

Monthly Forecast

- 1 Overview
- 1 In Hindsight: Arria-Formula Meetings
- 3 Status Update since our April Forecast
- 4 Yemen
- 6 Peacekeeping
- 7 Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 8 Libya
- 9 Syria
- 10 Sudan and South Sudan
- 11 Lebanon
- 12 Group of Five for the Sahel
- 14 Iraq
- 15 Counter-Terrorism
- 16 Somalia
- 17 Protection of Civilians
- 18 Burundi
- 19 DPRK (North Korea)
- 20 South Sudan
- 22 Haiti

Overview

Indonesia will hold the presidency in May. An open debate on [peacekeeping](#) focused on better training to improve the safety and security and performance of UN peacekeepers is planned. Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi will chair the meeting. Secretary-General António Guterres; the force commander of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lieutenant General Elias Rodrigues Martins Filho; and the director of the secretariat of the International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, Björn Holmberg, are expected to brief.

The other open debate in May is on [protection of civilians in conflict](#) with a focus on community engagement as a means of enhancing the protection of civilians.

There are several mandate renewals related to African issues: [UNISFA in Abyei](#) and [AMISOM in Somalia](#), as well as for the [2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee](#) and its Panel of Experts.

Other African issues include:

- [Burundi](#), on the political situation;
- [Libya](#), briefings by the ICC Prosecutor, the chair of the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee, and by the head of UNSMIL;
- [Somalia](#), a briefing on UNSOM; and
- [Sahel](#), a briefing on the activities of the joint force of the Group of Five for the Sahel.

A briefing and consultations on UNAMI in [Iraq](#) is scheduled ahead of its mandate renewal. In addition, the following Middle East issues will be considered:

- [Lebanon](#), on the implementation of resolution 1559;
- [Syria](#), the monthly briefings on the humanitarian situation, the political process and the use of chemical weapons; and
- [Yemen](#), an update on the implementation of resolution 2452, which established the UN Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement. Regarding Europe, Council members are expecting to discuss the Secretary-General's report on the negotiations on [Cyprus](#). There will also be the biannual debate on [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#).

On Asia, the Council will be briefed in consultations on the work of the [1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee](#).

The annual briefing by the chairs of the three [counter-terrorism](#) subsidiary bodies is also expected.

The Council may meet to discuss the transition of MINUJUSTH in Haiti as the Secretary-General is scheduled to submit details for a follow-up mission this month.

It is likely that there will be two Arria-formula meetings: on [Palestine](#) and on [peacebuilding](#).

In Hindsight: Arria-Formula Meetings

The “Arria-formula” is the most flexible meeting format the Security Council has at its disposal. It has been used every year since March 1992, when Ambassador Diego Arria of Venezuela wanted fellow Council members to hear an eyewitness account of atrocities occurring in the former Yugoslavia. Unable to find a formal way to hold such a meeting, Arria invited Council members to meet with the witness in the UN delegates’ lounge. This was deemed useful; several similarly informal

briefings were soon held, and the term “Arria-formula meetings” was born.

With the concurrence of Council members, subsequent Arria meetings moved from the delegates’ lounge to a UN conference room and were supported by simultaneous interpretation. On 3 November 2003, Council members held an Arria-formula meeting with local civil society representatives in Kabul during their visiting mission to Afghanistan. An Arria-formula meeting with

29 April 2019
This report is available online at securitycouncilreport.org.

For daily insights by SCR on evolving Security Council actions please subscribe to our “What’s In Blue” series at whatsinblue.org or follow [@SCRtweets](https://twitter.com/SCRtweets) on Twitter.

In Hindsight: Arria-Formula Meetings

representatives of civil society was also held on 19 November 2004 in Nairobi, on the margins of a Security Council formal session away from headquarters, focused on Sudan.

As is often the case when the Council wants to retain flexibility with respect to a practice, it has not defined the Arria-formula briefing precisely. Broadly speaking, these are meetings convened at the initiative of a Council member or members—sometimes in collaboration with states not on the Council—who believe it would be beneficial to hear from specific individuals, organisations or institutions and have a frank exchange of views. Holding an Arria meeting does not require the consensus of all 15 members; those opposed may signal their views by not attending.

Illustrating the Arria-formula's flexibility, the range of briefers has evolved and expanded, from high-level government and UN officials, representatives of NGOs and other members of civil society, to representatives of non-state actors, Hollywood actors, mandate holders of human rights monitoring procedures, representatives of international organisations and of territories not recognised as states who are stakeholders on issues before the Council.

Arria-formula meetings with top UN officials have been held when no agreement could be reached to hear a formal briefing due to sensitivities around the topic. The Secretary-General addressed an Arria meeting on 15 February 2013 on security dimensions of climate change, and on 19 March 2018 an Arria-formula meeting was organised on the spot, immediately after a Council procedural vote had rejected a formal briefing on human rights in Syria by the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Arria-formula meetings afford interested Council members an opportunity to engage in a direct dialogue on matters of concern, and can also be part of a broader strategy. Some have served as preparation for a Council open debate: an Arria-formula meeting organised by Senegal in April 2016 on “Water, Peace and Security” was a preparatory step to holding an open debate on this topic during its November presidency that year. The 19 October 2018 Arria-formula meeting on “Silencing the Guns in Africa”, organised by Côte d’Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, South Africa and the AU, paved the

way for the 27 February 2019 open debate and the adoption of resolution 2457 on this issue. Similarly, the 31 January Arria-formula meeting on “Preventing and Countering the Financing of Terrorism”, organised by Australia, France, Indonesia, Peru and Tunisia, was regarded as helpful preparation for an open debate on the same theme held on 28 March, during which the Council adopted resolution 2462. On at least one occasion, an Arria meeting helped lay the groundwork for the Council to become seized of an issue, as happened with the 24 May 2004 Arria meeting on Darfur.

Because of their informal character, Arria-formula meetings usually have neither a record nor an outcome, and are not included on the monthly programme of work posted on the UN website. But organisers have found ways for the meetings to be referenced in Council documents through letters addressed to the president of the Security Council that:

- summarised the event and asked that the letter be circulated as a document of the Security Council;
- included as attachments speeches delivered during an Arria-formula meeting and asked that the letter be issued as a Council document; or
- included the meeting's concept note along with the request to issue the text as a Council document, a frequent practice in the recent period.

The assessment of its Council presidency that each member needs to produce usually mentions Arria-formula meetings held during the month, whether or not these were at the presidency's initiative.

Since 8 August 2016 when the meeting on the humanitarian situation in Aleppo, Syria—under siege at the time—was webcast live on *UN Web TV*, some Arria-formula meetings are webcast and their footage archived on the UN website. Sixteen of the 21 Arria-formula meetings in 2018 were webcast and archived. While the frank nature of the discussion may be tempered as a result, issues of importance to Council members can be presented to a global audience.

The periodically-updated compendium of Council working methods known as Note 507 affirms in all three of its versions Council members' intention to use Arria-formula meetings “as a flexible and informal forum for

enhancing their deliberations” and, among other things, their agreement to use these meetings to enhance their contact with civil society and NGOs (S/2006/507, S/2010/507, and S/2017/507). This sentiment is also found in a presidential statement on “The role of civil society in conflict prevention and the pacific settlement of disputes” of 20 September 2005 (S/PRST/2005/42).

Following a period of high frequency in the 1990s and early 2000s, peaking at 20 in 1996, use of Arria-formula meetings dipped, with six to ten annual meetings becoming the norm. After a low point of just one meeting in 2011, members rediscovered this format in 2012, with ten briefings held that year, including one on women's role in mediation and conflict resolution, one on human rights in the context of peacekeeping operations, and two by members of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria. In 2015 and 2017 there were 17 Arria-formula meetings; in 2016 there were 12. Last year's 21 Arria-formula meetings were at an all-time high. 2019 has already seen 11 Arria-formula meetings by the end of April.

In the last year, members have used this format to highlight aspects of an issue already being considered by the Council such as protecting boys and girls in shrinking humanitarian space, or the use of sanctions in addressing sexual violence in conflict. There have also been a number of Arria-formula meetings on human rights and accountability issues, which might reflect the increasingly divisive environment around these issues in the Council.

The continuing popularity of this format is testimony to its value. These meetings have been particularly useful in introducing a new issue to the Council or providing valuable information that could not be heard in other formats. However, with their increasing use comes a need to ensure that members do not experience Arria-formula meeting-fatigue. Coordination among Council members on the strategic use of Arria-formula meetings could help ensure the longevity and effectiveness of this format.

There is no definitive list of all Arria-formula meetings held since 1992. SCR strives to keep as complete a list as possible at: www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/working_methods_arria_formula-12.pdf.

Status Updates since our April Forecast

Rule of Law/Protection of Civilians

On 1 April, in a meeting chaired by German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross Peter Maurer, and Professor of Practice at Harvard Law School Naz Modirzadeh briefed the Council on the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law, with a focus on International humanitarian law (S/PV.8499). An Arria-formula meeting on protecting humanitarian and medical personnel, chaired by French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, was held earlier that day.

Non-proliferation

On 2 April, the Council held a “high-level” meeting in support of the NonProliferation Treaty (NPT) chaired by German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas and with participation from International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Yukiya Amano and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu (S/PV.8500). In a press statement following the meeting, Council members reaffirmed their commitment to advance the goals of the NPT (SC/13762).

Small Arms and Light Weapons

On 8 April, Germany, France, the Dominican Republic and Equatorial Guinea organised an Arria-formula meeting on the Western Balkans Roadmap as a model for effective small arms and light weapons (SALW) control at the regional level. Speakers included High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu; Bojana Balon, head of UNDP/South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons; Ambassador Pernelope Beckles (Republic of Trinidad and Tobago); and Ambassador Fatima Kyari Mohammed, Permanent Observer of the AU to the UN. Discussion also touched on other SALW initiatives, including “Silencing the Guns” in Africa and SALW strategies in the Caribbean.

Refugees

On 9 April, High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi briefed the Council (S/PV.8504).

Central African Republic

On 9 April, the Council adopted a presidential

statement (S/PRST/2019/3), establishing benchmarks for suspending or progressively lifting arms embargo measures on the government of the CAR (S/PV.8503).

Western Sahara

On 10 April, Council members met in consultations to discuss MINURSO and the second roundtable of the parties in Geneva that occurred in March. Council members were briefed by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Colin Stewart and Personal Envoy Horst Köhler. On 24 April, Council members began negotiations to renew MINURSO’s mandate. The Council voted on the renewal of MINURSO’s mandate on 30 April.

Venezuela

On 10 April, the Council met at the request of the US to discuss the humanitarian situation in Venezuela (S/PV.8506). Secretary-General António Guterres made introductory remarks and the Council was briefed by Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock. The Council was also briefed by Eduardo Stein, the Joint Special Representative of the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration for Venezuelan refugees and migrants, and Dr. Kathleen Page, a professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. US Vice President Mike Pence participated in the meeting.

Sudan (Darfur)

On 12 April, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa Bintou Keita briefed Council members under “any other business” at the request of Belgium, France, Germany, Poland, the UK and the US, following the ousting of President Omar al-Bashir on 11 April by the Sudanese military. Also on 12 April, the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee met during informal consultations to receive a briefing from the Panel of Experts on the Panel’s workplan, in accordance with the Panel’s mandate as extended by resolution 2455 until 12 March 2020. On 17 April, the Security Council was briefed on the Secretary-General’s 90-day report (S/2019/305) on UNAMID by Joint Special Representative and head of UNAMID Jeremiah Mamabolo (via video teleconference from Khartoum). He told the Council the planned withdrawal of UNAMID by 30 June 2020 is on track, but

the political situation in Sudan has changed drastically and could affect implementation of the mission’s mandate. Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Ursula Mueller also briefed. The briefing was followed by consultations.

Colombia

On 12 April, the Council was briefed by Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Verification Mission in Colombia, on the Secretary-General’s latest report (S/2019/265). Rosa Emilia Salamanca, the Executive Director of the civil society organisation Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social y Económica, briefed the Council as well. Colombian Foreign Minister Carlos Holmes Trujillo participated in the meeting (S/PV.8511). On 16 April, Council members adopted a press statement reiterating their call for full respect for the Special Jurisdiction for Peace’s independence and autonomy (SC/13782).

Explosive Ordnance Threat Mitigation

On 12 April, Belgium and Poland, in coordination with Germany, organised an Arria-formula meeting on: “Explosive ordnance threat mitigation: For the implementation of a coherent and comprehensive response.”

Afghanistan

On 15 April, Council members issued a press statement condemning the announcement by the Taliban of a spring offensive, underscoring that calls for more fighting will not contribute to making a sustainable peace, and calling on all conflict parties to seize the opportunity to begin an inclusive intra-Afghan dialogue and negotiations that result in a political settlement (SC/13781).

Human Rights

On 17 April, there was a closed Arria-formula meeting on human rights in peace operations. Côte d’Ivoire, France, Germany, Kuwait, and Peru sponsored the meeting. The briefers were the heads of human rights components of three UN peace operations: Danielle Bell of UNAMI (Iraq); Guillaume Ngefa of MINUSMA (Mali); and Abdoul Aziz Thioye of MONUSCO (DRC).

Status Update since our April Forecast

Children and Armed Conflict

The Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict met on 18 April to discuss its conclusions on the Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict in Syria. (S/2018/969).

Mali

On 22 April, Council members condemned the attack perpetrated on 20 April against a convoy of MINUSMA between Douentza and Boni (region of Mopti), which resulted in one peacekeeper from Egypt killed and four others injured (SC/13789).

Ukraine

On 25 April, the Council was briefed on the situation in Ukraine (S/PV.8516). Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Ursula Mueller, Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission Ertuğrul Apakan, and Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Martin Sajdik provided the briefings. (Apakan and Sajdik participated via video teleconference.)

Israel/Palestine

The Council held its quarterly open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including

the Palestinian question, on 29 April. Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo briefed. She spoke on many issues, including the plight of women in Gaza. Additionally, Gidon Bromberg and Nada Majdalani, the Israeli and Palestinian co-Directors of the NGO EcoPeace Middle East, briefed on the difficult environmental situation in Gaza, especially concerning water. Many UN members also participated, including Israel and the Observer State of Palestine. Often repeated topics included the situation around the Golan Heights, the worsening financial crisis for the Palestinians, and the humanitarian situation of the Palestinians.

Yemen

Expected Council Action

In May, Special Envoy Martin Griffiths is expected to brief the Council on the implementation of resolutions 2451 and 2452. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock and General Michael Lollesgaard, the chair of the Redeployment Coordination Committee (RCC) and head of the UN Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA), may also brief.

Key Recent Developments

There has been little progress in the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement of December 2018. Houthi rebels and Yemeni government forces have not begun redeploying their forces from the critical port city of Hodeidah and the nearby smaller ports of Saleef and Ras Isa as set out in the agreement. Carrying forward the other two elements of the Stockholm Agreement—a prisoner exchange and Statement of Understanding on Taiz for greater humanitarian access to the city—has also stalled.

On 15 April, Griffiths announced during a Council briefing that the parties had accepted a detailed plan for the first phase of redeployments. According to the arrangement on Hodeidah in the Stockholm Agreement, phase one requires the Houthis to

withdraw from the three ports and both sides to redeploy from critical areas of Hodeidah city associated with humanitarian facilities. In a second phase, both parties should redeploy fully from the city. During the subsequent consultations, Lollesgaard expanded on Griffiths' announcement, saying that the parties had agreed in writing to the detailed plan. He recommended, however, that phase one redeployments should not occur until outstanding issues have been resolved, including the composition of "local security forces" that will assume security responsibilities in the city and ports, and a plan for the phase two redeployments.

On 17 April, Council members issued a press statement welcoming the agreement by the Yemeni government and the Houthis to "the concept of operations for Phase 1 of redeployments". Members called on both parties "to swiftly agree on local security force arrangements and the concept of operations for Phase 2 redeployments".

While the UN continues to assess the ceasefire in Hodeidah governorate as largely holding, fighting has escalated elsewhere. The city of Taiz saw heavy fighting in late March between anti-Houthi groups. Fighting near Abs in Hajjah governorate displaced 100,000 people by mid-April. There has also been an

escalation on the front lines along the Saudi-Yemeni border and in Al-Dhale governorate.

During the 15 April briefing, Lowcock warned that UN agencies were rapidly running out of money for essential relief operations to respond to the humanitarian crisis caused by the war. He also issued a warning about the risk of "an environmental disaster" posed by the FSO SAFER oil tanker, which is a floating storage and offloading facility eight kilometres off the coast of the Ras Isa terminal in the Red Sea. The facility, containing 1.1 million barrels of oil, has had no maintenance since 2015. Since September 2018, the UN has sought to conduct an assessment of the tanker, but the Houthis have apparently still not approved the request. Lowcock also flagged the tripling of suspected cholera cases in 2019 compared to the first quarter of 2018.

In political developments, Yemen's 301-member House of Representatives convened more than 130 parliamentarians from 13 to 17 April in Sayoun, in a rare session since the start of the war. Yemeni President Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi, having travelled from Riyadh, addressed the legislators, who elected a new speaker and adopted a budget. The Houthis meanwhile held elections on 13 April for 24 vacant seats in that same body.

Internationally, the US Congress passed

UN DOCUMENTS ON YEMEN Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2456 (26 February 2019) extended the Yemen sanctions regime for an additional year. S/RES/2452 (16 January 2019) established UNMHA for an initial period of six months. S/RES/2451 (21 December 2018) endorsed the agreements reached during consultations held in Sweden. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.8512 (15 April 2019) was a briefing on Yemen. Security Council Press Statement SC/13785 (17 April 2019) expressed grave concern that the agreements reached in Stockholm have not yet been implemented.

Yemen

a resolution on 4 April to end US involvement in the war. The US has provided arms, the sustainment of weapons, intelligence and targeting assistance to the Saudi Arabia-led coalition supporting the Yemeni government, and, until last November, mid-air refuelling of coalition planes. On 16 April, President Donald Trump vetoed the measure. Earlier, on 29 March, Germany extended for six months a moratorium on arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

Sanctions-Related Developments

The 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee undertook a visiting mission to Amman, Riyadh, Muscat and Tehran from 30 March to 5 April. It was the first visiting mission since the committee was established in February 2014. Fourteen committee members participated, a large number for a sanctions committee mission.

In Amman, the committee met with Griffiths and Humanitarian/Resident Coordinator in Yemen Lise Grande. It received a briefing by video teleconference from Lollesgaard. The next day, on 2 April, it met in Riyadh with, among others, President Hadi and the commander of the coalition forces, General Fahd bin Turki bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. The committee also visited a storage facility containing Houthi military equipment and armaments. While meeting Omani officials in Muscat, the committee was unable to confer with Oman-based Houthi representative Mohammed Abdul-Salam, apparently for logistical reasons as clearance was not provided in time by the leadership in Sana'a. In Tehran, committee members raised questions about alleged Iranian support of the Houthis, a point repeatedly stressed by officials in meetings in Riyadh. They also heard in Tehran that Iran was interested in contributing to a peaceful resolution of the war, but that coalition countries apparently were not willing to accept Iran's participation in political efforts.

Key Issues and Options

The lack of progress in implementing the Stockholm Agreement, in particular the agreement on Hodeidah, remains a key issue. The main stumbling block regarding Hodeidah continues to be the parties' inability to agree on the composition of local security forces to replace their own forces. Issues also include a lack of perceived incentives for the Houthis to withdraw, and the Houthis' concerns that if they take steps to redeploy, Yemeni and coalition forces will move in to seize the city and ports. While the Stockholm

Agreement last December halted a coalition offensive on Hodeidah, the status quo around Hodeidah is likely to be unsustainable. Tensions over the failure to implement the Agreement, and fighting elsewhere in Yemen, could cause the Stockholm process to collapse.

Another key issue is the importance of resuming talks between the Yemeni parties to focus on a comprehensive political solution. These have been put on hold until the agreement on Hodeidah is implemented or shows at least a minimum level of progress. During the 15 April consultations, Griffiths said he hoped to convene the next round of consultations after Ramadan, which ends on 4 June. If the impasse continues, the Council could exert pressure on the parties to follow through on their Stockholm commitments by adopting a presidential statement or a resolution, which could include the threat of sanctions.

The humanitarian situation remains catastrophic, with more than 24 million people requiring aid and 10 million people at risk of famine. Challenges in addressing the crisis include access restraints imposed by the parties and economic conditions that make it difficult for people to purchase essential commodities such as food. A lack of funding for relief efforts is a further challenge, with only 7 percent of the \$4.19 billion required for the 2019 humanitarian response plan received by 24 April. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which announced \$1.5 billion for the 2019 humanitarian response, comprising more than half of pledged funds, have so far delivered very little of this money. The two countries announced in an 8 April letter to the Council that they would provide \$200 million during Ramadan.

One option is a stand-alone Council briefing on the humanitarian crisis to refocus attention on the situation and possibly increase pressure on the parties to break through the current stagnation. Council members could further consider adopting a humanitarian resolution, perhaps with the more prescriptive elements that were dropped during last December's negotiations on resolution 2451 on steps that the parties should take, such as removing bureaucratic restrictions within prescribed timeframes and

measures for strengthening the economy. A further option is an open debate on Yemen to hear the views of the larger UN membership.

In either a product on the Stockholm Agreement or on the humanitarian situation, the Council could request the Secretary-General to submit written reports every two months, as the Council currently relies on oral briefings for information on Yemen.

Regarding the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee, the chair of the committee may brief the Council on last month's visiting mission. Another option is to establish a list of prohibited items in relation to the arms embargo created by resolution 2216, which the Panel of Experts recommended in 2017 due to the coalition prohibiting imports that it assesses to have dual civilian-military use, but, according to the Panel, was being applied to some items unlikely to have a combat value. An issue that arose during the Sanctions Committee mission is that a Yemeni government list bans importing items such as water pipes required to maintain sanitation systems, which has hurt efforts to address the cholera epidemic.

Council Dynamics

Members appear united in wanting the parties to fulfil their commitments under the Stockholm Agreement. They have been seeking a balance of patience and pressure on the parties that will support the efforts of Griffiths and Lollesgaard, while under pressure from the coalition and Yemeni government publicly to single out the Houthis for impeding progress. Kuwait is part of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, and tends to champion coalition positions. It has sought to facilitate political efforts, hosting peace talks in 2016 and providing aircraft to transport the Houthi delegation to last December's consultations in Sweden. Elected members Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Peru and Poland often coordinate their positions to highlight issues around the humanitarian crisis and international humanitarian law. The US shares coalition concerns about, and at times seeks to highlight, Iran's role, that it views as destabilising.

The UK is the penholder on Yemen. Peru chairs the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee.

Peacekeeping

Expected Council Action

In May, the Council will hold an open debate on “Investing in Peace: Delivering Quality Training and Capacity Building to Improve Safety and Security and Performance of UN Peacekeepers”. Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi will chair the meeting. Secretary-General António Guterres; the force commander of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Lieutenant General Elias Rodrigues Martins Filho; and the director of the secretariat of the International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, Björn Holmberg, are expected to brief.

Background

The open debate is expected to focus on the ways in which quality training and capacity-building are crucial in the effort to improve safety, security and the performance of peacekeepers.

In late 2017, Lieutenant General (Retired) Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz led an independent review of peacekeeper fatalities resulting from hostile acts. Following this review, the Secretariat developed an action plan to improve the security of peacekeepers that identified four priority areas: changing mindsets, improving capacity, adopting a threat-oriented and risk management-focused footprint, and enhancing accountability.

The September 2018 Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations, endorsed by 151 member states and four regional organisations, recognised the importance of training for performance and for safety and security. The Declaration included a commitment by member states to provide well-trained and well-equipped uniformed personnel and to support the effective development and delivery of peacekeeping training, including pre-deployment preparation of personnel and capabilities, and the existing human rights screening policy. Member states expressed support for “a light

coordination mechanism related to training and capacity building” and emphasised the need for increased funding to better support training. Furthermore, the Secretariat committed to provide member states with training materials and standards that match operational requirements.

In his November 2018 report to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34), the Secretary-General updated member states on the implementation of a new peacekeeping training plan focusing on three areas:

- developing and disseminating training standards;
- building the capacity of troop- and police-contributing countries for training delivery; and
- the verification of that training to confirm that it accords with standards and that only trained personnel have been deployed.

The UN Secretariat is also developing a framework that integrates existing performance-related policies and standards. One of the new tools under the framework, the comprehensive performance assessment system (CPAS), has been applied to three pilot missions to assess whole-of-mission performance—civilian and uniformed components, staff and leadership—through data collection and analysis. In resolution 2436 of 21 September 2018, the Council reaffirmed its support for the development of a comprehensive and integrated performance policy framework that identifies clear standards of performance for evaluating all UN civilian and uniformed personnel working in and supporting peacekeeping operations.

Issues and Options

Council members and the larger UN membership have differing views on several issues related to peacekeeping. Member states were unable to agree on the annual report in the last session of the C-34 in February-March as

a result of substantive differences, particularly regarding funding modalities of AU peace support operations. The open debate will be an opportunity for member states to present their views and renew political commitment to the role that training and capacity-building play in support of the implementation of Council mandates.

The Council could adopt a presidential statement highlighting how important it is for capacities and training to match operational requirements and encouraging member states and the Secretariat to consider innovative ways of bridging this gap.

Indonesia could also prepare a summary of the main points made at the open debate and circulate it as an official document of the Council.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Generally, there is a high degree of unity within the Council concerning the need to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers and the key role of training and capacity-building prior to and during their deployment. Indonesia’s interest in this issue is also due to its position as the eighth largest troop- and police-contributing country (T/PCC) and the largest one currently in the Council.

As demonstrated during the negotiations on resolution 2436 in September 2018, views differ in the Council and among the wider membership over how to improve peacekeeping performance. Some Council members have prioritised increased accountability for under-performance while others, including some T/PCCs, have argued for broadening the focus of these discussions, underlining that performance cannot be delinked from other factors related to mandate implementation, including the roles of the Council, the Secretariat and mission leadership.

A long-standing position raised by China and Russia in peacekeeping thematic discussions in the Council is that of the centrality of the C-34 in the policy-making process.

UN DOCUMENTS ON PEACEKEEPING Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2447 (13 December 2018) was on strengthening support for police, justice and corrections areas in peacekeeping operations and special political missions. S/RES/2436 (21 September 2018) was on peacekeeping performance. **Secretary-General’s Report A/73/480** (5 November 2018) was the annual report to the C-34. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.8360** (21 September 2018) was the meeting at which the Council voted for the adoption of resolution 2436 on peacekeeping performance.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Expected Council Action

In May, the Council will hold its biannual debate on Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The High Representative for BiH, Valentin Inzko, will brief, presenting the latest report of the Office of the High Representative (OHR).

Key Recent Developments

More than six months after general elections in October 2018, BiH still has not formed a government. Nor have governments been formed in the Federation of BiH (FBiH)—the predominantly Bosniak and Croat regional entity—and in seven of the Federation’s ten cantons. The deadlock reflects continued divisions and tensions among Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs.

On 18 December 2018, the Central Election Commission issued amendments to fix the electoral law related to the indirect election of delegates to the Federation’s House of Peoples. The commission’s decision came after the parliament had failed to adopt the necessary legal changes following the Constitutional Court’s ruling in December 2016 that the electoral law was unconstitutional. Not replacing the unconstitutional provisions could, among other consequences, prevent the formation of a federation government. The main Bosniak party, the Party of Democratic Action (SDA), challenged the decision before the Constitutional Court, which declined to rule on the case, saying that the decision was an action of the electoral commission and not a law.

On 23 January, the SDA said it would challenge in the Constitutional Court the name of the predominantly Serb entity, Republika Srpska (RS), which it claims is discriminatory against non-Serbs. The High Representative criticised the move as “irresponsible and counterproductive”.

Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik, the Republika Srpska leader for the past eight years, was elected to BiH’s tripartite presidency in the elections. He has continued the divisive rhetoric regularly documented by the High Representative in his six-month reports. On 12 April, Dodik claimed that the massacre at Srebrenica in July 1995 was a “fabricated myth”. The mass murder, in which

over 8,000 Bosniak men and boys were killed by Bosnian Serb forces, has been deemed an act of genocide by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Court of Justice. In a newspaper interview published on 14 April, Dodik said that the RS “is already separated, but it has not been announced yet”, while predicting the unification of all Serb territories—a further example of public comments that the High Representative has described as challenging BiH’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.

On 18 April, the RS parliament approved amendments to the law on public security to establish a 1,100-person reserve police force. RS authorities have said that the establishment of a police reserve is to protect against security threats such as Islamist extremists and migrants passing through BiH. Critics consider that the reserve force could potentially be used in case the RS secedes. The SDA warned prior to the vote that the FBiH would form its own reserve units, should the RS authorities proceed with the proposal. Other amendments to the law that would impose fines or jail time for recording or taking photos of police have raised concerns from human rights groups and journalists that they will be used to curb press freedoms.

In other developments, NATO ministers agreed on 5 December to start implementing BiH’s long-stalled Membership Action Plan, a key step for BiH’s accession to NATO. BiH has not accepted the offer, as Bosnian Serb leaders oppose NATO membership.

On 20 March, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals increased the sentence of Radovan Karadzic, the former Bosnian Serb president of the RS during the 1992-1995 Bosnian war, from 40 years to life in prison. Both the defence and the prosecutor had appealed the result of his 2016 trial at the ICTY, in which he was convicted on charges of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. In its decision, the court found that the 40-year sentence had not been commensurate with the gravity of the crimes for which he had been convicted. (The International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals was established by the Security Council to take

over the functions of the tribunals on Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia).

Key Issues and Options

Ethnic divisions among Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs continue to create political gridlock and a dysfunctional state, hampering socio-economic reforms—including BiH’s EU integration—and fostering disregard of judicial decisions. Linked to this is the stalled progress on fulfilling the criteria and objectives for closing OHR. Regarding BiH’s failure to form a government, the main cause of disagreement reportedly remains whether the country’s NATO Membership Action Plan should be activated. A further issue, flagged by the High Representative last year, is pressure on BiH from migrants increasingly seeking to pass through the country.

Besides the debate, the Council could consider holding consultations to explore ways that the High Representative and the Council may work towards breaking the cycle of gridlock and reducing tensions in BiH.

Council Dynamics

Members regularly express frustration over the country’s political gridlock. Most raise concerns about the rhetoric and political initiatives of the RS authorities, which they view as challenging BiH’s territorial integrity and the General Framework Agreement for Peace. Russia supports the positions of the RS, which it argues is unfairly blamed for BiH’s problems, maintaining that political dysfunction and provocations in the FBiH are overlooked. Russia has been publicly critical of the High Representative, claiming that his reporting is not objective and that he should focus more on encouraging intra-Bosnian dialogue and trust. Divisions between the US and European Council members with Russia related to BiH’s Euro-Atlantic integration, particularly in NATO, have also been a factor in Council dynamics in the past five years.

The BiH Coordination and Drafting Group prepares the first draft of Council products on BiH. For 2019, it comprises Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, the UK and the US.

Libya

Expected Council Action

In May, Council members are expected to receive a briefing from the Special Representative and head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Ghassan Salamé, and the Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany, Ambassador Jürgen Schulz, who chairs the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee. ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda will also provide her semi-annual briefing to the Council.

The mandate of UNSMIL expires on 15 September, and the mandate of the Panel of Experts assisting the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee expires on 20 February 2020.

Key Recent Developments

April was marked by a dramatic escalation of the situation in Libya. On 4 April, General Khalifa Haftar, head of a militia known as the “Libyan National Army” (LNA), undertook a military offensive towards Tripoli. This action followed months of military clashes over control of key strategic locations in southern Libya, including oil fields, between LNA forces and militias affiliated with the UN-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA).

Salamé briefed Council members in consultations on 5 April via video teleconference, hours after he had accompanied Secretary-General António Guterres, who was on a visit to Libya, to a meeting with Haftar. At the Council meeting, members agreed to press elements calling on LNA forces to “halt all military movements” and expressing their intention to hold accountable those responsible for further conflict. However, Russia opposed a subsequent effort to single out the LNA in a Council press statement circulated after that meeting.

Council members met again on Libya, this time with Guterres, on 10 April. At the meeting, Guterres reiterated his calls for the parties to de-escalate the situation, agree on a ceasefire and a cessation of hostilities, and re-commit to the UN-facilitated political dialogue. Given the ongoing hostilities, the UN cancelled a national conference, originally scheduled for 14-16 April, which was intended to provide an opportunity for Libyans to decide how the nation should proceed in the transition towards a democratically governed state. One of the desired outcomes of the

conference was an agreement on the holding of parliamentary and presidential elections as well as a constitutional referendum.

After initial successes in towns near Tripoli, the LNA offensive encountered the joint opposition of armed groups, some affiliated with the GNA. Following the LNA’s heavy rocket shelling of the high-density residential neighbourhood of Abu Selim in Tripoli on the night of 17 April, Salamé reiterated that “the use of indiscriminate, explosive weapons in civilian areas constitutes a war crime” and stressed that “liability for such actions lies not only with the individuals who committed the indiscriminate attacks, but also potentially with those who ordered them”. Indiscriminate bombing has continued, including by what media reports have identified as unmanned aircraft from the United Arab Emirates. Efforts to have a Council unified position have been unsuccessful to date given the support that the LNA enjoys from some permanent members. The readout of a 15 April phone call between US President Donald Trump and Haftar indicated that Trump recognised Haftar’s “significant role in fighting terrorism and securing Libya’s oil resources” and that the two “discussed a shared vision for Libya’s transition to a stable, democratic political system”.

By 22 April, 254 people had been killed and 1,228 wounded in conflict in and around Tripoli since early April, according to the World Health Organization. UNHCR has called attention to the impact of hostilities on the thousands of migrants and refugees detained in Libya. For UNHCR, the situation continues to underscore that Libya is a dangerous place for refugees and migrants and that those rescued and intercepted at sea should not be returned there. According to the International Organization for Migration, as at 22 April, some 7000 families had been displaced from their homes since early April as a result of the hostilities.

At press time, Council members were unable to agree on a draft resolution that they had been negotiating during much of April. The draft, which was circulated by the UK, demanded that all parties in Libya immediately de-escalate the situation, commit to a ceasefire, and engage with the UN to ensure

a full and comprehensive cessation of hostilities throughout Libya.

ICC-Related Developments

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, whose extradition has been sought by the ICC, has been at large since he was set free by the Abu-Bakr al-Siddiq Brigade, a Zintan-based militia, in June 2017. According to the final report of the Panel of Experts, his lawyer stated that he resides in Zintan. Following his conviction and eventual early release by the Tripoli Criminal Court, Gaddafi submitted a motion to the ICC that his case was inadmissible. However, on 5 April, Pre-Trial Chamber I rejected this challenge by a majority, arguing that the decision of the Libyan court was still subject to appeal and was rendered in absentia. The majority also argued that Gaddafi was excluded from the amnesty/pardon provided in the law that eventually led to his release (Law No. 6 of 2015) and that granting amnesties and pardons for crimes against humanity is incompatible with internationally recognised human rights.

Former internal security chief Mohamed Khaled al-Tuhamy, allegedly responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in 2011 in Libya, also remains at large.

On 4 July 2018, Pre-Trial Chamber I of the ICC issued a second arrest warrant for Mahmoud Mustafa Busayf al-Werfalli, an LNA commander participating in General Khalifa Haftar’s Operation Dignity in Benghazi. According to the arrest warrants, al-Werfalli appears to be directly responsible for the deaths of more than 40 persons during eight different incidents in Benghazi or surrounding areas between June 2016 and January 2018, either by killing them himself or ordering their executions.

On 15 April, Bensouda expressed her deep concern at the escalation of violence in Libya “arising from the advance of the LNA towards Tripoli, and related fighting with forces aligned with the GNA”. She also reminded all commanders, military or civilian, who have effective control, authority and command over their forces that they themselves may be held criminally responsible for crimes committed by their subordinates.

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 22 March, the Human Rights Council during its 40th session adopted without a vote resolution 40/27 on technical assistance and capacity-building to improve human rights in Libya. Among other things, the resolution strongly condemns all violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law, notes with concern the humanitarian situation, strongly encourages the Government of National Accord to increase its efforts to protect and promote human rights, and requests OHCHR to monitor and report on human rights violations and abuses across Libya while continuing its engagement with UNSMIL.

UN DOCUMENTS ON LIBYA Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2441 (5 November 2018) renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts assisting the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee as well as the measures related to the illicit export of crude oil from Libya until 15 February 2020. S/RES/2434 (13 September 2018) extended UNSMIL’s mandate until 15 September 2019. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.8488 (20 March 2019) was the latest briefing by Salamé.

Libya

Key Issues and Options

Council members could adopt a resolution demanding a ceasefire and a cessation of hostilities in Libya. Council members could also hold an informal discussion to address their differences over the situation in Libya and to chart the path forward for achieving the Council's stated objectives of supporting a political transition.

At the appropriate time and in support of Salamé's work, Council members might consider a visiting mission to Libya and neighbouring countries to convey a unified message to key stakeholders about the need to resume engagement in the political process

in good faith, and threaten sanctions against those hindering it.

Council and Wider Dynamics

In general, Council members have expressed broad support for the role of UNSMIL in the stabilisation of Libya, but they have divergent views on how best to achieve this goal. Although the Council has repeatedly called upon member states to cease support for and official contact with parallel institutions in Libya, several countries, including some Council members, have ignored this call. This has been reflected in the current negotiations on the draft resolution, during which there

have been differences over how to refer to the LNA's role in the military escalation and how to characterise the threat of terrorism in Libya.

The semi-annual briefings by Bensouda on Libya have had limited impact, given divisions among Council members on whether to take action to support the implementation of ICC decisions. Council members have often reverted to general exhortations rather than addressing non-compliance in a more forceful and effective way.

The UK is the penholder on Libya, and Schulz chairs the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee.

Syria

Expected Council Action

In May, the Council will receive the monthly briefings on the humanitarian situation, the political process, and the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

Key Recent Developments

The humanitarian situation in Syria remains critical. After Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (a Council-designated terrorist group) took control of most of Idlib in January, there has been an upsurge in attacks by government forces and in civilian casualties despite an agreement by Turkey and Russia to carry out coordinated patrols in and around the Idlib de-escalation zone. On 4 April, Syrian airstrikes hit a market in the town of Kafr Nabl, killing at least a dozen people and wounding dozens.

The situation in the northeast of Syria continues to be fragile following the December 2018 announcement by the US that it would withdraw its troops, with the potential for an escalation of violence between Turkey and the Kurdish YPG militia, which is part of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

On 18 April, UN Humanitarian Coordinator Panos Moumtzis urged governments, some of which have refused to take back their citizens, not to abandon the 2,500 foreign children held in the Al-Hol camp, which is overcrowded with some 75,000 people, more

than 90 percent of whom are women and children. The camp hosts people who were living in territory held by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), including family members of foreign fighters, displaced by hostilities and the group's territorial loss.

Briefing the Council on 24 April, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Ursula Mueller highlighted how, eight years into the conflict, 11.7 million people inside Syria still require humanitarian assistance and protection. She emphasised the need for durable solutions for the thousands of people who remain stranded in the makeshift Rukban settlement, near Syria's southern border with Jordan. Although most residents have expressed a desire to leave the settlement, they have also highlighted various protection concerns. In recent weeks, over 7,000 people have left the camp, but Mueller reiterated that any returns or relocations must be voluntary, safe, dignified and well-informed and must abide by the core protection standards of international humanitarian law and human rights law. At the meeting, Nujeen Mustafa, a civil society representative, briefed the Council on the disproportionately high impact of the Syrian conflict on people with disabilities.

Rosemary DiCarlo, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, briefed the Council on 27 March on

developments on the five goals identified by Special Envoy for Syria Geir O. Pedersen for the period ahead. These include a sustained dialogue with the government and the opposition; concrete action on detainees, abductees and missing persons; engagement with a wide range of Syrians on the political process; convening a credible, balanced and inclusive constitutional committee as soon as possible; and improving international dialogue and cooperation on Syria. Since assuming office, Pedersen has held three separate meetings with the government of Syria in Damascus and with the opposition Syrian Negotiation Commission in Riyadh.

At a 25-26 April meeting, the Astana guarantors—Iran, Russia and Turkey—decided to hold the next round of consultations on the launching of a constitutional committee in Geneva. Pedersen has said he considers the convening of a constitutional committee as a potential door-opener for the political process.

The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, briefed Council members on 4 April. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Syrian government have held technical consultations to discuss the gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies identified by the OPCW in Syria's initial declaration in 2013

UN DOCUMENTS ON SYRIA [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2449](#) (13 December 2018) renewed the authorisation for cross-border and cross-line humanitarian access to Syria. [S/RES/2254](#) (18 December 2015) focused on the key elements of a political solution to the Syrian crisis. [S/RES/2118](#) (27 September 2013) was on the verification and destruction of Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles. [Secretary-General's Report S/2019/321](#) (16 April 2019) was the bi-monthly report on the humanitarian situation in Syria. [Security Council Letter S/2019/279](#) (28 March 2019) was an OPCW report on progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.8515](#) (24 April 2019) was a briefing on the humanitarian situation in Syria. [S/PV.8493](#) (27 March 2019) was a briefing on the political and the humanitarian situations in Syria.

Syria

of its chemical weapons stockpile. In March, these issues were reviewed and prioritised for further action, and a road map for future activities was developed.

Key Issues and Options

Given the crucial role of the Astana guarantors on both the political and humanitarian fronts, Council members could seek an informal interactive dialogue with their representatives to have a more action-oriented discussion regarding current and future efforts to avert a full-fledged military offensive in Idlib.

Despite international engagement on the establishment of the constitutional committee, some question whether any effort on the political process is likely to yield results, considering the trajectory of the conflict and the consolidation of control by the Syrian government. With Pedersen still early in his tenure, Council members could organise a retreat to hold an informal and frank discussion with

him to consider how, individually and collectively, they can best support the prospects for a political process based on resolution 2254.

Building on the information provided by DiCarlo in her 27 March briefing, the Council could suggest that the working group on detainees, abductees, handover of bodies and identification of missing persons, which includes the Astana guarantors and the UN, meet in Geneva in the near future and move beyond one-for-one exchanges to focus instead on the simultaneous release of unequal numbers of detainees/abductees. The Council could hold a meeting specifically to shed light on this little-discussed issue and call on the guarantors to use their influence on the government to engage in good faith on this matter.

The Council could request a briefing in consultations by the Secretariat to focus on the potential for instability in north-eastern Syria, call on the actors involved to exercise

restraint, and support good-offices efforts to address long-standing grievances.

Council members could invite the director of the OPCW to participate in an informal interactive dialogue on the work of the organisation on Syria.

Council Dynamics

Strong divisions among Council members persist on Syria. Although the arrival of a new envoy provides an opportunity to reinvigorate the political process, Council dynamics on Syria continue to be marked by polarisation, especially among the permanent members, on the three areas through which it engages on the conflict: political, humanitarian and chemical weapons.

Belgium, Germany and Kuwait are co-penholders on humanitarian issues in Syria.

Sudan/South Sudan

Expected Council Action

In May, the Council is expected to renew the mandate of the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) prior to its 15 May expiration.

Key Recent Developments

The security situation in Abyei, the disputed territory along the Sudan/South Sudan border, “remained generally calm, with sporadic incidents of violence”, according to the Secretary-General’s most recent report, which covers 16 October 2018 to 15 April. The biggest challenge is criminality as a result of the adverse economic situation and the prevalence of small arms, the report says. While not referring to the ousting of President Omar al-Bashir on 11 April by the Sudanese military and its possible impact on future progress in resolving the status of Abyei, the report notes that “relations between the Sudan and South Sudan have improved significantly in the past year”. However, it also states that there has been a “lack of meaningful progress

by both Governments in addressing critical issues, such as the completion of the withdrawal of forces from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone and the full establishment of border crossing corridors”. In this context, UNISFA “remains essential to the stability of the Abyei Area and border region”, and the report recommends that the mission’s mandate be extended for another six months. The report further calls on members of the Security Council “to pursue diplomatic efforts to impress upon the two countries the importance and urgency of progress towards resolving their border issues”, adding that an “open-ended mandate for UNISFA should not be acceptable”.

On 12 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2465, which extended until 15 October UNISFA’s support for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM), established in 2011 to conduct monitoring and verification activities along the Sudan-South Sudan border. However, it decided that as of 15

October, UNISFA’s authorised troop ceiling would decrease by 557 troops from the currently authorised level of 4,150, unless the Council again extends the mission’s support for the JBVMM. As in previous extensions since resolution 2353 of 24 May 2017, the Council indicated in resolution 2465 that this would be the final extension of such support unless Sudan and South Sudan “demonstrate measurable progress” in certain specified areas. In this regard, resolution 2465 sets out seven specific border-demarkation measures on which progress is required. It also expresses the Council’s “intention to request the Secretary-General to update recommendations on the reconfiguration of UNISFA’s mandate, including on UNISFA’s support to the JBVMM, taking into account the current political and security situation, in order to contribute to creating the conditions for a viable exit strategy for UNISFA”.

At press time, the Council was scheduled to receive a briefing on 30 April from Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations

UN DOCUMENTS ON SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2465 (12 April 2019) extended UNISFA’s support for the JBVMM until 15 October 2019. S/RES/2445 (15 November 2018) extended UNISFA’s mandate until 15 May 2019. S/RES/2438 (11 October 2018) extended UNISFA’s support for the JBVMM until 15 April 2019. **Secretary General’s Report S/2019/319** (16 April 2019) was on the situation in Abyei. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.8357** (20 September 2018) was a briefing on UNISFA and Sudan/South Sudan. **Security Council Letters S/2019/227** (8 March 2019) was on the appointment of the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa. S/2018/955 (24 October 2018) set out the functions of the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa.

Sudan/South Sudan

Jean-Pierre Lacroix on the Secretary-General's report. The Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Parfait Onanga-Anyanga (appointed in March) was also expected to brief the Council for the first time in this capacity. (Onanga-Anyanga was previously the Special Representative and head of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.) Consultations were scheduled to follow the briefing. Prior to this, the Council was last briefed on UNISFA and Sudan/South Sudan issues in consultations on 29 October 2018. The last public briefing on the issue took place on 20 September 2018.

Key Issues and Options

The key issue for the Council is to consider UNISFA's current mandate and strategic priorities as they relate to realities on the ground, including what modifications to make to the mandate and force structure, if any. A likely option is to renew UNISFA's mandate for another six months, as recommended in the Secretary-General's report. In doing so, the Council may consider altering current troop and police levels as well as whether to impose additional criteria for progress by the parties on border demarcation.

Another issue is what steps the Council should take to encourage greater progress in the political process to resolve the final status of Abyei. An option would be for Council members to consider the request in the Secretary-General's report to enhance "the mission's civilian component in order to advance its support to the African Union Commission and the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, as well as to the two parties." Council members may also reflect on how best to support Onanga-Anyanga going forward and will likely be interested in hearing his assessment of the situation.

Council Dynamics

As in previous years, the Council's focus on the situation in Abyei remains limited, largely overshadowed by its ongoing engagement on South Sudan and Sudan (Darfur). However, the renewal of UNISFA's support for the JBVMM in April and the upcoming renewal of the mission's mandate in May present opportunities for Council members to direct attention to the issue.

During negotiations in April on the renewal of UNISFA's support for the JBVMM, the US, consistent with its position in October 2018, sought neither to reduce the mission's

authorised troop ceiling (as it did in April 2018), nor to suspend the mission's support for the JBVMM (as it did in November 2017), both of which then-Council member Ethiopia and others successfully resisted. As a result, negotiations ahead of adopting resolution 2465 proceeded comparatively smoothly.

At press time, it was unclear whether negotiations in May on renewing UNISFA's mandate will also proceed smoothly. Key issues during negotiations on the last mandate renewal in November 2018 and the adoption of resolution 2445 included troop reductions, the number of additional police personnel, and whether to request the Secretary-General to appoint a civilian deputy head of mission (ultimately not requested). (For more details, see our *What's In Blue* story of 14 November 2018.)

The US has repeatedly asserted that UNISFA is persisting longer than intended for an interim force and that Sudan and South Sudan are taking advantage of the relative stability that UNISFA provides to delay attempts to resolve the status of Abyei. It has also pressed for a viable exit strategy for the mission.

The US is the penholder on Abyei.

Lebanon

Expected Council Action

In May, the Council expects to receive the semi-annual briefing on the latest report on the implementation of resolution 1559. Adopted in 2004, resolution 1559 called for the disarmament of all militias and the extension of government control over all Lebanese territory.

This briefing, usually conducted by the Special Coordinator for Lebanon or an official from the Department of Peacebuilding and Political Affairs, has traditionally been held in consultations.

Key Recent Developments

On 22-23 March, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo travelled to Lebanon, where he met

with, among others, President Michel Aoun, Prime Minister Saad Hariri and Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil. While reiterating the US's continued support for Lebanese institutions, Pompeo expressed concern over the destabilising influence of Hezbollah and Iran. In a press conference following his meeting with Bassil, Pompeo said that Hezbollah has put the Lebanese people at risk for 34 years and that the organisation defies the state through a terrorist wing committed to spreading destruction. Hezbollah made significant gains during the May 2018 parliamentary elections, giving the group substantial influence in the current Lebanese government.

Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix visited Lebanon

from 9 to 13 March. During his meetings with Lebanese leadership, Lacroix emphasised the importance of close cooperation between the Lebanese government and the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in preserving the relative calm in southern Lebanon and ensuring implementation of UNIFIL's mandate. He urged the parties to work towards a permanent ceasefire and long-term solution to the conflict.

UNIFIL head and force commander Major General Stefano Del Col chaired a tripartite meeting on 2 April with the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defence Forces to discuss the situation along the Blue Line, the border demarcation between Israel and Lebanon, and the discovery of clandestine

UN DOCUMENTS ON LEBANON [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2433](#) (30 August 2018) renewed UNIFIL's mandate for another year. [S/RES/1559](#) (2 September 2004) urged withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, extension of the Lebanese government's control over all Lebanese territory, and free and fair presidential elections. [Secretary-General's Reports S/2019/237](#) (14 March 2019) was the report on the implementation of resolution 1701. [S/2018/920](#) (15 October 2018) was the semi-annual report on the implementation of resolution 1559. [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2016/10](#) (22 July 2016) stressed the importance of Lebanon electing a president by May 2017 in order to maintain stability. [Security Council Press Statement SC/13696](#) (8 February 2019) welcomed the formation of the new unity government in Lebanon.

Lebanon

cross-border tunnels, among other things. While noting the recent increase of activity along the Blue Line, Del Col said that the area has remained generally stable because of the restraint shown by the parties, as well as UNIFIL's engagement and liaison activities.

The new Lebanese government led by Hariri faces several challenges that it must address in the coming months. Chief among them are growing public debt and slow economic growth. In addition, Lebanon continues to carry the burden of hosting approximately one million Syrian refugees. Since the Syrian government regained control of most of its territory, the Lebanese leadership has been advocating for increased refugee repatriation to Syria.

US President Donald Trump announced on 8 April that the US would designate the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a foreign terrorist organisation. The IRGC is under the direct control of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and operates independently of Iran's traditional armed forces. The US has accused the IRGC of providing financial and weapons support for terrorist organisations in the region, including Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Key Issues and Options

The situation in UNIFIL's area of operations

has remained generally calm. The Council remains concerned, however, that there has been little progress towards implementing the main objectives of resolution 1701, including a permanent ceasefire, more than a decade after its adoption.

A principal problem for the Council is that Hezbollah and other non-state actors still maintain significant amounts of weaponry. This inhibits the government's ability to exercise full authority over its territory, poses a threat to Lebanon's sovereignty and stability, and contravenes its obligations under resolutions 1559 and 1701, the latter of which called for a cessation of hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel in 2006. A related issue is Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian civil war and the movement of arms from Syria to Hezbollah.

Lebanon's hosting of approximately one million refugees from Syria is also of deep humanitarian concern, and in that regard, the Council could request a briefing by UNHCR on the prospects for an acceleration of refugee returns and what is being done to address issues of concern to refugees.

Council Dynamics

The Council has been united in supporting Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity and security, and the country's efforts to

insulate itself from the damaging effects of the Syrian conflict. The Council is also unified in its recognition of the crucial role the Lebanese Armed Forces play in responding to security challenges.

Members are divided, however, in their views of the security dynamics in the region and the role of the mission. This has been particularly evident during the negotiations on UNIFIL's mandate renewal over the past two years. The US has continued to emphasise the threat posed by Iran, Hezbollah, and the proliferation of weapons in southern Lebanon and has promoted a more active role for UNIFIL in confronting these threats. It has also raised concerns over the growing influence of Hezbollah in the new Lebanese government.

On the mission's configuration, the US has strongly advocated for a reduction of UNIFIL's Maritime Task Force, leading towards its eventual termination. Most of the other members, however, share the view that the mission's mandate and tasks should remain unchanged, and are cautious about drastic mandate changes because of the potential impact on the fragile calm that has been maintained in southern Lebanon for over a decade.

France is the penholder on Lebanon.

Group of Five for the Sahel

Expected Council Action

In May, the Council expects a briefing on the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, which the group—Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger (G5 Sahel)—decided to establish in February 2017 to combat terrorist and criminal groups in the region.

Key Recent Developments

In January, the FC-G5S resumed operations, which had been suspended after the June 2018 attack on its former headquarters in Sévaré. Although it has carried out five operations in Mali this year, bringing the FC-G5S

to full operational capacity continues to be difficult.

On 5 February, the G5 Sahel held the fifth ordinary session of its heads of state conference, in Ouagadougou, which marked the start of Burkina Faso's presidency of the regional group. In a communiqué, the G5 Sahel reiterated its commitment to mobilising its own resources while calling upon the international community to respect commitments made during the February 2018 donor conference for the Sahel in Brussels and at the December 2018 donor conference in Nouakchott to support the G5 Sahel's Priority Investment Programme. The G5 Sahel

repeated its call for the Security Council to authorise the FC-G5S under a Chapter VII resolution and for closer cooperation with the UN.

Over the last year, the expansion of terrorist groups in central Mali has exacerbated long-standing intercommunal tensions between ethnic groups over access to land and water. On 23 March, at least 160 Fulani civilians, including women and children, were killed in the village of Ogossagou in central Mali, reportedly by armed elements of the Dogon ethnic group. On 18 April, Prime Minister Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga and his entire government resigned, one day before a

UN DOCUMENTS ON THE SAHEL Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2391 (8 December 2017) outlined the ways in which MINUSMA is expected to support the G5 Sahel joint force and described how the UN will be reimbursed for its assistance. S/RES/2359 (21 June 2017) welcomed the deployment of the G5 Sahel joint force. Security Council Press Statement SC/13584 (15 November 2018) encouraged the FC-G5S to conduct new operations and become fully operational as soon as possible and called on donors to honour their commitments to the force.

Group of Five for the Sahel

possible vote in the parliament on a no-confidence motion in the government over Mali's worsening insecurity.

Attacks by armed groups in Burkina Faso, which started in 2016, intensified throughout much of the country. On 31 March, armed attackers raided the town of Arbinda in the north, killing a religious leader and six members of his family. That triggered intercommunal clashes that claimed more than 60 lives. According to OCHA, attacks and insecurity in Burkina Faso's Est, Centre-Nord, Nord and Sahel regions have led to an unprecedented humanitarian emergency. Over 138,000 people have been uprooted from their homes, two-thirds of whom have been displaced since the start of 2019. A Human Rights Watch report in March spotlighted atrocities committed by extremist groups and Burkinabe security forces during counter-terrorism operations, with the latter allegedly having executed at least 116 men accused of supporting or harbouring armed extremists between September 2018 and February 2019.

The Security Council visited Mali and Burkina Faso from 21 to 25 March. The focus of the Council mission was to assess the implementation of the 2015 Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in Mali, the operational status of the G5 Sahel joint force, and the deterioration of the security situation in Burkina Faso. Council members met with the FC-G5S force commander, General Hanena Ould Sidi, and the Executive Secretary of the G5 Sahel, Maman Sidiko. Burkina Faso's president, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, briefed members on the priorities of the one-year Burkinabe presidency of the G5 Sahel: making the FC-G5S fully operational, including its police component; implementing the Priority Investment Programme; reinforcing the Permanent Secretariat of the G5 Sahel, which is headquartered in Nouakchott; and empowering women and children.

On 28 March, a high-level meeting on the G5 Sahel at UN headquarters in New York focused on the issue of sustainable financing and support for the FC-G5S. The foreign ministers of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger participated. They reiterated concerns raised during the Council visiting mission about the

territorial constraints of the support that the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) can provide to the FC-G5S under resolution 2391 of December 2017; the resolution restricts this support to FC-G5S forces operating on Malian territory. In a communiqué following its 9 April meeting on the Lake Chad and Sahel regions, the AU Peace and Security Council underlined the need for the Security Council to extend MINUSMA's support beyond the limits of the Malian territory to all other components of the FC-G5S.

In response to the deteriorating situation in Burkina Faso, the Secretary-General earlier this year appointed Mohammed Ibn Chambas, the Special Representative and head of the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel, to lead a sustaining peace review that will assess how the UN Country Team is organised to address the challenges facing Burkina Faso, define priorities, and lay out how the UN can better leverage its capacity to assist the country. At an Executive Committee Meeting in late March, a decision was made to reinforce the office of the UN Resident Coordinator and increase the reach of UN agencies, funds and programmes throughout the country.

Chad and Niger have continued to battle armed groups in several border areas, including an escalation of attacks by the armed group Boko Haram. According to OCHA, the attacks displaced 18,000 people in southwest Niger between March and mid-April. The group killed 23 Chadian troops in a night-time attack on 21-22 March.

Key Issues and Options

Despite efforts by regional countries and external partners, armed extremist groups and intercommunal fighting are on the rise across the Sahel, especially in Burkina Faso. A key issue is assessing progress and challenges in making the FC-G5S fully operational. Limiting factors include tensions regarding the force among the five countries; unclear sustainability of its financing and the inadequacy of current support modalities; equipment shortages; limited basic infrastructure, and deficient training. Promoting and ensuring that the FC-G5S complies with

international humanitarian law, which is necessary for UN support and critical for effective counter-terrorism, is a related issue.

The importance of complementing security measures with efforts to address structural problems that contribute to regional instability through the UN's Sahel Strategy and the G5 Sahel Priority Investment Programme is a further key issue. Problems in common facing Sahelian countries include poor governance, poverty, lack of opportunities for young people, and climate change.

A continuing option before the Council is to establish a dedicated UN support office, funded through assessed contributions and independent of MINUSMA, to deliver a support package for the FC-G5S across its entire area of operations, as the Secretary-General has recommended.

Another option is for the Council to consider adopting a resolution authorising MINUSMA to provide life support (rations and fuel) to FC-G5S battalions operating beyond Mali, if transportation of these items is provided by the joint force or another third party.

Council Dynamics

The Council is divided over whether the UN should provide financial support to the FC-G5S. While resolution 2391 in December 2017 established some multilateral support for the FC-G5S, most members—including France, which has championed the joint force—seem supportive of providing further support through the UN. The US, though, prefers to assist the FC-G5S bilaterally, and continues to object to proposals that could incur UN assessed contributions or which would expand the geographic scope of MINUSMA support as G5 Sahel countries have recently requested. Due to the divisions, members have opted to wait until the joint force becomes more operational to reconsider the Secretary-General's recommendation to establish a UN support office, stating in a November 2018 press statement that they would “discuss international support to the joint force of the G-5 Sahel, after its full operationalization and in parallel to its first operational results”.

France is the penholder on the G5 Sahel joint force.

Iraq

Expected Council Action

In May, the Council is expected to receive briefings on the Secretary-General's latest reports on the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and also on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property (including the national archives). The Council will also renew the mandate of UNAMI, which is set to expire on 31 May 2019. In addition, the Council expects to receive the second report on the activities of the UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) in May.

Key Recent Developments

On 13 February, the Council held its most recent briefing on Iraq, during which the members generally welcomed the formation of the new government and called on political stakeholders to reach an agreement on the appointment of the remaining members of the cabinet. Special Representative and head of UNAMI Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert also expressed concern over the prolonged process of appointing the remaining cabinet members, and called on the political blocs in Iraq to reach a compromise. Although there has been a notable decrease of terrorist activity in Iraq, she stressed that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) still poses a threat.

Six days after the briefing, the Council adopted a presidential statement welcoming the cooperation between Iraq and Kuwait on the issue of missing Kuwaiti nationals and third country nationals and the return of Kuwaiti property, including the national archives. The statement noted, however, that there are still 369 unresolved cases of missing Kuwaiti and third-party nationals.

In March, the government of Iraq and

UNITAD conducted its first exhumations in Kojo village in the Sinjar region. The remains of some 30 individuals were recovered. The remains and evidence were then transferred to Baghdad for further forensic analysis by the investigative team. During its peak of power from 2014 to 2017, ISIL committed serious human rights violations against the Yazidi ethnic minority in Sinjar.

On 6 April, Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi met in Tehran with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. During their meeting, Khamenei urged Mahdi to request the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq.

Two days later, US President Donald Trump announced that the US would designate the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a foreign terrorist organisation. The IRGC is under Khamenei's direct control and operates independently of Iran's traditional armed forces. The US has accused the IRGC of providing financial and weapons support for terrorist organisations in the region, including various Shiite militias in Iraq.

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 21 February, members of the 1518 Iraq Sanctions Committee held a meeting with the Special Representative of INTERPOL to the UN, Emmanuel Roux. The discussion centred on the possibility of cooperation between the committee and INTERPOL. During March and April, the committee removed 26 entities from the sanctions list.

Key Issues and Options

Given that Iraq still does not have a fully formed government, the Council will continue to follow closely developments related to this issue. In renewing UNAMI's mandate, the Council could urge political parties to compromise to enable remaining cabinet positions to be filled.

Another option would be for the Council to conduct a visiting mission to Iraq to get a better understanding of current challenges on the ground.

As for efforts to hold members of ISIL accountable for international crimes, the Council will continue to monitor developments regarding the investigative team. It could request a briefing from Karim Asad Ahmad Khan, the Special Adviser and head of UNITAD, on the team's report, or alternatively discuss the report with him in closed consultations.

Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members are unanimous in their support for UNAMI. The mandate of the mission has not changed since resolution 1770 was adopted in 2007. Some members have expressed interest in incorporating stronger language in the UNAMI resolution on such issues as the promotion of national reconciliation; accountability; security sector reform; deeper political and economic reforms; women, peace and security; children and armed conflict; and the right of internally displaced persons to return to their homes. It seems that the US, the penholder, and Iraq, the host country, are reluctant to make any substantial changes to UNAMI's mandate.

Some member states, especially those opposed to the death penalty, have had concerns about the possibility that evidence shared by UNITAD could be used in criminal proceedings in which capital punishment could be imposed. This may continue to affect some member states' willingness to contribute to the trust fund established by the Secretary-General.

The US is the penholder on Iraq issues in general, and the UK is the penholder on Iraq-Kuwait issues. Poland is the chair of the 1518 Iraq Sanctions Committee.

UN DOCUMENTS ON IRAQ [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2421](#) (14 June 2018) extended the mandate of UNAMI for ten months. [S/RES/2379](#) (21 September 2017) established an investigative team to collect, store and preserve evidence of ISIL crimes in Iraq. [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2019/1](#) (19 February 2019) was a statement welcoming the cooperation between Iraq and Kuwait on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and the return of missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives. [Secretary General's Reports S/2019/101](#) (1 February 2019) was on UNAMI [S/2019/78](#) (25 January 2019) was on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives. [Security Council Letter S/2018/1031](#) (15 November 2018) was from the Special Adviser and head of UNITAD, transmitting the first report on the activities of UNITAD. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.8462](#) (13 February 2019) was a briefing on the situation in Iraq. [S/PV.8412](#) (4 December 2018) was the first briefing by Karim Asad Ahmad Khan, the Special Adviser and head of UNITAD. [Sanctions Committee Documents SC/13736](#) (13 March 2019) was a press release about the removal of four entities from the sanctions list. [SC/13710](#) (21 February 2019) was a press release about the meeting of the 1518 Sanctions Committee and the Special Representative of INTERPOL to the UN. [SC/13682](#) (29 January 2019) was a press release about the removal of eight entities from the sanctions list.

Counter-Terrorism

Expected Council Action

In May, the Council is scheduled to receive its annual briefing from the chairs of its counter-terrorism-related committees: Ambassador Dian Triansyah Djani (Indonesia), chair of the 1540 Committee, which focuses on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and of the 1267/1989/2253 Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee; and Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra Velásquez (Peru), chair of the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC).

Background and Key Recent Developments

There have been several developments on counter-terrorism in the Council since the last joint briefing in October.

1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee

On 28 March, the Council held an open debate on combatting the financing of terrorism, with briefings by the Under-Secretary-General of the UN Counter-Terrorism Office, Vladimir Voronkov (via video teleconference); Marshall Billingslea, president of the Financial Action Task Force, an international organisation that develops standards for suppressing the financing of terrorism and effectively implementing existing measures to combat terrorism; and Mercy Buku, an expert in anti-money-laundering and countering the financing of terrorism.

During the open debate, the Council adopted resolution 2462, which reiterated commitments on criminalising terrorism and the financing of terrorism that had been established by resolution 1373 and supplemented by further resolutions.

The resolution further decided that states shall ensure that their domestic laws establish serious criminal offenses for the wilful provision or collection of funds, directly or indirectly, with the intention that the funds should be used, or in the knowledge that they are to be used, for the benefit of terrorist organisations or individual terrorists for any purpose. States are to ensure that this

measure and all others taken to counter terrorism comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international refugee law.

1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee

On 11 February, Voronkov and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) Executive Director Michèle Coninsx briefed the Council on the eighth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL. Regarding ISIL's financial strength, Voronkov said the report "notes that despite some loss of revenue because of territorial setbacks, ISIL could sustain its operations through accessible reserves, in cash or investments in businesses". Coninsx reviewed CTED's findings on the increased use of mobile payment services by terrorist groups and concerns about the possible exploitation of blockchain technology and the misuse of cryptocurrencies for malicious, criminal or terrorist purposes.

On 21 February, Council members condemned the 14 February suicide bombing in Jammu and Kashmir, noting that over 40 Indian paramilitary personnel had died and dozens had been wounded in the attack, for which Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) claimed responsibility. In March, France, the UK and the US proposed in the committee that the founder of JeM, Masood Azhar, be listed, but China has placed a hold on the listing. At press time, Council members were still considering possible ways forward on the issue of listing Masood Azhar.

On 15 March, Council members condemned the terrorist attack that took place at Al Noor and Linwood mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, earlier that day, which resulted in at least 50 killed and many wounded.

1540 Committee

On 19 March, Djani briefed the Council on the committee's activities. He noted that 182 countries have submitted initial reports

providing the committee with information on the measures they have taken, or plan to take, to comply with their obligations under resolution 1540. He added that the committee has begun its preparatory work for its upcoming comprehensive review of the implementation of the resolution, requested by the Council in resolution 1977 (2011).

On 2 April, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu briefed the Council, ahead of the 2020 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. She cautioned that the disarmament success of the post-Cold War era is being replaced with dangerous rhetoric about the utility of nuclear weapons and an increased reliance on these weapons in security doctrines, making the prospect of the use of nuclear weapons higher than it has been in generations.

Council and Wider Dynamics

In general, counter-terrorism enjoys the support of all Council members; the importance of curbing the financing of terrorism, in particular, is a consensus issue. Some differences in approach between Council members were evident during negotiations over resolution 2462, on the nexus between counter-terrorism efforts and international humanitarian law. Humanitarian and human rights groups had strong reactions to the initial French draft text. They viewed the language as restricting humanitarian activities, otherwise permitted under and forming part of international humanitarian law, which requires them to interact with parties to a conflict that may be considered by states as terrorist organisations, particularly in areas controlled by groups such as ISIL. Several Council members were sympathetic to these concerns after they were flagged, and the final text attempts to address them, balanced with the positions of members such as Russia and the US, that were less amenable to changes as they wanted the text to eliminate possible situations of funnelling money to terrorists through non-governmental organisations under the guise of legitimate activities.

UN DOCUMENTS ON COUNTER-TERRORISM [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2462](#) (28 March 2019) was a resolution on combatting the financing of terrorism. [S/RES/1373](#) (28 September 2001) created obligations on states to suppress the financing of terrorism. [Secretary-General's Report S/2019/103](#) (1 February 2019) was the eighth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.8500](#) (2 April 2019) was a briefing by Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu. [S/PV.8496](#) (28 March 2019) was an open debate on the financing of terrorism. [S/PV.8487](#) (19 March 2019) was a briefing by the Chair of the 1540 Committee. [S/PV.8460](#) (11 February 2019) was a briefing on the eighth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh). [Security Council Press Statements SC/13788](#) (22 April 2019) condemned the series terrorist attacks that took place in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday, 21 April 2019, which resulted in nearly 300 killed and hundreds more wounded. [SC/13740](#) (15 March 2019) condemned the terrorist attack that took place at Al Noor and Linwood mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. [SC/13712](#) (21 February 2019) condemned the 14 February suicide bombing in Jammu and Kashmir.

Somalia

Expected Council Action

The Council is expected to renew its authorisation of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), due to expire on 31 May.

The Council will also be briefed on the Secretary-General's report on the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), due by 15 May.

Key Recent Developments

The armed group Al-Shabaab remains highly active. On 23 March, Al-Shabaab fighters detonated a suicide car bomb and then stormed a government building, killing 15 people including the country's deputy labour minister, according to the police. On 18 April, a car bomb exploded in Mogadishu, killing five people. The following day, five family members of the deputy minister for fisheries were fatally shot.

On 14 April, a US airstrike in Puntland reportedly killed Abdulhakim Dhuqub, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's deputy leader in Somalia. The US has increased its Somalia operations, reporting 28 airstrikes in 2019 thus far, compared with 47 for the whole of 2018 and 35 in 2017. A 20 March report by Amnesty International claimed that 14 civilians had been killed and eight wounded in five US airstrikes investigated between April 2017 and December 2018. The US denied the allegations but later acknowledged that a woman and child were killed in an airstrike in April 2018.

On 27 March, the Council unanimously renewed the mandate of UNSOM. The mission will continue to provide strategic support and advice to Somalia and AMISOM on peacebuilding and state-building in the areas of governance, security sector reform, and constitutional review, and it will assist the federal government in building its capacity to promote respect for human rights. The resolution further reiterates the Council's regret at Somalia's decision to

expel the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Nicholas Haysom, and its expectation of full cooperation between Somalia and the UN, including the new Special Representative when appointed. (Haysom was declared *persona non grata* by Somalia at the end of 2018 after criticising Somalia for violence against demonstrators in an election-related incident in South West State.) The resolution also calls on Somalia and South West State to address allegations of human rights violations and abuses prior to the South West State elections.

On 13 February, the AU Peace and Security Council adopted a new Concept of Operations (CoP) for AMISOM for 2018-2021, in accordance with resolution 2431, to provide clear target dates for the progressive transfer of security responsibility from AMISOM to Somali security institutions and forces. The AU Peace and Security Council said in a communiqué that the successful implementation of the CoP depends on the effective generation of the Somali Security Forces necessary for the gradual and progressive takeover of security responsibilities from AMISOM, the presence of the required number of well-trained and equipped AMISOM personnel, and predictable resources for AMISOM to support the Somali transition. AMISOM's leadership met in Nairobi on 2 April to discuss the budget for programmes under the CoP.

Sanctions-Related Developments

On 18 April, the 751 Somalia Sanctions Committee met with National Security Advisor to the President of Somalia Abdi Said M Ali. Ali discussed progress on Somali security and political reforms.

Key Issues and Options

A key issue is ensuring that AMISOM retains the capability and means to strengthen and assist the Somali forces so that these forces can progressively take the lead in providing

security while avoiding a premature handover of security responsibilities.

Closely related is the need to secure predictable and sustainable funding for AMISOM and Somali security institutions throughout this process. One option in this regard, although unlikely given current Council dynamics, would be for the Council to adopt language in support of direct UN funding for AMISOM during this transition period or express the willingness to consider this possibility in the future.

The Council may further consider the issue of troop strength.

Council Dynamics

In the past, including during last year's negotiations on resolution 2431, positions taken on the pace of troop reductions reflected the underlying divisions among Council members. While then-Council member Ethiopia and others cautioned against downsizing AMISOM prematurely, France and the US pressed for strict timelines for further reductions. UNSOM's assessment of the security situation and progress in the Somali transition may prove influential ahead of negotiations over AMISOM's new mandate in this regard.

The AU continues to press the Council to do more to ensure predictable and sustainable funding for AMISOM. In addition to the logistical support given through the UN Support Office in Somalia and the voluntary contributions provided through the UN trust fund for AMISOM, several Council members have been willing to consider providing direct funding to AMISOM through UN assessed contributions. The US remains opposed to the idea, however. In the past, Council members have been unable to agree on specific language on this issue beyond general support for sustainable funding without committing the Council to any position.

The UK is the penholder on Somalia.

Protection of Civilians

Expected Council Action

In May, the Council is scheduled to receive the Secretary-General's report on protection of civilians and hold its annual open debate on the topic. It seems that Indonesia, as Council president, is planning to focus the debate on community engagement as a means of enhancing the protection of civilians. Secretary-General António Guterres and representatives of the ICRC and civil society are expected to brief.

Key Recent Developments

The situation for civilians in conflict continues to be troubling, including across the Council's agenda. On average, 91 percent of reported casualties of explosive weapons in populated areas are civilians. In Yemen, the number of people in need has increased by two million since last year to 24.1 million people (80 percent of the population), including 11.3 million children. The number of people needing humanitarian assistance in Syria is 13.1 million. In Iraq, 6.7 million people need humanitarian assistance, and 1.7 million remain internally displaced as a result of armed conflict. The number of civilians killed in conflict-related action in Afghanistan in 2018 increased by 11 percent to 3,804. In South Sudan, some 4.4 million children are in need, while 2.2 million children are out of school, and around 600,000 pregnant and lactating women will be acutely malnourished in 2019. In Nigeria, the conflict in the northeast has continued to cause humanitarian suffering, with 7.7 million in need of assistance and 1.7 million internally displaced. All told, the UN has estimated that in 2019 over 130 million people will require humanitarian assistance.

Likewise, ICRC President Peter Maurer recently said in a speech that the organisation has almost doubled both its budget and staff in the last few years because of demand. According to the ICRC's numbers, two billion people are affected by fragility, conflict or violence, and it predicts that by 2030 half of these people will live in extreme poverty. In 2017, it found that 68.5 million people were displaced because of violence and conflict. In an analysis of 20 areas of conflict, the ICRC noted that most conflicts are lasting longer than they did in decades past.

The Security Council's most recent open debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict was held on 22 May 2018. Poland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jacek Czaputowicz, presided, as Poland held the Council presidency that month. The briefers were Secretary-General Guterres; Director-General of the ICRC, Yves Daccord; and Hanaa Edwar of the Iraqi Al-Amal Association, a civil society group.

Guterres highlighted three actions to advance the protection agenda, taken from his 2018 report. First, he said that governments around the world should develop policy frameworks for protecting civilians in conflict, including in urban warfare. Second, UN member states should back attempts by the UN and others to engage with non-state armed groups in developing policies, codes of conduct, and action plans to support and protect civilians. Finally, member states should increase their advocacy for the protection of civilians through ensuring accountability to end impunity for serious violations. Daccord stressed his concern over the large gap between policy and implementation with respect to the protection of civilians. Edwar spoke of ways the Iraqi people had suffered in conflict in past years, drawing from her first-hand experience of the destruction of Mosul.

Since the May 2018 open debate, there have been two thematic outcomes on the protection of civilians. On 24 May 2018, the Council adopted resolution 2417 that focused on the link between armed conflict and food insecurity. The resolution strongly condemned the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare, as well as the unlawful denial of humanitarian access. It further requested the Secretary-General to brief the Security Council every 12 months on the resolution's implementation in the context of his annual briefing on the protection of civilians. On 21 September 2018, the Council adopted a presidential statement recognising the contribution of the updated aide memoire, a document designed to facilitate the Council's consideration of issues pertaining to the protection of civilians in armed conflict and created through discussions between the Security Council, OCHA, concerned UN departments and agencies, and other relevant

humanitarian organisations.

On 1 April, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas chaired a briefing on "Promoting and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security." The briefers were Maurer, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock, and Naz Modirzadeh, founding Director of the Harvard Law School Program on International Law and Armed Conflict.

Several Arrria-formula meetings during the past six months have focused on aspects of the protection agenda. These include meetings on the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on persons with disabilities (3 December 2018); enhancing the effectiveness of atrocity crime protection (10 December 2018); the protection of medical care in armed conflict (21 December 2018); the protection of children affected by armed conflict in contexts where humanitarian space is shrinking, with a specific focus on the Central African Republic (12 February); protecting humanitarian and medical personnel (1 April); and human rights in peace operations (17 April).

Key Issues and Options

While the Council has engaged extensively on the protection of civilians at both the thematic and country-specific level during the past two decades, a key issue is how to work toward more consistent implementation of this agenda on the ground. In this regard, member states may decide to emphasise in their interventions how protection can be enhanced in country-specific cases with respect to compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law, the protection of medical personnel and facilities, and humanitarian access, among other pertinent matters.

Another key issue is how best to secure follow-up and engagement on protection issues in the aftermath of the debate. In this regard, Indonesia could decide to produce a chair's summary, capturing the main proposals made during the open debate. Council members could also decide to use the ideas generated during the debate to produce an outcome afterwards.

UN DOCUMENTS ON PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2417](#) (24 May 2018) was on the link between armed conflict and food insecurity. [Secretary-General's Report S/2018/462](#) (14 May 2018) was the Secretary-General's annual report on protection of civilians in armed conflict. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.8267](#) (24 May 2018) was the meeting at which the Council adopted resolution 2417 on the link between armed conflict and food insecurity. [S/PV.8264](#) (22 May 2018) was the ministerial-level open debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

Protection of Civilians

Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members and the wider membership are acutely aware of the continued devastating impact of armed conflict in the 20 years since the Council held its first meeting on protection of civilians. The debate affords member states an opportunity to emphasise their support for the protection agenda, while underscoring that more needs to be done to

translate advances at the normative level into effective country-specific strategies. As part of its effort to frame the discussion around community engagement, Indonesia may discuss the role of community engagement in gaining the trust of conflict-affected communities and enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping.

Council members and other member states may also discuss efforts to implement

resolution 2417 on the link between conflict and food insecurity and resolution 2286 on the protection of health care in armed conflict, as the Secretary-General is required to report on these issues on an annual basis and may refer to them in his briefing.

The UK is the penholder on the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

Burundi

Expected Council Action

In May, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Michel Kafando, is scheduled to brief the Council on the situation in Burundi in accordance with resolution 2303 of 29 July 2016, which requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council on Burundi every three months. Ambassador Jürg Lauber (Switzerland), the chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, may also brief.

Key Recent Developments

The security and political situation in Burundi—which deteriorated sharply after April 2015 when Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza announced that he would run for a controversial third term later that year—remains unsettled. While the Burundian government maintains that the security situation is good throughout the country, serious human rights abuses continue to be committed daily with impunity, mainly by the government and the Imbonerakure, the youth wing of Nkurunziza's party.

Arbitrary killing, enforced disappearances, torture, and arbitrary detentions continue as the overall level of oppression and state control over Burundian society persists. Furthermore, these actions are taking place in an environment where freedom of expression, association and assembly are suppressed.

On 29 March, Burundi's National Council of Communication (CNC) announced the withdrawal of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)'s operating licence for producing a "slandrous, deceitful and scathing" documentary and the continued suspension

of the Voice of America "until further notice" for employing a Burundian journalist accused of involvement in the failed coup d'état of 13 May 2015.

According to the UNHCR, there were 352,000 refugees in neighbouring countries as at 31 March. At the same time, a total of 61,685 refugees voluntarily returned to Burundi in 2017 and 2018. There were also 130,562 internally displaced people as at 28 February.

The latest Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region said that strained relations between Burundi and the East African Community (EAC) persisted and have also affected the inter-Burundian dialogue. The dialogue has yet to produce much progress, and its continuation is unclear after the submission of its final report by facilitator Benjamin Mkapa at the end of 2018, with a recommended roadmap for credible elections in 2020, including dialogue with the exiled opposition. On 1 February, at the EAC heads of state summit, Rwanda took over the leadership of the EAC from Uganda and decided to postpone deliberations on the situation in Burundi.

Kafando last briefed the Council on 19 February. He said that "the inter-Burundian dialogue remains the only viable option for resolving the political crisis and the holding of peaceful elections in 2020, in the spirit of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreements". He urged the government to be more inclusive, particularly in the context of preparations for the elections. Lauber also briefed, urging all stakeholders to create an enabling

environment for free, inclusive, democratic and peaceful elections in 2020.

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 5 March, High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet announced, "with deep regret", that the UN Human Rights Office in Burundi was closed on 28 February at the insistence of the government after a 23-year presence in the country. In October 2016, the government suspended all cooperation with the office following the release of the final report (A/HRC/33/37) of the UN Independent Investigation in Burundi, established by the Human Rights Council (HRC) on 17 December 2015. "Even as our Office in Burundi closes, we will continue to explore other ways to work to shed light on human rights concerns and support the advocacy, promotion and protection of human rights in the country," Bachelet said in her statement.

During its 40th session, the HRC held an interactive dialogue on 12 March with the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi, whose mandate was renewed by the HRC for a third term by resolution 39/14 of 28 September 2018. "In view of the upcoming elections scheduled for 2020, our mandate is especially important. We will pay particular attention to civil liberties and factors that may trigger violence or human rights violations", the commission said. It also called on Burundi to reconsider its position and accept the commission's requests to visit the country.

Key Issues and Options

The lack of progress in the EAC-led mediation and, more broadly, lack of inclusiveness ahead of the 2020 election remain serious concerns that the Council will need to monitor closely. An option would be to adopt a presidential or press statement, noting Nkurunziza's commitment not to run for president in 2020, urging the EAC to intensify efforts to revive the dialogue, and calling on

UN DOCUMENTS ON BURUNDI [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2303](#) (29 July 2016) established a UN police component in Burundi of 228 officers for an initial period of one year. [Secretary-General's Report S/2019/229](#) (12 March 2019) was on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes Region. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.8465](#) (19 February 2019) was a briefing by Michel Kafando, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Burundi.

Burundi

Burundi to take steps towards an inclusive electoral process, including respect for the freedom of expression and association.

Another major issue is the continued lack of accountability for human rights violations over the last several years in Burundi, magnified by the closure of the UN Human Rights Office in the country. The Council may encourage Burundi to cooperate fully with all UN bodies.

One possible way to address some of these issues would be to impose targeted sanctions against those obstructing a genuine political

dialogue and those responsible for human rights violations.

Council Dynamics

Council members agree that the continued viability of the Arusha Accord as a basis for stability in Burundi is important. Burundi, for its part, remains entrenched in its opposition to the international community's involvement in its political affairs.

The Council has been unable to find a fresh avenue to re-engage with Burundi over the political situation thus far. Some Council

members, despite the political concerns, continue to question the need to keep Burundi on the Council's agenda, viewing the situation as an internal issue that lacks a pressing international peace and security dimension. When considering the programme of work for February, several Council members questioned the need to hold the quarterly briefing on Burundi, though ultimately the briefing was held as scheduled. It does not seem that similar disagreement has arisen with respect to the May briefing, but the issue may resurface.

DPRK (North Korea)

Expected Council Action

In May, the chair of the 1718 Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Christoph Heusgen (Germany), is expected to brief Council members in consultations on the 90-day report of the work of the committee.

Key Recent Developments

After initial discussions in the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee, the final report of the Panel of Experts was published on 12 March. This is the first publicly-available report of the panel since March 2018. Council members failed to reach a consensus on publishing the midterm report, which was due in September 2018, after the US claimed that Russia had interfered with the work of the panel, an accusation that Russia denied.

While noting the absence of ballistic missile testing in 2018, the final report describes the DPRK's continued violations of the sanctions imposed by the Council. Among the most prominent violations of sanctions, the report notes increased activities related to illicit ship-to-ship transfers of petroleum products and coal by the DPRK. Financial sanctions have, according to the report, continued to be some of the least implemented, and the use of cryptocurrency has made financial activity even harder to trace. The

panel has also described the DPRK's use of cyber-attacks to force the illicit transfer of funds from financial institutions. The report further notes that the DPRK has continued to violate the arms embargo, including attempts to supply weapons to armed groups in Yemen, Libya and Sudan.

On 10 April, the Council adopted resolution 2464, which extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee until 24 April 2020. The vote on the draft resolution was postponed for several weeks because of a disagreement that arose between Russia and the US, the penholder. It seems that Russia wanted the resolution also to address the impact of the sanctions on the humanitarian situation in the DPRK and to request OCHA periodically to report to the Council on this issue. As a compromise, committee members agreed to address the humanitarian situation in the DPRK within the committee and hold briefings by OCHA every six months.

After the collapse of the second US-DPRK Summit in Hanoi in February, diplomatic efforts on the denuclearisation of the DPRK have stalled. The breakdown of the summit has been attributed to differences over sanctions relief and denuclearisation. In remarks to the media, US President Donald Trump said that DPRK leader Kim Jong-un had

asked the US to lift all sanctions in exchange for the dismantling of nuclear facilities at the Yongbyon nuclear site. The North Korean leadership has disputed this claim, saying that the DPRK asked only for partial sanctions relief. Kim has not ruled out a third summit and has said that he will wait until the end of 2019 for the US to be more flexible.

On 16 April, the DPRK tested what it called "a tactical guided weapon", which the US has said was not a ballistic weapons test.

Human Rights-Related Developments

During its 40th session, the Human Rights Council (HRC) held an interactive dialogue on 12 March with the special rapporteur on human rights in the DPRK, Tomás Ojea Quintana, and considered the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on promoting accountability in the DPRK (A/HRC/40/36). The report describes the progress made on the HRC's recommendations contained in resolution 34/24 on promoting accountability for human rights violations, particularly on the establishment and the work carried out by a dedicated accountability team of the Office of the High Commissioner, which contributes to and enhances the work already being undertaken by the OHCHR field-based structure in Seoul. On 22 March, the HRC adopted without a vote resolution 40/20 on the situation of human rights in the DPRK, which extended the mandate of the special rapporteur for one year. Among other things, the resolution "encourages the UN system as a whole to continue to address the grave situation of human rights in the DPRK in a coordinated and unified manner".

UN DOCUMENTS ON THE DPRK Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2464 (10 April 2019) extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee until 24 April 2020. **S/RES/2407** (21 March 2018) extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee until 24 April 2019. **S/RES/2397** (22 December 2017) further tightened sanctions on the DPRK. **Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2017/16** (29 August 2017) condemned the launch of a missile over the territory of Japan and urged the DPRK to comply with previous Council resolutions and presidential statements. **Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.8507** (10 April 2019) was the adoption of a resolution renewing the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee until 24 April 2020. **S/PV.8363** (27 September 2018) was a ministerial-level meeting on efforts to denuclearise the DPRK. **S/PV.8362** (26 September 2018) was a high-level meeting on countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. **Sanctions Committee Document S/2018/1148** (21 December 2018) was the annual report of the sanctions committee.

DPRK (North Korea)

Key Issues and Options

Tensions on the Korean peninsula remain, but have declined significantly during the past year. The DPRK has refrained from testing ballistic missiles for over a year and has engaged in diplomatic talks with the US on possible denuclearisation. The Council continues to be concerned with maintaining stability on the peninsula but has maintained a relatively low profile on DPRK, with most diplomatic activity taking place outside its purview. While the Council has been cautious about pronouncing itself on diplomatic developments, Council members could consider a formal product showing support for a third summit before the end of 2019.

A continuing issue for the Council is finding the right balance between applying sanctions and simultaneously exploring the diplomatic track. An option for the Council is to explore ways to modify the sanctions on the DPRK to encourage further engagement on the diplomatic front.

Some Council members are concerned

about the impact of sanctions on the humanitarian situation in the DPRK. The Council could seek more regular interaction with OCHA to obtain the information it needs for humanitarian exemptions. Another option would be to consider having the monitoring panel assisting the committee add an expert on humanitarian issues who could analyse the impact of sanctions on the civilian population.

A prevailing issue for the committee remains addressing gaps in the implementation of the sanctions on the DPRK. An emerging issue is preserving the independent nature of the panel, safeguarding it from pressure by Council members.

Council Dynamics

The Council has continued to maintain a low profile on the DPRK while the diplomatic efforts outside the Council play out. Over the past several months, Council dynamics have been dominated by diverging views between the US and Russia on the role of sanctions on the DPRK. The US continues to promote a

policy of maximum pressure on the DPRK, while Russia and China have shown more interest in considering some form of sanctions relief. During the negotiations on the latest resolution on the mandate of the Panel of Experts, Russia stressed that the Council should address the impact of sanctions on the humanitarian situation in the DPRK.

Most Council members remain cautious in their optimism about the DPRK's denuclearisation and supportive of inter-Korean and US-DPRK diplomatic efforts. While some members have shown interest in a new approach toward the Council's relationship with the DPRK, including a greater response to positive developments through Council outcomes and other possible means of showing support for serious dialogue on the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, there has been little movement in this direction.

The US is the penholder on the DPRK, and Germany chairs the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee.

South Sudan

Expected Council Action

In May, the Council expects to adopt a resolution renewing the South Sudan sanctions regime, which expires on 31 May. The Council is also set to renew the mandate of the Panel of Experts assisting the South Sudan Sanctions Committee by 31 May to avoid its expiration on 1 July, as set out in resolution 2428.

Key Recent Developments

The overall levels of political violence remain diminished since the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) on 12 September 2018. However, ethnic and intercommunal violence continues, as well as clashes between government and opposition forces in the Greater Upper Nile and the Greater Equatoria regions. The human rights, humanitarian, food security and economic conditions in the country remain dire, with an enormous impact on civilians.

According to the terms of the R-ARCSS, 12 May marks the end of the eight-month pre-transitional period and the start of the 36-month transitional period, with elections to be held 60 days before the end of this transitional period. At press time it was unclear whether the parties would meet this deadline. South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar met with Pope Francis at the Vatican from 10 to 11 April. A statement released by the Vatican described the goal of the meeting as "an occasion for encounter and reconciliation, in a spirit of respect and trust, to those who in this moment have the mission and the responsibility to work for a future of peace and prosperity for the South Sudanese people." On 13 April, Machar told reporters that the pre-transitional period should be extended by six months to unify and deploy defence forces, demilitarise the capital Juba and other cities, and agree on the devolution of power and the release of

political prisoners. At press time, Machar had yet to return to South Sudan.

On 15 March, the Security Council adopted resolution 2459, extending the mandate of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) until 15 March 2020 and maintaining the overall ceilings of 17,000 troops and 2,101 police personnel. The four core elements of the mandate remain largely unchanged, namely protecting civilians, creating the conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, monitoring and investigating human rights, and supporting the peace process. However, resolution 2459 added language calling on the mission to "support the facilitation of the safe, informed, voluntary, and dignified return or relocation of [internally displaced persons] from United Nations protection of civilian sites, in coordination with humanitarian actors and other relevant stakeholders, and within existing resources". In this regard, at the most recent

UN DOCUMENTS ON SOUTH SUDAN Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2459 (15 March 2019) extended the mandate of UNMISS. S/RES/2428 (13 July 2018) renewed the sanctions regime and imposed an arms embargo. S/RES/2418 (31 May 2018) renewed the sanctions regime until 15 July 2018. **Secretary-General's Report S/2019/191** (28 February 2019) was the 90-day report on South Sudan. **Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.8484** (15 March 2019) was the adoption of resolution 2459. S/PV.8480 (8 March 2019) was a briefing on South Sudan. **Sanctions Committee Document S/2018/1049** (26 November 2018) was the interim report of the Panel of Experts.

South Sudan

Council briefing on South Sudan on 8 March, Special Representative and head of UNMISS David Shearer told the Council that “for the first time in three years, people are expressing a willingness to return home” and emphasised that the mission “will support those who want to leave...consistent with international principles and humanitarian non-governmental organization guidelines that returns must be voluntary and dignified.” Regarding support for the peace process and implementation of the R-ARCSS, resolution 2459 included language specifying “advice or technical assistance, within existing resources” as part of the mission’s mandate. A preambular paragraph underlined that the R-ARCSS “is an important step forward in the peace process that provides a window of opportunity to achieve sustainable peace and stability in South Sudan”. Resolution 2459 was adopted with 14 votes in favour. Russia abstained, in part because of its opposition to the resolution only noting and not welcoming the R-ARCSS. (See our *What’s in Blue* story of 14 March.)

On 13 July 2018, the Council adopted resolution 2428, which imposed an arms embargo on South Sudan until 31 May 2019 and designated two additional individuals as subject to targeted sanctions, namely a travel ban and assets freeze, bringing the total number of listed individuals to eight (six individuals were listed in 2015). The resolution also decided on two additional designation criteria for the imposition of targeted sanctions against individuals for “planning, directing, or committing acts involving sexual and gender-based violence in South Sudan” and for “engagement by armed groups or criminal networks in activities that destabilize South Sudan through the illicit exploitation or trade of natural resources”. Resolution 2428 received the minimum of nine votes required for adoption absent a veto from a permanent member, with abstentions by six members (Bolivia, China, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan and Russia). The adoption of resolution 2428 was preceded by the adoption of resolution 2418 on 31 May, deciding that if the Secretary-General reported “fighting or lack of a viable political agreement”, the Council “shall consider applying” targeted sanctions to six individuals identified in an annex to that resolution, or an arms embargo, or both. The adoption of resolution 2418, which received the same minimum number of

nine votes, thus paved the way for the adoption of resolution 2428 based on the findings of the Secretary-General that there had been credible reports of fighting. (For more details, see our *What’s in Blue* story of 12 July 2018.)

The Council was last briefed on South Sudan on 8 March by Shearer, as well as by Angelina Nyajima Simon Jial, who founded the civil society organisation Hope Restoration South Sudan. (See our *What’s in Blue* story of 7 March.)

Sanctions-Related Developments

Council members expect to receive the final report of the Panel of Experts assisting the South Sudan Sanctions Committee by 1 May, as requested in resolution 2428. The Panel’s interim report, dated 26 November 2018, said that while it was too early to assess the full impact of the arms embargo, “a number of violations have been noted”. The report also referred to “alarming levels of sexual and gender-based violence, food insecurity and grave human rights abuses, including against children”.

Human Rights-Related Developments

On 22 March during its 40th session, the Human Rights Council adopted without a vote resolution 40/19 on the situation of human rights in South Sudan. Among other things, the resolution “condemns in the strongest possible terms the ongoing violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law in South Sudan, including those involving the targeted killing of civilians and widespread sexual and gender-based violence, including rape and gang rape, which continue to be used as a weapon of war, the recurring unlawful recruitment and use of children by armed groups, arbitrary arrests and detention, torture, the arbitrary denial of humanitarian access and attacks on schools, places of worship, hospitals and United Nations and associated peacekeeping personnel by all parties”. The resolution extended the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan for another year.

Key Issues and Options

An immediate issue for the Council is renewing the sanctions regime, including the arms embargo, and the mandate of the Panel of Experts. In doing so, the Council may also consider whether targeted sanctions should be imposed against additional individuals in line with the regime’s listing criteria, which include acts involving sexual violence. An option would be for such considerations to be informed by the briefing of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict,

Pramila Patten, to the Council on 18 December 2018, when she said that sexual violence “escalated dramatically in 2018” despite the signing of the R-ARCSS and that her office, together with OHCHR, had submitted a confidential letter to the chair of the South Sudan Sanctions Committee with the names of three alleged perpetrators.

Another key issue for the Council is the implementation of the arms embargo and targeted sanctions imposed by resolution 2428. As noted in the Panel of Experts’ November 2018 interim report, “[i]ncreased regional security backing for the peace agreement led the Panel to identify a number of violations of the [arms] embargo” as well as “repeated violations of the travel ban by several designated individuals”. The report also noted the Panel “continued to seek the cooperation of regional States and commercial banks to monitor the implementation of the asset freeze.” The findings and recommendations of the Panel’s final report, not yet available at press time, are likely to inform the Council’s further consideration regarding implementation of the sanctions regime.

Council Dynamics

The imposition of an arms embargo on South Sudan in July 2018 was a major development. On several occasions in the four years prior to this, some Council members had called for an arms embargo, but until July 2018, such proposals had failed to garner sufficient support. (See our *In Hindsight: South Sudan Arms Embargo, September 2018 Monthly Forecast*.) As negotiations on resolutions 2418 and 2428 demonstrated, imposing the arms embargo on South Sudan was controversial, and both resolutions obtained the minimum number of votes required for adoption. One notable factor that made the adoption possible was the support of Côte d’Ivoire, which in doing so broke ranks with the two other African members of the Council at the time. Of the six members that abstained on resolutions 2418 and 2428 in 2018, three remain (China, Equatorial Guinea and Russia).

It is still unclear how the new composition of the Council may affect the upcoming adoption in May. However, references to the sanctions regime, and the arms embargo in particular, were contentious during negotiations on resolution 2459 renewing the UNMISS mandate in March. China, Russia and South Africa

South Sudan

sought the removal of language contained in earlier drafts of the resolution noting the contribution to the peace process of the sanctions regime, including the arms embargo. The

version adopted reflected a concession by only noting the measures adopted by the Security Council in resolution 2428, without referring to the arms embargo or the sanctions regime's

impact on the peace process.

The US is the penholder on South Sudan. Poland chairs the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee.

Haiti

Expected Council Action

In May, the Security Council could meet to discuss the transition of the UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) to a non-peacekeeping UN presence. While no meeting is currently scheduled, resolution 2466 requires the Secretary-General to submit details for a follow-up mission to MINUJUSTH in May. Following the submission of the Secretary-General's report the Council may choose to meet to discuss next steps in the transition.

Key Recent Developments

On 12 April, the Council renewed MINUJUSTH for a final six months, adhering to the timeline stipulated in resolution 2410 that the withdrawal of MINUJUSTH not begin before 15 October. Resolution 2466 endorsed transitioning to a Special Political Mission (SPM), a recommendation presented by the Secretary-General in his most recent MINUJUSTH report. The resolution requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council within 30 days with "operational details of the proposed SPM, including specific objectives and information regarding its proposed deployment, staffing, and structure".

The Secretary-General's March report recommended a mission "in the form of a small strategic advisory office led by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General functioning alongside the technical capacities of a United Nations Country Team, supported by a triple-hatted Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, for a period of one year, starting on 16 October 2019." The Secretary-General also said that only an SPM would allow a police commissioner and some international police

officers to remain and play an advisory role, which was deemed important.

This came after the Council held a debate on 3 April on the situation in Haiti with the participation of Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix; UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet; and Loune Viaud, Executive Director of Zanmi Lasante, a civil society group. Some non-Council members were also invited to participate. Lacroix highlighted how the Secretary-General's report lays out some possible paths forward for the UN in Haiti. He called for international cooperation to assist Haiti as MINUJUSTH begins to drawdown. Bachelet, in her first statement to the Council in her current position, called on all Haitian stakeholders to strengthen human rights protections.

Council Dynamics

During negotiations on resolution 2466, which had been drafted by the US, some Council members expressed their preference for a single resolution that would include MINUJUSTH's six-month renewal and concrete plans for an SPM. These members took the view that having two resolutions could create uncertainty; they also wished to give the Secretariat as much time as possible to prepare for the post-MINUJUSTH presence.

The resolution was adopted with 13 votes in favour and two abstentions (Russia and the Dominican Republic). In explanations after the vote, some countries voiced their general support for MINUJUSTH. France, Germany, Peru, and the US welcomed the beginning of the end of the UN peacekeeping presence. France and Germany also welcomed a reference to Chapter VII, including for human rights monitoring.

Members abstained for different reasons. The Dominican Republic was concerned that MINUJUSTH's withdrawal would coincide with Haiti's scheduled elections. Russia abstained, as it has done before, due to the use of Chapter VII in respect of all elements of the resolution, including and in particular its human rights monitoring. Russia has maintained that Haiti's human rights situation is not a threat to international peace and security. Another reason for its abstention was what it reportedly felt was a premature reference to a performance policy framework being undertaken by the Secretary-General.

China, which abstained in 2018, voted in favour, saying in its explanation after the vote that the renewal period would allow MINUJUSTH to discharge its mandate, help the Haitian government take up its responsibilities, and achieve a final and orderly exit. Like Russia, China would have liked more time for negotiations in order to achieve consensus and indicated that it would like to see greater unity in the upcoming negotiations on the SPM. Peru said that any exit strategy must consider the security conditions on the ground and the ability of Haiti to ensure security throughout its territory. It has voiced support for swift negotiations on the future mechanism, and would like to see a robust SPM established with the necessary human and financial resources.

Proposed German language about strengthening the resilience of Haiti with respect to climate change was not included, and further discussion on this can be anticipated in a future resolution.

Members' positions on the renewal resolution provide an insight ahead of negotiations, which could begin as soon as the middle of May.

UN DOCUMENTS ON HAITI Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2466 (12 April 2019) was the final six-month renewal of MINUJUSTH. S/RES/2410 (10 April 2018) extended the mandate of MINUJUSTH for another year under Chapter VII and set a timeline for the gradual drawdown of formed police units. **Secretary-General's Report S/2019/198** (1 March 2019) was on MINUJUSTH. **Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.8510** (12 April 2019) documented the adoption of resolution 2466 and the positions of some countries after the vote. S/PV.8502 (3 April 2019) was a Council debate with participation of Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations; Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; and Loune Viaud, Executive Director of Zanmi Lasante, a civil society group.

Security Council Report Staff

Karin Landgren
Executive Director

Joanna Weschler
Deputy Executive Director

Shamala Kandiah Thompson
Deputy Executive Director

Paul Romita
Senior Policy Analyst

Victor Casanova Abos
Policy Analyst

Teale Harold
Policy Analyst

Lindiwe Knutson
Policy Analyst

Vladimir Sesar
Policy Analyst

Eran Sthoeger
Policy Analyst

Vanessa Tiede
Policy Analyst

Benjamin Villanti
Policy Analyst

Robbin VanNewkirk
Website Manager

Audrey Waysse
Operations Manager

Maritza Lopez
Administrative Assistant

Joëlle Santos
Research Assistant

Security Council Report is a non-profit organisation supported by the Governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and United Arab Emirates, and Carnegie Corporation and the MacArthur Foundation.

Design Point Five, NY

Security Council Report
711 Third Avenue, Suite 1501
New York NY 10017

Telephone +1 212 759 6394

Fax +1 212 759 4038

Web securitycouncilreport.org
whatsinblue.org

Follow **@SCRtweets** on Twitter