resolution S/RES/2207 (4 March 2015) renewed the Panel of Experts' mandate for 13 months. **Security Council Letters S/2016/9** (6 January 2016) was the ROK statement on the 6 January nuclear test. **S/2015/1007** (21 December 2015) was from the DPRK transmitting a statement warning the US of "unimaginable consequences to be entailed by its persistent hostile policy towards the DPRK". **S/2015/931** (3 December 2015) was from nine Council members requesting a meeting on the DPRK. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7575** (10 December 2015) was on the human rights situation in the DPRK. **Sanctions Committee Documents S/2015/987** (16 December 2015) was the Committee's annual report. **S/2015/131** (23 February 2015) was the Panel of Experts' 2015 final report. **Security Council Press Statement SC/12191** (6 January 2016) condemned the DPRK's nuclear test.

DPRK (North Korea) (con't)

DPRK did not constitute a threat to international peace and security. Angola, Russia, and Venezuela joined China in voting against the agenda. Chad and Nigeria abstained, while the remaining nine members, who had requested the meeting, voted in favour. (In a procedural vote the veto does not apply and a decision can be made with just nine affirmative votes.)

Sanctions-Related Developments

The Sanctions Committee last met on 18 December 2015 to continue its consideration of the recommendations in the Panel of Experts' February 2015 final report as well as the Panel's August 2015 midterm report, but there was no agreement on any of the recommendations.

On 18 January, the Panel submitted its final report under resolution 2207 to the Committee. The report will be considered at the Committee's next meeting, which at press time had yet to be scheduled. As had been expected, the report concluded that widespread sanctions violations had continued and also made several recommendations aimed at strengthening implementation of the sanctions regime.

In a separate development, on 8 December the US announced several new additions to its DPRK-related sanctions list. These included the DPRK's strategic rocket force, which the Panel of Experts recommended should be added to the UN sanctions list in its report to the Sanctions Committee on the DPRK's 26 March 2014 ballistic missile launch. The new US listings also included three shipping companies – Haejin Ship Management Company Limited, Pyongjin Ship Management Company Limited and Yongjin Ship Management Company Limited. In its 2015 final report, the Panel recommended that they be added to the UN sanctions list as owned or controlled by the Ocean Maritime Management Company (OMM), already on the list since July 2014. In addition, the US sanctioned six officials of the Tanchon Commercial Bank. The bank has been on the UN sanctions list since April 2009.

Human Rights-Related Developments

The special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK, Marzuki Darusman, visited Seoul from 21 to 26 November. In a 26 November statement, he warned that nothing had changed in the country since the commission of inquiry on the DPRK issued its 2014 report and that the crimes against humanity documented in the report appeared to continue. Darusman underlined the crucial role of civil society in taking a lead role towards accountability for those most responsible for the DPRK government's systematic denial of human rights. He also noted that during the visit, his attention was repeatedly drawn to the increasing difficulties faced by individuals from the DPRK attempting to cross the border, mainly to China, and seeking to reach the ROK.

In addition to the DPRK's strict border control, imposing a virtually absolute ban on its citizens crossing the border, China has a rigorous policy of forcibly repatriating DPRK nationals. Furthermore, he expressed disappointment that Russia had signed an extradition treaty with the DPRK the previous week. Despite Russia's assurance that this treaty would not be used to return anybody at risk of persecution, it could de facto facilitate forced repatriation of DPRK asylum seekers, which might put the returnees at risk of serious violations, including torture, Darusman said.

From 18 to 22 January, Darusman visited Japan to assess the latest developments and discuss ways to ensure accountability for gross human rights violations in the DPRK, including abductions. In a 22 January statement, he said that in addition to continuing political pressure to exhort the DPRK to improve human rights, it was also imperative to pursue criminal responsibility of its leadership. Consequently, the visit focused on exchanging views with law enforcement agencies on national and international accountability issues, to look at the legal framework and identify possible next steps for seeking accountability for serious human rights violations, in particular in relation to the DPRK's abduction of Japanese nationals. He also expressed disappointment that there had been no concrete progress towards resolving the abductions issue since Japan and the DPRK signed a bilateral agreement almost two years ago. Darusman will present his report to the Human Rights Council in March, before his current mandate ends in July.

Key Issues

A key issue for the Council is what kind of additional measures should be imposed on the DPRK in response to the 6 January nuclear test, and whether new sanctions measures will induce the DPRK to change its behaviour or only further aggravate the situation.

An additional issue is whether to implement any of the Panel's recommendations.

A practical issue is whether to renew the Panel's mandate in the new sanctions resolution or adopt a separate resolution later. (The Council expressed its intention in resolution 2207 to renew the mandate by 7 March 2016.)

Options

The main options include:

- adopting a resolution that would significantly strengthen existing sanctions provisions and impose new measures, including additional new targeted listings; or
- adopting a weaker resolution that would mainly condemn the nuclear test, call for stricter enforcement of existing measures and emphasise the need for dialogue and the resumption of the six-party talks;
- in either case, including a provision extending the Panel of Experts for another 13 months; and
- holding an open briefing for UN member states once the new resolution has been adopted, to be convened by the Committee chair, to explain the new measures and stress the need for strict compliance with all Council resolutions on the DPRK. (It is now more than a year and a half since the last open briefing was held in July 2014.)

Council and Wider Dynamics

At press time, negotiations on a draft resolution on the DPRK were still ongoing and the timeline for adoption remained unclear, although the Chinese New Year on 8 February was seen by some as a potential deadline. As was the case in the past, only a few countries have so far been engaged in the negotiations. China and the US, as the penholder, are the main players, but Japan and the ROK seem to be closely involved on the side lines. Few details about the main elements being discussed have emerged so far, although US Ambassador Samantha Power apparently said during the consultations on 6 January that the US would be seeking to target the DPRK's proliferation procurement networks and the illicit activities of DPRK diplomats, and that it also wanted to strengthen restrictions on maritime transportation, financial transactions, and small arms, which are currently exempt from the arms embargo. More recent remarks by the US and its allies seem to indicate that they are seeking to significantly step up the pressure on the DPRK through a more comprehensive approach that would include measures designed to target the country's leadership.

While China used unusually strong language in condemning the nuclear test, it still appears reluctant to support stronger measures against the DPRK, and has continued to stress that any new resolution must focus on safeguarding peace and stability in the region. For its part, the US has made clear it believes China's approach has failed and that it is time for Beijing to take the lead in putting more pressure on the DPRK, given its special relationship with Pyongyang. In a meeting in Beijing on 27 January, US Secretary of State John Kerry reiterated the need for significant new measures, while China stressed that the new resolution should not provoke additional tensions.

Syria

Expected Council Action

Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura is expected to brief in February pursuant to the request in resolution 2254 for an update on the UN-facilitated political process within 60 days.

There will also be the regular monthly briefings on the chemical weapons and humanitarian tracks. Regarding chemical weapons, in addition to the monthly OPCW report on implementation of resolution 2118, Council members will also consider the first report of the UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism.

Key Recent Developments

On 18 December 2015, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2254, setting out the sequence of events to end the war in Syria: UN-mediated political talks, a national ceasefire and a two-year timeline to achieve a political transition.

Agreement on the broad parameters of a political process by Russia and the US, as well as buy-in from regional actors Iran and Saudi Arabia, was critical in the lead-up to the adoption of resolution 2254. However, on 2 January, Saudi Arabia executed prominent Shi'a cleric Nimr al-Nimr. There were subsequent attacks on Saudi diplomatic premises in Iran, followed by Saudi Arabia's severing of diplomatic ties with Iran. Council members condemned the attacks in a press statement but also called on the parties to reduce tension in the region. While both Iran and Saudi Arabia remain publicly committed to the Syria peace talks, the incident created even deeper rifts ahead of what was already a very fragile process.

When de Mistura briefed Council members on 18 January, he said he would only issue invitations to UN-facilitated talks in Geneva when he had clarity about who would represent the Syrian opposition from those with influence—i.e. Russia and the US. He stressed the importance of maintaining the momentum towards a political solution, but not at the cost of convening a process that would be a stillborn repetition of previous Geneva talks. After a series of meetings in late January between US Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, followed by a meeting between Kerry and Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir,

de Mistura announced the talks were scheduled to begin on 29 January. A meeting of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) was also tentatively scheduled for 11 February in order to maintain the momentum toward a negotiated political transition.

Talks were postponed from 25 January due to disagreements about who would represent the opposition. It seems the opposition bloc's Riyadh-based High Negotiating Committee (HNC) had insisted on its primacy and threatened to not attend if invitations were extended to other opposition groupings. There has been a particular focus on the HNC's exclusion of the opposition Kurdish Democratic Union Party, which controls territory in northeastern Syria near the Turkish border and has been active in the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS).

Another issue was which opposition groups should be identified as terrorists, in addition to those already designated by the Security Council, such as Al-Qaida, ISIS and Al-Nusra Front. The government, along with Iran and Russia, is of the view that opposition groups Ahrar al-Sham and Jaysh al-Islam should be included on the terrorist list and thus barred from participating in the talks. Others regard this as impossible since these groups are significant actors on the ground and in the HNC.

Aside from the issue of representation, the opposition has said it would participate in the talks only if the government met several demands: lift sieges, release detainees and stop indiscriminate attacks—particularly aerial bombardment.

The Council focused on besieged areas at three meetings in January, in part to build the opposition's confidence that the Security Council would use its leverage on the humanitarian track in the lead-up to talks.

Humanitarian leads New Zealand and Spain requested a briefing under “any other business” on 11 January to keep pressure on the government to fulfil its 7 January agreement to grant humanitarian access to Madaya. The situation in Madaya—besieged by government forces—was a matter of particular concern after alarming images of starving residents appeared in the media. The UN has credible reports of people dying from starvation and

being killed by sniper fire or landmines while trying to flee. The government's agreement linked any aid received in rebel-held Madaya to simultaneous aid deliveries to Foah and Kefraya—the only two government-held villages besieged by rebel groups.

In comments to the press, New Zealand and Spain said that access to Madaya had to be a start to broader humanitarian access in Syria and not a one-off event. They underscored that humanitarian access is an obligation under international humanitarian law and that siege with the goal of starvation is a war crime. The P3 also condemned siege tactics by the government in press statements made in their national capacities.

France and the UK, supported by the US and the humanitarian leads, requested a public briefing on 15 January to follow up the Madaya briefing. Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Kyung-Wha Kang reported that the situation in Madaya was not unique given that there are 181,200 people who are besieged by the government, 200,000 by ISIS and 12,500 by rebel groups. She added that while access to Madaya was welcome, it was just a trickle and that food aid had reached less than 1 percent of besieged areas in 2015. She urged Council members to set aside differences and put Syria on a firm path to peace.

The regular monthly humanitarian briefing was held on 27 January, with briefings by OCHA and by the World Food Programme on access to food, malnutrition and starvation in Syria. The Human Rights Council's special rapporteur on the right to food warned on 19 January that the deliberate starvation of civilians as a tactic of war constitutes a war crime and could also amount to a crime against humanity if it can be shown that denial of food is a deliberate and systematic tactic to cause civilian suffering.

In other developments, Acting UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo briefed Council members on the regular chemical weapons track on 5 January. He reported that the destruction of Syria's declared chemical weapons had been completed. Separately, he said further investigation was required by the OPCW fact-finding mission to determine if there was sarin

UN DOCUMENTS ON SYRIA Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2254 (18 December 2015) was on a political solution for the Syrian crisis. 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/2258 (22 December 2015), S/RES/2191 (17 December 2014), S/RES/2165 (14 July 2014) and S/RES/2139 (22 February 2014) were on the humanitarian situation. **Security Council Press Statement SC/12190** (4 January 2016) condemned the attacks on the Saudi diplomatic premises in Iran. **Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7612** (27 January 2016) and **S/PV.7605** (15 January 2016) were on the humanitarian situation. **Secretary-General's Reports S/2016/60** (21 January 2016) was on the humanitarian situation. **S/2015/1049** (29 December 2015) was on chemical weapons.

Syria (con't)

exposure in one case of the 11 chemical weapons attacks alleged by the government.

Key Issues

The essential issue for the Council—in the fifth year of a war that has exacted a death toll of 300,000, injured one million and displaced half of the Syrian population, including 4.6 million refugees—is to build on the momentum of resolution 2254 and exert effective leadership in supporting a cessation of violence and efforts to implement a political solution.

Options

The ISSG and resolution 2254 have identified roles for the Security Council in the event that anticipated political talks in 2016 produce concrete results towards a national ceasefire. How such a ceasefire would be monitored would require more consideration by the Council. On 18 January, de Mistura provided the outline of what the UN is planning in terms of a “light touch” option, based out of Damascus, whereby national counterparts would call in violations that could be investigated by a small group of UN personnel. If future security conditions permit, a further option might be a strengthened international role.

Council Dynamics

Resolution 2254 was the first time the Security Council adopted a resolution focused exclusively on a political solution to the Syrian crisis. However, it left the fundamental

question that has divided the P5 since the beginning of the Syrian conflict intentionally ambiguous—the role of President Bashar al-Assad in any political transition.

Some Council members are of the view that the Russian and the US positions on Assad have quietly moved closer together, in that Assad would have a role in the transition but would not stand for re-election. However, regional and national actors have yet to subscribe to this understanding. There may also be a grudging convergence on the issue of which opposition groups to designate as terrorists. It seems Russia may forgo the immediate need to designate terrorist groups ahead of talks. On the part of the US, it may be willing to consider designating certain groups based on their conduct on the ground after a ceasefire agreement is reached.

The proposed modality for monitoring a ceasefire is not controversial. However, the negotiating parameters for what a ceasefire might look like remain contentious. This was an important issue during the negotiation of resolution 2254, when France placed a great deal of importance on the Council expressing support for a national ceasefire. Some Council members are concerned about the criticism that the local ceasefires achieved to date have received. They are often seen as surrenders after siege and starvation tactics are imposed by the government on rebel-held areas; they benefit the government by allowing them to redirect their forces to achieve military objectives elsewhere; and they have often been accompanied

by massive military build-ups, disappearances of rebel fighters and population exchanges.

Regarding the confidence-building measures requested in resolution 2254, the Secretary-General has said that lifting sieges, the release of those arbitrarily detained, and stopping indiscriminate attacks will be fundamental tests for the credibility of the renewed political process. Council members have mixed views about the proposals for confidence-building measures. A few are cautious about treating obligations under international law as bargaining chips in a political process. Many others share that view but also believe that if such demands are met as part of a larger political process it would ameliorate the dire humanitarian situation civilians are facing, and an enhanced protection environment would create a positive momentum for negotiations. A smaller set of Council members view these as unacceptable pre-conditions to the opposition’s participation in the Geneva talks.

Council members are unanimous in their support for political talks starting in January and many think it would be dangerous to backtrack on resolution 2254. If the political process collapses, a window of opportunity may be lost for some time.

Egypt, New Zealand and Spain lead on humanitarian issues. In practice, however, most outcomes are agreed between Russia and the US prior to seeking agreement by the broader Council. France and the UK are also active in calling for meetings and drafting texts.

Iraq

Expected Council Action

In February, Special Representative Ján Kubiš will brief on developments in Iraq and the Secretary-General’s report on the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). 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 a large swath of its territory and has led to a widespread protection crisis.

Since Kubiš last briefed the Council on 11 November 2015, the US has stated that ISIS has lost 40 percent of the territory it had previously controlled in Iraq. Gains against ISIS were achieved late last year in Baiji, Sinjar and Ramadi. These offensives have been

undertaken by Iraqi government forces and Kurdish peshmerga forces, backed by the US-led anti-ISIS coalition.

The Shi'a militia Hashd al-Shaabi—or the popular mobilisation forces—have also participated in reclaiming areas from ISIS, but not in Ramadi. Shi'a militias have not been included in offensives backed by the US-led coalition in deference to the US position that Iraq's use of Shi'a militias in Sunni

UN DOCUMENTS ON IRAQ Security Council Resolution S/RES/2233 (29 July 2015) renewed UNAMI for a year. **Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2015/25** (16 December 2015) was on trafficking in persons in situations of conflict, with a particular focus on ISIS and the impact on women and children. **Security Council Press Statement SC/12197** (12 January 2016) condemned the 11 January ISIS attacks. **SC/12190** (4 January 2016) condemned the attacks on the Saudi diplomatic premises in Iran. **Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.7589** (18 December 2015) was a briefing on Iraq's complaint regarding the Turkish deployment in Iraq. **S/PV.7556** (11 November 2015) was the regular briefing on Iraq. **Security Council Letter S/2015/963** (11 December 2015) was Iraq's complaint regarding the Turkish deployment of an armoured battalion to the Ba'ishiqa region near Mosul. **Secretary-General's Reports S/2015/826** (28 October 2015) was the Iraq/Kuwait missing persons and property report. **S/2015/819** (26 October 2015) was the UNAMI report.

Iraq (con't)

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.

The government has announced that it intends to recapture Mosul in the first half of 2016. In the lead-up to this offensive, some analysts think that the jockeying for influence has already begun, as demonstrated on 3 December 2015 when Turkey deployed an armoured battalion to the Ba'shiqa region near Mosul. On 18 December, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman briefed the Council on Iraq's complaint regarding this Turkish deployment. The issue had also been raised by Russia in the Council on 8 December under "any other business". Iraq called the entry of Turkish forces a provocation and a violation of international law. Turkey said the deployment was part of an existing arrangement with Iraq to train Kurdish peshmerga forces and local militias fighting ISIS. The US has been working to de-escalate the dispute and has asked Turkey to withdraw any forces not authorised by the Iraqi government. Turkey withdrew some troops to the autonomous Kurdish region of Iraq but has reportedly rejected a total withdrawal.

Despite the government's military gains against ISIS, the situation of civilians has not seen a corresponding improvement. OCHA reports that the violence between armed groups and government forces has resulted in 3.3 million internally displaced persons and 10 million people who require humanitarian assistance.

The 19 January joint report by UNAMI and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights says that almost 19,000 civilians have died since January 2014 as a result of this surge in violence. Government forces have denied displaced persons access to safe areas, and government airstrikes and shelling of civilian areas have resulted in casualties. The report details how ISIS continues to commit systematic and widespread violence, which in some instances amounts to war crimes, crimes against humanity and possibly genocide. ISIS has enslaved 3,500 women and children, mostly from Iraq's Yazidi community. On 16 December 2015, the Council adopted a presidential statement focused on human trafficking by terrorists, with a predominant focus on how ISIS generates

revenue through trafficking and the slave trade, with a particular impact on women and children.

Civilians, especially minority communities, have been hesitant to return to some liberated areas since they have no guarantees of protection. The UN and Amnesty International have separately documented abuses against Sunni Arabs committed by Iraqi and Kurdish security forces in areas reclaimed from ISIS—including looting, arbitrary arrest, forcible displacement and extra-judicial killings—in retaliation for perceived support for ISIS.

Following the recapture of Ramadi, the first major victory against ISIS in Iraq, Kubiš said that for military advances against ISIS to hold, the government, in cooperation with the UN, would have to work quickly to restore the rule of law and basic services, and thus give civilians confidence that it was safe to return. This has been a consistent message from UNAMI regarding all areas liberated from ISIS, but particularly in relation to the Sunni provinces, which have a strained relationship with the Shi'a-led government in Baghdad.

Aside from military offensives against ISIS, persistent sectarian violence has been exacerbated by Saudi Arabia's execution of Shi'a cleric Nimr al-Nimr on 2 January—one day after Saudi Arabia reopened its embassy in Baghdad for the first time since 1990, when Iraq invaded Kuwait. A wave of demonstrations in Iraq and attacks on Sunni mosques ensued. There were also attacks on Saudi diplomatic premises in Iran following the execution, which led Saudi Arabia and Iran to sever diplomatic ties. Council members issued a press statement on 4 January condemning the attacks on Saudi diplomatic premises in Iran and calling on parties to reduce tensions in the region. Following a trip to Tehran, Iraq's foreign minister expressed concern over escalating regional tension and offered to mediate between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

There was further reprisal violence against Sunnis after ISIS attacks against Shi'a areas of Baghdad and Muqaddiya on 11 January left at least 50 people dead. Council members condemned the attacks in a press statement. The reprisal violence caused Iraqi Sunni parliamentarians to boycott government sessions on 19 January.

In addition to the dire security situation, Iraq is facing a potential fiscal crisis

because of plummeting global oil prices, the impasse over Kurdish oil exports, a bloated government payroll, corruption, and the cost of fighting ISIS. UNAMI leadership has 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. Implementation of a December 2014 agreement on oil exports and revenue sharing has been stymied since June 2015 because of a stalemate between Baghdad and Erbil. Baghdad claims that the KRG did not export a sufficient amount of oil through the central government, and the KRG claims that it did not receive its expected share of the federal budget. The KRG has resumed its autonomous exportation of oil via Turkey.

There has been discussion of the KRG renegotiating oil exports with Baghdad, but that has been delayed by the political uncertainty in Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region since its president, Massoud Barzani, has stayed in office after his term ended in August 2015. The Kurdish political crisis intensified when Barzani's ruling party unilaterally expelled rival Parliament Speaker Yousef Mohammed from government in October 2015.

Key Issues

The key issue for the Council is promoting a genuinely inclusive government. A related 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 Prime Minister Haider al-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

Iraq (con't)

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 and believe that the mission's mandate is sufficiently broad and flexible to allow Kubiš to fulfil the mission's good-offices role. However, the Council has been largely disengaged from grappling with the underlying political divisions among Iraq's Shi'a, Sunni and Kurdish populations, beyond bland calls for an inclusive government.

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. Some Council members will be watching with interest whether Abadi will be able to maintain his current balance of good relations with Riyadh and Tehran once Iran experiences the economic relief of lifted sanctions.

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

Sudan/South Sudan

Expected Council Action

In February, Council members will receive their quarterly briefing on the implementation of resolution 2046 on Sudan/South Sudan issues. Haile Menkerios, the Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, is expected to brief via video teleconference on developments. No outcome is anticipated.

Key Recent Developments

On 10 January, Sudan, South Sudan and the World Food Programme extended through June an agreement, initially signed in July 2014, permitting the transport of humanitarian aid from Sudan to South Sudan. South Sudan is in the midst of a humanitarian crisis, with large-scale food insecurity and "some 6.1 million people...in need of some form of humanitarian assistance or protection," according to Eugene Owusu, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in the country.

In early January, South Sudan requested that Sudan reduce transport and related fees on oil flowing from South Sudan through Sudan. A landlocked country, South Sudan must transport its oil through Sudan for it to reach the outside world. Based on an August 2013 agreement, South Sudan pays Sudan a fixed fee of approximately \$25 per barrel for the shipment of oil. As world oil prices have declined to approximately \$31 per barrel, South Sudan's oil-derived income has

continued to diminish. In mid-January, South Sudan indicated that it might shut down oil production in Upper Nile State if Sudan is not amenable to reducing oil transport and related fees. On 20 January, President Omar al-Bashir indicated a willingness to review South Sudan's request for a reduction in the transit fee, but no decision had been made at press time.

From 19 to 23 November 2015, the AU High-Level Implementation Panel mediated peace talks in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), a rebel group based in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states (the Two Areas). The negotiations focused on efforts to cease hostilities and provide humanitarian access to the Two Areas. These talks were unsuccessful. While the government of Sudan focused on the need to move toward a permanent ceasefire, the SPLM-N emphasised the need for a political agreement as a prerequisite. Furthermore, while the government reiterated its demand that aid be delivered to South Kordofan and Blue Nile through areas it controls, the SPLM-N maintained that aid should be delivered through neighbouring countries Ethiopia and South Sudan.

The government and the SPLM-N met again in Addis Ababa for informal discussions from 16 to 18 December 2015, and in Berlin, Germany, from 22 January to 23 January. However, the parties did not make

progress on the issues dividing them.

President Omar al-Bashir announced a one month cessation of hostilities on 31 December 2015. However, the SPLM-N has accused government forces of continuing their military campaign. Arnu Ngutulu Lodi, a spokesman for the SPLM-N, said that the Sudanese air force dropped bombs on 1 January near Kurmuk, a town in Blue Nile state, damaging farms and destroying livestock. On 9 January, Lodi accused Sudan of additional aerial bombardments near Kurmuk, which he claimed destroyed three farms.

Sanctions-Related Developments

The final report of the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee's Panel of Experts, yet to be made public at press time, apparently stated that Sudan's government has supplied weapons and related material to the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition during the South Sudan civil war. This has included ammunition, and to a lesser degree, arms and uniforms. While the Council has imposed targeted sanctions (i.e., assets freezes and travel bans) on designated individuals in South Sudan, it has not placed an arms embargo on the country.

Key Issues

The key issue for the Council is how to encourage Sudan and South Sudan—as well as Sudan and the SPLM-N—to engage in constructive dialogue to resolve their differences. The agreement on oil transit, which is now under some stress, was one issue on

UN DOCUMENTS ON SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN Security Council Resolution S/RES/2046 (2 May 2012) was on Sudan-South Sudan relations and provided a roadmap for Sudan, South Sudan and the SPLM-N to resolve outstanding issues and threatened Article 41 measures.

Sudan/South Sudan (con't)

which the countries had struck a compromise. Unresolved matters include border demarcation and the final status of Abyei. The restriction of humanitarian access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile is an ongoing concern.

Options

The Council could consider adopting a resolution or presidential statement that:

- encourages efforts by Sudan and South Sudan to resolve their dispute on oil transit fees amicably;
- encourages the two countries to step up negotiations to reopen border trade, which would generate significant revenue for both;
- demands an end to support by both countries of rebel groups on either side of the border;

- welcomes the recent extension of the agreement on the delivery of humanitarian aid to South Sudan from Sudan; and
- urges the Sudanese government and the SPLM-N to continue to engage in dialogue on a cessation of hostilities and humanitarian access.

Members could also consider holding an Arria-formula meeting open to the wider UN membership and NGOs on the humanitarian situation and the need for access in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, to ensure that attention on this issue does not wane.

Council Dynamics

Relations between Sudan and South Sudan have not recently been an intensive focus of the Council. Members realise that it has been

difficult for both countries to exert significant time and energy in negotiations with one another, given their engagement with their own domestic crises. The violence in South Kordofan and Blue Nile and restrictions on humanitarian access to these areas are routinely raised during Council consultations on Sudan/South Sudan. However, divisions within the Council have hampered efforts over the years to stop the violence and to alleviate the suffering of civilians in the Two Areas, with some members highly critical of the government's access restrictions and others asserting its sovereign right to defend itself against the rebels.

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

Guinea-Bissau

Expected Council Action

In February, the Council is expected to adopt a resolution renewing the mandate of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), which expires on 28 February. Ahead of the renewal, Special Representative Miguel Trovoada is expected to brief on developments and the Secretary-General's latest UNIOGBIS report. Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota (Brazil), chair of the Guinea-Bissau country configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), will also brief.

Key Recent Developments

Political instability has continued to afflict Guinea-Bissau since President José Mário Vaz's decision to dismiss Prime Minister Domingos Simões Pereira's government on 12 August 2015. On 20 August, Vaz unilaterally appointed Baciro Djá as prime minister, a move that was condemned by the National Assembly since Djá was not nominated by the majority party, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), to which all three men belong. The

National Assembly appealed to the Supreme Court, which on 9 September ruled Djá's appointment unconstitutional. Djá resigned and Vaz dismissed the government that he had appointed only days earlier.

It seemed that a compromise had been struck between Vaz and the PAIGC when Carlos Correia, an 84-year-old veteran politician who served as prime minister three times between 1991 and 2008, was appointed and sworn in as prime minister on 17 September. However, disagreements persisted between Vaz and Correia over the formation of the new government, with Vaz initially rejecting Correia's proposed list of ministers. At last, on 13 October, Vaz appointed Correia's proposed government, made up in large part from members of Simões Pereira's former cabinet. The coveted ministries of Interior and Natural Resources, however, remained unfilled, to be temporarily overseen by Correia. The Party for Social Renewal (PRS), Guinea-Bissau's second-largest party, which had participated in the administration of Simões Pereira, declined an invitation to join the new government.

A new political crisis emerged on 23 December 2015 when 15 PAIGC representatives in the National Assembly abstained during the vote on Correia's proposed 2016 budget, preventing its adoption. According to Guinea-Bissau's constitution, a second failed vote on the legislation would require the dissolution of the government. On 14 January, the PAIGC expelled the 15 legislators, including Djá and others close to Vaz, from the party. On 18 January, the expelled party members joined the opposition PRS, making it the new majority party. PRS leader Alberto Nambei declared himself speaker of the assembly. PAIGC leaders decried the developments as illegal. At press time, a second vote on the budget had been postponed indefinitely.

Developments in the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)

The Guinea-Bissau country configuration has remained active in considering the country's political crisis, holding informal meetings on 17 August 2015, 21 October 2015 and, most recently, 20 January. It issued statements last year on 28 August, 26 October, and 15 December. At press time, a statement was expected in January as well.

UN DOCUMENTS ON GUINEA-BISSAU Security Council Resolution S/RES/2203 (18 February 2015) renewed UNIOGBIS until 29 February 2016 and requested recommendations on the 2048 sanctions regime's continuation. Security Council Press Statements SC/12207 (16 January 2016) was on UNOWA, in which members expressed concern over Guinea-Bissau's political tension and called upon national leaders to sustain stability through dialogue. SC/12054 (21 September 2015) noted Carlos Correia's appointment as prime minister and commended the respect for the constitution and the rule of law demonstrated by the Bissau-Guinean actors. SC/12007 (14 August 2015) called on leaders to seek dialogue and consensus in resolving the crisis and underscored the importance of the non-interference of security forces. SC/12005 (12 August 2015) called on Guinea-Bissau's political leadership to resume dialogue. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.7514 (28 August 2015) was a briefing by the Special Representative to Guinea-Bissau, Miguel Trovoada. Secretary-General Reports S/2015/626 (13 August 2015) was on UNIOGBIS. S/2015/619 (12 August 2015) were the recommendations on the 2048 sanctions regime.

Guinea-Bissau (con't)

At the 20 January meeting, Trovoada briefed via video teleconference on the prevailing political situation and recent developments in parliament. Paola Zacchia from the World Bank Regional Office in Dakar briefed the PBC configuration on the impact of the political situation on the economy. Configuration members expressed concern over the unpredictability of the situation, along with discussing roles for ECOWAS, the International Contact Group and Trovoada to try to resolve the crisis.

Human Rights-Related Developments

The special rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Mónica Pinto, visited Guinea-Bissau from 10 to 16 October 2015, to assess the functioning of the justice system in the country. In a 16 October statement she warned that the government must prioritise urgent measures to guarantee better access to justice and to rebuild the population's trust in the justice system, where she observed serious dysfunctions and material deficiencies that contribute to corruption and impunity. She further stressed the importance of guaranteeing the security of judges, prosecutors and lawyers, as well as protecting victims and witnesses.

Key Issues

Guinea-Bissau's political instability is a key issue, threatening to undermine the progress achieved following the restoration of constitutional order in 2014, including the disbursement of \$1.2 billion that donors pledged in March 2015 to support the country's five-year reform and economic-development programme.

Whether security forces will continue to refrain from interfering in political affairs in light of the deteriorating political situation is another key issue.

Related to this is advancing security sector reform, as well as the difficulty the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) faces in financing the ECOWAS

Mission in Guinea-Bissau, which is charged with security sector reform.

Considering how Trovoada's good offices role and regional mediation efforts could be more effective is an important issue.

Another important issue for the Council to follow is the constitutional review to clarify the powers of the president and prime minister.

Also connected to the political instability are concerns that drug trafficking and illegal natural-resource exploitation could rise.

Options

The Council may renew the mandate of UNIOGBIS, continuing to prioritise its good offices role, support for national dialogue and reconciliation and coordination of international assistance.

The resolution could express deep concern over the deterioration in the political situation and recall that Guinea-Bissau risks losing the funds pledged at the March 2015 donor conference in Brussels if political leaders fail to restore a government committed to the Strategic and Operational Plan 2015-2020. It could additionally recall that spoilers of Guinea-Bissau's democratic consolidation could be subjected to existing travel-ban sanctions.

Another option is to use the Informal Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa as a tool to monitor ongoing developments in Guinea-Bissau more closely.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Last August, amidst the crisis involving Vaz and Simões Pereira, the Council became quite engaged in following developments, requesting two briefings on the situation. This was in addition to the Council's

regularly scheduled August semi-annual briefing and a meeting of the 2048 Guinea-Bissau Sanctions Committee to consider the Secretary-General's findings from a review of the Guinea-Bissau sanctions regime. The Council had requested the review earlier in the year when it renewed the mandate of UNIOGBIS, with some members thinking at the time that the sanctions regime might be ended. The Secretary-General's review, conducted before the crisis, recommended maintaining the sanctions, and the political crisis, which occurred when the Committee was considering the review, swayed members otherwise inclined to end the regime, that doing so would be premature.

Since then, the Council has been less engaged, which demonstrates its tendency to follow the lead of regional actors—ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP)—when dealing with Guinea-Bissau. While Guinea-Bissau is not a priority for most members, other Council members have taken a keen interest. Angola, which is a CPLP member, was quite vocal during last year's negotiations on the UNIOGBIS mandate, feeling that the resolution did not sufficiently reflect the progress that Guinea-Bissau had achieved. Newly elected member Senegal is likely to take interest in Guinea-Bissau as an immediate neighbour. Its president, Macky Sall, is the current chairman of ECOWAS and has been involved in mediation efforts. During consultations on the UN Office for West Africa in January, Spain and Angola raised concerns over the situation in Guinea-Bissau, which were reflected in the 16 January press statement about the regional office that was drafted by Senegal.

Senegal is the penholder on Guinea-Bissau. Uruguay chairs the 2048 Guinea-Bissau Sanctions Committee.

Kosovo

Expected Council Action

In February, the Council is expected to hold its quarterly briefing on Kosovo. Zahir Tanin, the 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. Serbia is likely to participate at a high level, while Kosovo will probably be represented by its ambassador to the US.

Key Recent Developments

Both Serbia and Kosovo have traditionally participated in Council meetings at a high level. Kosovo decided to depart from this practice and was represented by its ambassador to the US, Vlora Çitaku, at the 19 November 2015 briefing.

In her statement to the Council, Çitaku said that, from now on, Kosovo will continue to participate at the ambassadorial level, noting that "the time is long overdue to change the nature and the format of the relationship between Kosovo and the UN in general and the format of the debate in the Security Council in particular". Furthermore, Çitaku noted that the Council should lengthen the reporting cycle on Kosovo in order to make the meetings more useful, rather than a venue for exchanging long-held positions on the issue.

On the domestic front, the political situation in Kosovo has been somewhat precarious following the signing of the 25 August 2015 agreement between Belgrade and Pristina on key issues, including energy, telecommunications, establishment of the Association/Community of Serb Municipalities (ASM/CSM) in northern Kosovo and the freedom of movement on a bridge dividing the town of Mitrovica. In particular, the establishment of the ASM/CSM has proven to be the most contentious part of the agreement. From the outset, the opposition parties have resisted the creation of the ASM/CSM, fearing that this would lead to the creation of another layer of government and eventually pose a risk of secession.

Since October 2015, the representatives of the opposition parties have continued to disrupt the normal functioning of the Assembly of Kosovo by repeatedly setting off tear gas and smoke bombs in the

assembly chamber. Moreover, political turmoil has on several occasions spilled into the streets of Pristina and other towns, with supporters of the opposition clashing with police. In the latest incident in the Assembly on 14 December 2015, the representatives of the opposition set off smoke bombs in the chamber twice on the same day. The following day, Kosovo police arrested eight members of the opposition implicated in the incidents. Previously, the police had arrested five members of the opposition who were alleged to have been involved in similar smoke-bomb incidents in October and November 2015.

In light of mounting pressure from the opposition legislators and subsequent street protests, the president of Kosovo, Atifete Jahjaga, ordered the Constitutional Court to review the legality of the agreement on the establishment of the ASM/CSM. Initially, the Court suspended the implementation of the agreement pending a complete review. Then on 23 December 2015, the Court upheld the legality of the agreement, ruling that the creation of the ASM/CSM is in line with the constitution. However, the Court said that some aspects of the agreement pertaining to the ASM/CSM were unconstitutional and ordered the relevant authorities to correct this through legal amendments.

Protesters returned to the streets of Pristina on 9 January in the largest anti-government demonstrations so far. According to media reports, more than 10,000 people took part in demonstrations organised by the opposition parties, which continue to hold grievances towards the agreement on the ASM/CSM. Protesters set fire to parts of the main Kosovo government building and clashed with police, leaving dozens injured. The leaders of the opposition parties said that they would continue to encourage public unrest and disruption of the work of the assembly until the current government resigns and the agreement on the ASM/CSM is renounced.

The long-awaited formation of the special court that is supposed to investigate cases of war crimes committed by the Kosovo Liberation Army during the conflict in Kosovo still has not materialised. Nevertheless, a positive development on the issue was the 15 January

formal announcement that the Netherlands agreed to host the court in The Hague. The court is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2016, contingent on the final approval of its establishment by the legislatures of both Kosovo and the Netherlands. The official name of the court will be the Kosovo Relocated Specialist Judicial Institution. The court will be established under Kosovo law but will be staffed by international judges; funding for the court will be provided by the EU.

Key Issues

Maintaining stability is the main issue for the Council, especially amid the recent heightened political tensions in Kosovo.

UNMIK's role in promoting the implementation of the existing agreements between Belgrade and Pristina is a related issue.

Also an issue the Council will be following closely is the timely establishment of the special court for war crimes and subsequent cooperation by the Kosovo authorities with the court.

Options

Should the current political crisis in Kosovo continue to disrupt the normal functioning of the Kosovo institutions or pose a threat to overall stability, the Council could consider issuing a statement urging political actors in Kosovo to engage in constructive dialogue to resolve the issues.

The Council could also explore ways in which UNMIK could facilitate the implementation of the existing agreements between Belgrade and Pristina, including the 25 August 2015 agreement.

Looking ahead, should the agreements between Belgrade and Pristina be fully implemented, the Council could consider modifying UNMIK's mandate, including reducing its presence.

Council Dynamics

Kosovo remains an issue of relatively low intensity for the Council, mainly because of the preeminent role of the regional organisations in Kosovo, primarily the EU, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The Council's dynamics on Kosovo are

Kosovo (con't)

unchanged and are characterised by the deep division between permanent members. France, the UK and the US all recognise Kosovo's independence; China and Russia do not and remain strongly supportive of Serbia's position. This division is likely to

prevent any attempt by the Council to alter UNMIK's mandate in the near future. Russia will likely use the current political crisis and instability in Kosovo as an argument against any attempts to lengthen the reporting cycle on Kosovo or alter UNMIK's mandate.

The changed composition of the Council as of 1 January is not likely to have a significant effect on Council dynamics. Of the new Council members, Egypt, Japan and Senegal recognise Kosovo while Ukraine and Uruguay do not.

Lead Roles within the Council in 2016: Penholders and Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies

The penholder system emerged around 2010 though the exact date is difficult to establish. The first time it was mentioned in a Council document other than meeting records was in a 2014 note by the president (S/2014/268). The note proclaimed that members of the Council agreed to support "where appropriate, the informal arrangement whereby one or more Council members (as 'penholder(s)') initiate and chair the informal drafting process" of documents, including resolutions, presidential statements and press statements of the Council. While the note specified that any member of the Council can be a penholder, the P3 (France, the UK and the US) currently dominate the penholder list, as is clear from the table in the supplemental insert attached to this Forecast. It should be noted, however, that this is only an informal system, with nothing preventing other Council members from "grabbing the pen" and drafting outcomes on any given issue if they so desire.

Contrasting with the penholder system, the many subsidiary bodies established by the Security Council, are chaired by non-permanent members. The chairs are appointed by the P5, following informal, usually bilateral consultations with other members, with a different P5 assuming the task of coordinating the consultations each year. (Most recently it was China, and elected members were informed about the distribution of chairmanships at the beginning of the second week of December 2015.) In recent years there has been a push by some Council members for a more inclusive and transparent process that would to a greater extent take into consideration the priorities and preferences of all Council members. This resulted in the issuance of two notes by the president of the Council, in December 2012 (S/2012/937) and June 2014 (S/2014/393). The first note called for an informal process "with participation of all Council members in

a balanced, transparent, efficient and inclusive way" while the second note stated that this process should start as early as possible after the election of new members to facilitate a smooth transition from the chairs departing the Council (and often New York). It seems, however, that elected members are not yet fully satisfied with the appointment process and believe their views are still not sufficiently taken into account.

The table on the insert in this *Forecast* does not contain an exhaustive list of all the agenda items of which the Security Council is currently seized, but includes items with regular outcomes or where a subsidiary body has been established. For the full name of the agenda items, please refer to the summary statement by the Secretary-General of 4 January 2016 (S/2016/10) and the weekly updates thereto.

Notable Dates for February

REPORT DUE	REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION IN FEBRUARY	REQUESTING DOCUMENT
15 January	Final report of the Panel of Experts of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee	S/RES/2200
22 January	Final report of the Panel of Experts of the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee (S/2016/73)	S/RES/2204
27 January	OPCW report on the implementation of resolution 2118 (Syrian chemical weapons)	S/RES/2118
28 January	SG report on Iraq/Kuwait missing persons and property	S/RES/1284
29 January	SG report on UNMIK (Kosovo)	S/RES/1244
29 January	SG report on UNAMI (Iraq)	S/RES/2233
31 January	SG strategic report on UN efforts in support of member states in countering ISIS	S/RES/2253
1 February	Final report of the Panel of Experts of the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee	S/RES/2206
5 February	Final report of the Panel of Experts of the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee	S/RES/2207
11 February	UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism report (Syria chemical weapons)	S/RES/2235
12 February	SG report on UNMISS (South Sudan)	S/RES/2252
15 February	SG report on UNIOGBIS (Guinea-Bissau)	S/RES/2203
17 February	SG report on the humanitarian situation in Syria	S/RES/2139

MANDATES EXPIRE

		RELEVANT DOCUMENT
12 February	Panel of Experts of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee	S/RES/2200
26 February	Yemen sanctions and the Panel of Experts of the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee (expires in March but will be renewed in February)	S/RES/2204
29 February	UNIOGBIS (Guinea-Bissau)	S/RES/2203
3 March	South Sudan sanctions (expires in March but will be renewed in February)	S/RES/2206

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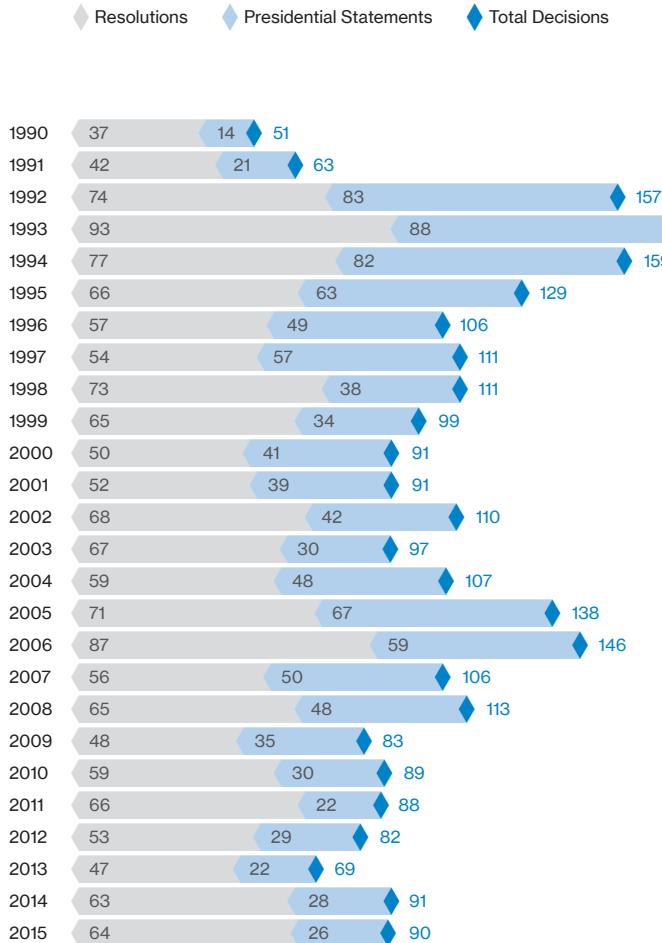
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Security Council Statistics in 2015

Overall, 2015 saw a similar number of decisions adopted (resolutions and presidential statements), and a decrease in consensus and number of formal meetings convened, as illustrated by these three graphs.

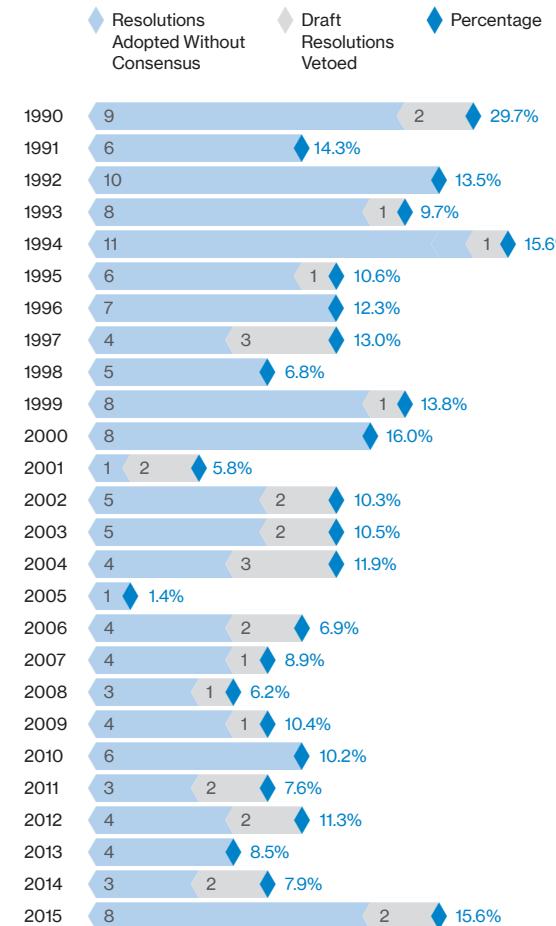
For further analysis see SCR's *In Hindsight on Security Council Statistics in 2015* in the February 2016 Monthly Forecast.

Graph 1. Total Annual Decisions of the Security Council: 1990–2015



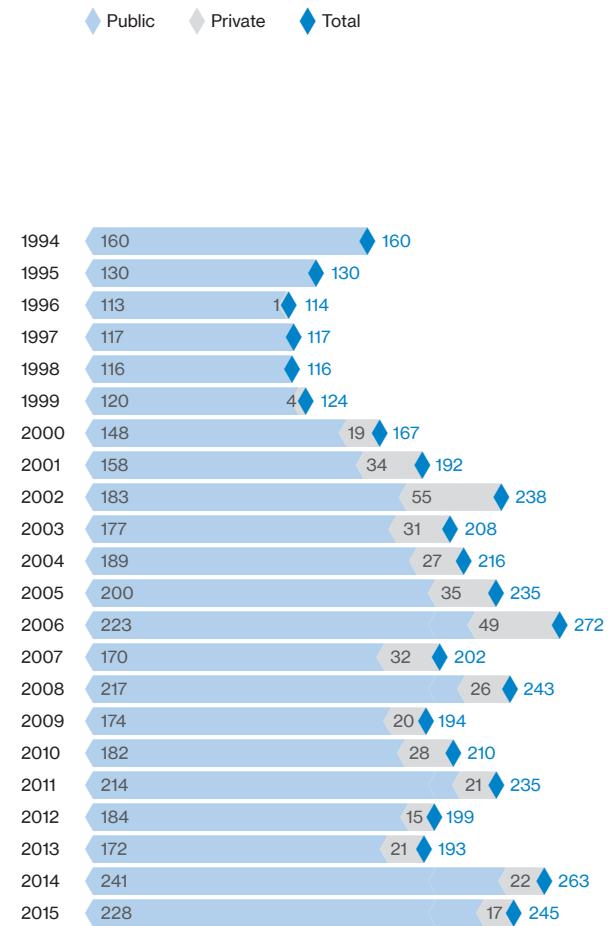
The Council adopted 90 decisions in 2015, compared to 91 decisions in 2014. The number of resolutions increased by one, from 63 in 2014 to 64 in 2015. The number of presidential statements adopted decreased by two compared to 2014. The number of resolutions in 2015 maintained the higher numbers seen in 2014 following the 12-year low registered in 2013. Although registering only a small decrease, presidential statements continued a larger trend seen since 2010 of 30 or fewer presidential statements.

Graph 2. Total Non-Consensual Resolutions: 1990–2015



In 2015, 56 of the 64 (87.5 percent) adopted resolutions were unanimous. The number of resolutions adopted without consensus increased by five relative to 2014. Resolutions relating to international tribunals, Libya and migrants, small arms, Somalia/Eritrea sanctions, South Sudan, Syria chemical weapons and Yemen were adopted without a unanimous vote in 2015. For the second year in a row, there were two vetoes. Both vetoes were by Russia: the first on a draft resolution commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the massacres in Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the second on setting up an international tribunal on the downing of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17. The percentage (15.6 percent) of resolutions that did not have consensus has not been so high since the early nineties.

Graph 3. Total Annual Meetings of the Security Council: 1994–2015



In total, the Council convened 245 formal meetings in 2015 representing a decrease (7 percent) from 2014, when 263 formal meetings were held. Of those, 228 meetings were public, and 17 were private. The 23 percent decrease in private meetings from 2014 was largely a result of "wrap-up" meetings moving from private to public formats. In spite of a 5 percent drop in public meetings compared to 2014, which had the highest number in twenty years, 2015 registered the second highest number in the last twenty years. For further analysis see the *In Hindsight on Security Council Statistics 2015* in the February 2016 Monthly Forecast.

Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies and Penholders for 2016

SITUATION-SPECIFIC OR THEMATIC MATTER	PENHOLDER IN THE COUNCIL	CHAIR OF THE RELEVANT COUNCIL SUBSIDIARY BODY	SITUATION-SPECIFIC OR THEMATIC MATTER	PENHOLDER IN THE COUNCIL	CHAIR OF THE RELEVANT COUNCIL SUBSIDIARY BODY
Afghanistan	Spain	Gerard van Bohemen (New Zealand), 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee	Somalia	UK; US on piracy	Rafael Ramirez Carreño (Venezuela), 751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Sanctions Committee
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Rotating on a monthly basis among members of the contact and drafting group (currently France, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, Russia, Spain, the UK, Ukraine and the US)	N/A	Sudan and South Sudan	UK on Darfur; US on South Sudan and Sudan/South Sudan	Rafael Ramirez Carreño (Venezuela), 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee; Fodé Seck (Senegal), 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee
Burundi	France	N/A	Syria	Egypt, New Zealand and Spain lead on humanitarian issues. On other issues, incl. chemical weapons, texts are normally agreed between Russia and the US prior to seeking agreement by the broader Council although France and the UK have also been active in tabling drafts and calling for meetings.	N/A
Central Africa Region (UNOCA/LRA)	UK	N/A	Ukraine	There is no clear penholder for Ukraine. Both Russia and the US have drafted texts and other members have been active in calling for meetings on the issue.	N/A
Central African Republic	France	Volodymyr Yelchenko (Ukraine), 2127 CAR Sanctions Committee	Yemen	UK	Motohide Yoshikawa (Japan), 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee
Central Asia (UNRCCA)	Russia	N/A	Western Sahara	US	N/A
Colombia	UK	N/A	Children and Armed Conflict	Malaysia	Ramlan Ibrahim (Malaysia), Children and Armed Conflict Working Group
Côte d'Ivoire	France	Elbio Rosselli (Uruguay), 1572 Côte d'Ivoire Sanctions Committee	Counter-terrorism (1267 and 1989)	US	Gerard van Bohemen (New Zealand) 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee
Cyprus	UK	N/A	Counterterrorism (1373)	US	Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta (Egypt), 1373 Counterterrorism Committee
Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	France	Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta (Egypt), 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee	Counterterrorism (1566)	US	Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta (Egypt), 1566 Working Group
DPRK (Non-proliferation)	US	Román Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain), 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee	ICTY and International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals	Uruguay	Elbio Rosselli (Uruguay), International Tribunals Informal Working Group
Golan Heights (UNDOF)	Russia and the US	N/A	Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (1540)	Spain	Román Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain), 1540 Committee
Guinea-Bissau	Senegal	Elbio Rosselli (Uruguay), 2048 Guinea-Bissau Committee	Peace and Security in Africa	N/A	Ismael Abrão Gaspar Martins (Angola), Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa
Haiti	US in consultation with the Group of Friends of Haiti (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Guatemala, Peru, the US and Uruguay).	N/A	Peacekeeping	UK	Fodé Seck (Senegal), Peacekeeping Operations Working Group
Iran (Non-Proliferation)	US; Spain acts as facilitator for implementation of resolution 2231	N/A	Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict	UK	UK, Protection of Civilians Informal Expert Group
Iraq	US on Iraq; UK on Iraq/Kuwait	Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta (Egypt), 1518 Iraq Sanctions Committee	Women and Peace and Security	UK on women's participation and protection (resolution 1325); US on sexual violence in conflict (resolution 1820)	N/A
Lebanon	France	Motohide Yoshikawa (Japan), 1636 Lebanon Sanctions Committee	Working Methods	Japan	Motohide Yoshikawa (Japan), Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions
Liberia	US	Volodymyr Yelchenko (Ukraine), 1521 Liberia Sanctions Committee			
Libya	UK	Ramlan Ibrahim (Malaysia), 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee			
Mali	France	N/A			
Middle East (Israel/Palestine)	The US is often seen as the lead, but recent proposals on this issue have been drafted by various other Council members.	N/A			