

# Monthly Forecast

- 1 Overview
- 2 In Hindsight: Towards a More Consultative Allocation of Subsidiary Body Chairs
- 3 Status Update since our August Forecast
- 5 Afghanistan
- 7 COVID-19
- 8 Libya
- 10 Syria
- 11 Cooperation between the UN and Regional Organisations: the Role of the International Organization of La Francophonie
- 12 Children and Armed Conflict
- 14 Peacekeeping Operations
- 15 Yemen
- 17 Sudan
- 18 South Sudan
- 20 The Impact of Environmental Degradation on Peace and Security
- 22 Iraq (UNITAD)
- 23 Colombia

## Overview

Niger has the presidency in September. While the Security Council is expected to continue to work largely remotely, due to COVID-19 restrictions, it plans to hold some meetings—including adoptions—on UN premises.

Niger has chosen to hold four meetings focused on its areas of priority. It is organising a debate on [the role of the International Organization of La Francophonie \(OIF\) in peace and security](#), with briefings expected from the Secretary-General of the OIF, Louise Mushikiwabo, the UN Secretariat and civil society.

A debate on [children and armed conflict](#) and attacks against schools, with a focus on the Sahel region, is also planned. The anticipated briefers are Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict Virginia Gamba and UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore. A child civil society representative may also brief.

There will also be a summit-level debate on global governance in the aftermath of the [Covid-19](#) pandemic which will be held during the virtual high-level week in the General Assembly in the third week of September. Expected briefers are the Secretary-General, António Guterres, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, and a civil society representative. Niger also plans to hold a ministerial-level open debate on the humanitarian impact of [environmental degradation on peace and security](#) with a particular focus on the Sahel region. Senior officials from the Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the ICRC are expected to brief, as is a civil society representative.

Other debates this month include a debate for

the annual briefing on [UN peacekeeping reform](#) and the quarterly debate on Afghanistan. Regarding [Afghanistan](#), an adoption is also scheduled to renew the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

Three other adoptions are anticipated to renew the mandates of the [UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL](#), the [UN Verification Mission in Colombia](#) and the [UN Support Mission in Libya \(UNSMIL\)](#). There will be open and closed VTC meetings on UNSMIL ahead of the adoption.

The regular meetings on [Syria](#), [Yemen](#) and the [situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question](#), are also on the programme of work. On Syria, there will be open and closed VTCs on the political and humanitarian situation and a closed VTC on the use of chemical weapons. The meetings on developments in Yemen and on the situation in the Middle East are planned in both open and closed format.

Regarding African issues, there will be meetings on [Sudan and South Sudan](#). The Council will hold open and closed VTCs for briefings on reports on the [AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur](#), the [UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan](#), and the [UN Mission in South Sudan](#). There will also be the quarterly briefing on the work of the [1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee](#) by its chair, Ambassador Sven Jürgenson (Estonia).

Also expected in September is the [14th annual meeting with the AU Peace and Security Council](#). The Council will be watching developments in [Belarus](#), [Burundi](#), [Guinea-Bissau](#), [Iran](#) and [Mali](#).

31 August 2020  
This report is available online at [securitycouncilreport.org](https://securitycouncilreport.org).

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

## In Hindsight: Towards a More Consultative Allocation of Subsidiary Body Chairs

The way chairs of subsidiary bodies are allocated has changed fundamentally in recent years. Although Council subsidiary bodies are chaired by elected members, with only rare exceptions, the allocation of these positions was historically decided by the permanent members, with minimal consultation. The decisions would be finalised late in the year, and sometimes not until January. Elected members were frustrated with the process that left them no time to prepare and with appointments that did not reflect their country's interests and political priorities.

The more transparent and collaborative allocation process that has developed since 2016 gives elected members greater say. Its genesis is closely linked to that year's shift in the date of the Council elections in the General Assembly from October to June. Bringing Council elections forward by four months gave incoming members extra preparation time before taking their Council seat on 1 January, and prompted the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions (IWG), then chaired by Japan, to focus on the issue of the selection and preparation of chairs of subsidiary bodies.

In July 2016, the IWG issued a note on transitional arrangements for elected members (S/2016/619). Among other things, the note called on Council members "to make every effort to agree provisionally on the appointment of the chairs of the subsidiary organs for the following year no later than 1 October". Consultations on the appointment should begin as soon as possible after the elections and be conducted in a "balanced, transparent, efficient and inclusive way" by two members of the Council "working in full cooperation", with the understanding that the two members in question would be the IWG chair and one permanent member. The P5 initially resisted, but eventually agreed to this new appointment process. These new arrangements were incorporated in the 2017 "Note 507", which also elaborated a set of measures aimed at enhancing the transparency of subsidiary organs, improving the preparation of chairs, and increasing the interaction and coordination among subsidiary organs and the Council.

This year, elected members began exchanging information on the subsidiary bodies they were interested in chairing almost immediately after the five incoming members were elected. As has been the case since 2016, the chair of the IWG—currently St Vincent and the Grenadines—coordinates the process among the incoming members and works with the P5 coordinator to finalise the list of chairs. (The P5 coordinator position rotates every three months; France holds it from August to October 2020.)

Over the years the Security Council has established a range of subsidiary bodies to support its work. They include sanctions committees, working groups and committees related to counter-terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and protection of children in armed conflict. These subsidiary bodies are composed of all 15 members of the Council and work under its authority. Elected members also traditionally co-chair the informal working group (IEG) on women, peace and security, which although not a formal subsidiary body has at times been a popular choice for incoming members. Both IEG co-chair positions will be available in 2021, along with ten subsidiary body chair positions.<sup>1</sup> (A chart showing the chairs of subsidiary bodies over the last ten years can be found on our website.)

For an elected member, deciding which subsidiary bodies to aim for requires understanding their workloads, which differ greatly, with some requiring a significant commitment of time and resources. The Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict held 12 formal and 28 informal meetings, the most among subsidiary bodies in 2019; the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee and the 1540 Committee on weapons of mass destruction were also active, while the 1566 Working Group on Terrorism did not meet once. (For more information on the workload of the Council's subsidiary bodies see the UN's 2019 Highlights of Security Council Practice.)

An even distribution of the workload of chairing subsidiary bodies among the elected members is not always possible. Incoming members with fewer resources may be reluctant to take on a busy working group or

committee, while the daunting political implications of chairing a sanctions committee has occasionally led to a member willing only to chair working groups. In general, members are wary of subsidiary bodies that are of particular political interest to P5 members or other influential member states. Two years ago, no incoming member wanted to chair the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee. Germany finally agreed, with the condition that its deputy permanent representative serve as chair rather than its permanent representative, a break with the historical practice of sanctions committees. (The chair of a sanctions committee serves in his/her individual, rather than national, capacity.) By having its deputy permanent representative chair this sanctions committee, Germany may also have been making a point about the workload on permanent representatives in taking on these positions.

Until the change in the selection process, the choice of chair often reflected P5 views on which elected member would be the most appropriate in the position. While these decisions may have been based on geo-political and resource factors, they did not lead to chairs generally coming only from a particular region. In the recent history of subsidiary bodies, only two appear to be chaired throughout by representatives from just one regional group: the Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, which has had a chair from an African country since it was established in 2002, and the 1718 Democratic People's Republic of Korea Sanctions Committee, which has always been chaired by members of the Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG).

Other patterns can be discerned as well. For some subsidiary body chairs, there has been a shift, after some years, from one regional group to another. The first three chairs of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee were WEOG members—Greece, Italy and Austria. The next three chairs came from Group of Latin American and the Caribbean (GRU-LAC) countries—Colombia, Argentina and Venezuela—and in more recent years Eastern European members have dominated, starting with Ukraine in 2017, followed by Poland and then Estonia. In the last 12 years the Working

1. The Committees: 1988 Taliban Sanctions, 1718 DPRK Sanctions, 1970 Libya Sanctions, 2374 Mali Sanctions, 751 Somalia Sanctions, 1267/2989/2253 Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)/Da'esh/Al-Qaida Sanctions, 1540 (Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction); others: Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Resolution in Africa, and Implementation of Resolution 2231 (Iran)

---

## In Hindsight: Towards a More Consultative Allocation of Subsidiary Body Chairs

Group on International Tribunals had chairs from WEOG from 2008 to 2013, and was then led by GRULAC members until 2020, when Viet Nam took on the chairmanship. The 1592 Côte d'Ivoire Sanctions Committee established in 2004 was chaired by WEOG members until 2010, after which GRULAC members were the chairs until the committee was terminated in 2016 following the lifting of sanctions on Côte d'Ivoire.

The 1267/1989/2253 Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee was chaired by a WEOG member until 2017, when Kazakhstan became the chair, followed by Indonesia in 2019. The chair of this committee also always chairs the 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee, which was once part of it; any member interested in one committee is aware that it will be taking on both.

Not surprisingly, the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations has been chaired by an elected member with an active presence in peace operations, often, but not exclusively, from an African country.

The 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee has possibly had the most diverse mix of chairs, including permanent members and members from Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Europe and Latin America.

It is clear that there is no set formula for determining the chairs of a given subsidiary body. The recent significant shift lies in incoming members themselves negotiating their preferences, depending on their foreign policy priorities, the role they hope to play on the Council, and regional considerations. Members who seek to take over the chair of a subsidiary body from another member of

their regional group may reflect a sense that such an “internal” handover may be smoother; it may also be the most straightforward for members who have limited information.

Today, permanent members chair no subsidiary bodies, and the issue of burden-sharing may come up during the current allocation process. A presidential note adopted in December 2019 reaffirmed that the informal consultation process for the selection of chairs should take place in a balanced, transparent, efficient and inclusive way but also stressed that it should “take into account the need for a shared responsibility and a fair distribution of work for the selection of the Chairs among all members of the Council, bearing in mind the capacities and resources of members”.

In November 2018, the ten elected and five incoming Council members wrote to the president of the Council conveying their conviction that a more equal distribution of work among all members, including through co-penholderships, would improve the overall effectiveness of the Council (S/2018/1024). For some years now, France, the UK and the US, have held the “pen” on most country-specific issues, taking on the role of drafting any decisions and leading negotiations and discussions on these issues. (Please see Security Council Report’s research report on penholders for background information on this issue.)

In the past, permanent members have chaired some subsidiary bodies. The UK was the first chair of the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee, and Russia its third. In 2005, France became the first chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, a position it held for three years. However, since 2009 the task of chairing formal

subsidiary bodies has fallen exclusively on the shoulders of elected members. When Germany was about to enter the Council two years ago, it fought hard to share the pen with a permanent member, which led to its being the co-penholder with the UK on Darfur and on issues concerning Libya sanctions. None of the members incoming in 2020 pushed to be co-penholders, and it is not clear if any of the incoming members this year have the appetite to do so.

The process of negotiating the available subsidiary body chair positions has been refined over the last few years. In the aftermath of the 2016 changes, incoming members could not always agree to put forward a single candidate for each available position. As a result, the P5 made changes and several members did not get the positions they wanted. In the last two years, the incoming members and Kuwait, as chair of the IWG, coordinated closely at permanent representative-level in order present to the P5 a list without significant gaps or overlap. While this requires compromise from the incoming members, it appears to make it more difficult for the P5 to make significant changes. This was seen in 2019, when—possibly for the first time—all new members were appointed chair of the subsidiary body of their choice. While in the last three years, the decision on subsidiary body chairs was made earlier than in the past, so far the 1 October deadline has not been met. This year a list was sent to the P5 by mid-August, so the chance for a prompt decision appears good, and with it the added time for an elected member to prepare for a time-consuming and often delicate responsibility where an active, engaged chair can make a difference.

---

## Status Update since our August Forecast

### Jammu and Kashmir

On 5 August Council members discussed the situation in Jammu and Kashmir under “any other business”. The discussion was initiated by China at Pakistan’s request. It followed letters in early August from Pakistani Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi to the Council president (S/2020/771) on recent developments in

Jammu and Kashmir and on a legal review of the dispute and on human rights violations. Besides meeting in consultations in August 2019 to discuss developments after India rescinded Article 370 of its constitution, which provided semi-autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir, the Council has held one other meeting on this topic under “any other business” in January 2020.

### Terrorism

On 6 August, Council members held an open debate via VTC titled “Addressing the Issue of Linkages between Terrorism and Organised Crime” under the agenda item “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts” (S/2020/791). The meeting was chaired by Retno L. P. Marsudi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia.

---

## Status Update since our August Forecast

Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov, the head of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, and the Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Under-Secretary-General Ghada Waly, briefed. On 17 August, an open VTC meeting of the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) took place. The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) presented its updated “Technical guide to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions” to the CTC and the wider UN membership. On 24 August, Council members held an open VTC on the Secretary-General’s 11th biannual strategic-level report on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL or Da’esh) under the agenda item “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts” (S/2020/836). Voronkov and Assistant Secretary-General Michèle Coninsx, the Executive Director of CTED, briefed. On 31 August, the Council failed to adopt a resolution on the prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of foreign terrorist fighters due to the veto of the US. The 14 other members voted in favor.

### Guinea-Bissau

On 10 August, the Security Council held a briefing followed by closed consultations on Guinea-Bissau (S/PV.8754). Special Representative and head of the UN Integrated Peacemaking Office in Guinea-Bissau Rosine Sori-Coulibaly presented the latest Secretary-General’s report on Guinea-Bissau (S/2020/755). Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil João Genésio de Almeida Filho briefed on behalf of the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, and Ghada Fathi Waly, Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, also briefed.

### Lebanon

On 11 August, the Security Council heard a briefing on the latest Secretary-General’s report on the implementation of resolution 1701 (S/2020/710) in a closed VTC meeting. Special Coordinator for Lebanon Ján Kubiš and Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix briefed the Council. On 28 August, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2539, which renewed the mandate of UNIFIL until 31 August 2021.

### Iran

On 14 August, the Council concluded the written voting procedure on the US draft resolution (S/2020/797) that would extend the existing arms-related restrictions set to expire in October under resolution 2231 “until the Security Council decides otherwise” (S/2020/805). The draft failed to obtain the required number of votes to be adopted. The US and Dominican Republic voted in favour of the draft, China and Russia voted against it, and the remaining Council members abstained. On 20 August, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo hand-delivered identical letters (S/2020/815) to both UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the president of the Security Council, Ambassador Dian Triansyah Djani (Indonesia), notifying the Council that Iran is non-compliant with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). For this reason, the US claimed to have triggered the snapback provision under resolution 2231, which could lead to reinstatement of sanctions measures that were in place before the adoption of resolution 2231. Thirteen Council members (excluding the US and Dominican Republic) sent letters to the president of the Security Council opposing the US move and maintaining that the US does not have the right to invoke the snapback provision under resolution 2231 due to its withdrawal from the JCPOA. During the 25 August meeting (S/2020/837) on “the Situation in the Middle East including the Palestinian Question”, Russia raised the question to the Council’s president (Indonesia) on how the presidency will proceed with the US decision to trigger a snapback provision under resolution 2231. Ambassador Djani (Indonesia) responded that given the lack of consensus among Council members the presidency could not take further action on this issue.

### Belarus

On 18 August, members of the Security Council discussed the situation in Belarus under “any other business”. Estonia and the US requested the meeting to address the ongoing crackdown on the protesters in Belarus following the presidential elections on 9 August. Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Reinsalu participated in the meeting. He expressed his concern over grave human rights violations in Belarus and called for

the use of preventive diplomacy and greater engagement of the Security Council in monitoring the situation in the country.

### Mali

On 19 August, Security Council members held a closed VTC on developments in Mali, where the day before soldiers had arrested President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and other government officials. Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix briefed. Ahead of the meeting, Council members issued a press statement condemning “the mutiny” and urged the mutineers to release safely and immediately all the officials detained (SC/14279). The press statement underlined the urgent need to restore rule of law and to move towards the return to constitutional order, and reiterated Council members’ strong support to the Economic Community of West African States’ initiatives and mediation efforts. On 31 August, the Council renewed for one year the Mali sanctions regime in resolution S/RES/2541. Earlier in the month, the 2374 Mali Sanctions Committee met on 5 August to discuss the Mali Panel of Experts final report (S/2020/785).

### Somalia

On 20 August, Council members held a briefing and consultations on Somalia (S/PV.8755). James Swan, Special Representative and head of UNSOM, and Francisco Madeira, AU Special Representative, briefed. Council members reacted to recent political turmoil in Somalia surrounding electoral delays. Council members called for cooperation and compromise, but seemed divided on whether to support a one-person-one-vote electoral model or a compromise model. Council members also condemned Al-Shabaab’s deadly attacks, which have increased in recent weeks. On 28 August, the Council adopted resolution 2540, renewing UNSOM’s mandate for 12 months until 31 August 2021.

### Israel/Palestine

On 25 August, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Nickolay Mladenov briefed on “The Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question” (S/2020/837). Mladenov noted that the Secretary-General had welcomed the agreement between the United Arab Emirates and Israel

---

## Status Update since our August Forecast

to normalise relations between them and to stop Israeli plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.

### DPRK

On 27 August, the chair of the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Christoph Heusgen (Germany), briefed Council members in a closed VTC on the 90-day

report of the committee's work. The briefing was primarily focused on developments related to the work of the committee, the implementation of the sanctions and the midterm report of the Panel of Experts.

---

## Afghanistan

### Expected Council Action

In September, the Security Council is expected to renew the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), set to expire on 17 September. Prior to that, the Council will also hold its quarterly meeting on Afghanistan. Deborah Lyons, Special Representative for Afghanistan and head of UNAMA, is expected to brief the Council via videoconference (VTC) on the latest Secretary-General's report on UNAMA, issued on 18 August. Saad Mohseni, Chief Executive of MOBY GROUP, which contains MOBY media group—the largest media company in Afghanistan—will also brief the Council on issues relating to media freedom in the country.

### Key Recent Developments

The reporting period of the latest Secretary-General's report was characterised by concerted diplomatic efforts aimed at bringing together the Afghan government and the Taliban for direct peace talks. The commencement of intra-Afghan negotiations appeared to be imminent following a 9 August announcement by Afghan President Ashraf Ghani that his government would release a final round of Taliban prisoners, comprising 400 militants. Many observers saw the decision by the Afghan government as a step to overcoming the last obstacle to the start of direct negotiations, as the Taliban had previously announced its willingness to begin talks within one week of the full release of Taliban inmates. The action would also fulfil the provision stipulated in the 29 February US-Taliban agreement that called for the Afghan government to release up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners and for the militant group to release 1,000 Afghan prisoners ahead of the start of intra-Afghan negotiations.

On 17 August, however, the Afghan government reversed course after it had released 80 of the last 400 Taliban inmates, maintaining that it would not release the final 320 prisoners until the Taliban released all remaining government prisoners held by the group, including 20 elite Afghan troops. In addition, Australia and France have reportedly expressed concerns about the release of some militants whom they claim were involved in high-profile attacks. In a 15 August statement, the French Foreign Ministry called on the Afghan government not to release Taliban fighters accused of killing French citizens in Afghanistan. Although Afghan officials, including Abdullah Abdulla, the chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation, have stated that direct talks may start in the first week of September, at the time of writing, a date for the start of intra-Afghan negotiations had yet to be determined.

As the talks continue to stall, Afghanistan experienced a rise in attacks against peace activists and Afghan officials involved in the peace negotiations. On 14 August, Fawzia Koofi, a member of Afghanistan's negotiation team, sustained minor injuries after an attack by unknown assailants. The attack was condemned by Ghani and Zalmay Khalilzad, the US Special Representative to Afghanistan, who praised Koofi for her work to promote women's rights. On 19 August, Abdul Baqi Amin, a high-ranking official in the Education Ministry, was killed in a car bomb explosion. Amin had previously taken part in intra-Afghan dialogue talks with the Taliban which took place in Qatar in 2019, in which Afghan officials participated in their personal capacity. No group claimed responsibility for the attack and the Taliban condemned the murder.

The Afghan government's 9 August announcement on the release of the final batch of Taliban prisoners was made after a three-day meeting of a consultative assembly known as a Loya Jirga, comprising thousands of tribal elders and other stakeholders from across the nation, which eventually advised the government to release the prisoners. The Afghan president maintained that a decision on the release was beyond his authority, as some of the prisoners were accused of grave crimes, such as murder and kidnapping. Media reports point to some issues with this consultative process, as the representatives of the Loya Jirga were reportedly not presented with information about the nature of the crimes committed by the prisoners.

The recent push towards direct negotiations was also preceded by a three-day ceasefire between the Taliban and the Afghan government from 31 July to 2 August during the Eid al-Adha holiday. This marked the second formal ceasefire by both sides in the past year; the first took place between 23 and 25 May during the Eid al-Fitr holiday. After a brief reduction in hostilities, violence resumed on the night of 2 August with a terrorist attack on a prison complex in Jalalabad. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL /Da'esh) claimed responsibility for the attack, in which at least 29 were killed and 50 injured. More than 1,300 inmates tried to escape during the attack; while the majority were re-captured, several members of the Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISIL-KP) and the Taliban were able to escape. Members of the Security Council condemned the attack in a 5 August press statement, which underscored the need to hold perpetrators of acts of terrorism accountable.

---

**UN DOCUMENTS ON AFGHANISTAN** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2513](#) (10 March 2020) was on the US-Taliban agreement and the joint declaration issued by the US and the Afghan government. [S/RES/2489](#) (17 September 2019) renewed the mandate of UNAMA until 17 September 2020. [Secretary-General's Report S/2020/809](#) (18 August 2020) was the latest Secretary-General's report on UNAMA. [Security Council Letter S/2020/783](#) (7 August 2020) contained a compilation of statements made at the Arria-formula meeting on "Women and the Afghan Peace Process: Ensuring Women's Participation and Promoting their Rights", held on 27 July. [S/2020/597](#) (29 June 2020) contained the record of the latest quarterly meeting on the situation in Afghanistan, held on 25 June. [Security Council Press Statement SC/14271](#) (5 August 2020) condemned the terrorist attack that took place at a prison complex in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, on 3 August 2020.

---

## Afghanistan

While the intra-Afghan negotiations continued to stall, the US expressed its intention to complete its part in the US-Taliban agreement. On 8 August, US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper announced that the US would reduce its forces in Afghanistan to fewer than 5,000 troops by the end of November in accordance with its obligations under the US-Taliban agreement. At the time of the signing of the agreement in February, the US had nearly 13,000 troops in Afghanistan.

UNAMA's mid-year report on protection of civilians, issued on 27 July, painted a dire picture of the heavy toll the civilian population continues to pay while the parties to the conflict fail to begin negotiations towards a comprehensive ceasefire. According to the report, the first half of 2020 witnessed the killing of 1,282 civilians, with 2,176 civilians injured. UNAMA stressed that while the figures represent a 13 percent decrease compared to the first half of 2019, there was no reduction in civilian casualties attributed to the Taliban and the Afghan national security forces. According to the mission, the decrease can be attributed to a reduction in operations by international forces and in attacks by ISIL-KP.

UNAMA's report illustrates the disproportionate effect of the conflict on women and children, who accounted for more than 40 percent of civilian casualties in the first half of 2020. It further warned about the increased vulnerability of children to recruitment and use by parties to the conflict because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, including school closures and economic difficulties which increase pressures for children to earn money for their families. The report said that "prioritizing the experiences, needs, and rights of victims of the conflict" is essential to creating an environment conducive for the peace talks.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

On 14 August, Mary Lawlor, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, issued a joint statement on Afghanistan with three other Human Rights Council-mandated special rapporteurs (Irene Khan, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, Special Rapporteur on Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association; and Agnès Callamard, Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial summary or arbitrary executions). The statement said that "the death of nine defenders since

the beginning of this year shows the emergence of a truly alarming trend [that] has far exceeded last year's figures" and that "impunity allows the perpetuation of such crimes and implies a lack of recognition for human rights defenders' role in society". The statement emphasised that investigations in many cases have not yielded any results, underscoring that "there needs to be full accountability for such egregious violations of human rights". The rapporteurs called on the government of Afghanistan to do better at "detecting and acting on early warning signs, such as threats and intimidation, protecting others who find themselves at risk, and thoroughly investigating violence, including killings, when they happen".

### Women, Peace and Security

On 27 July, an Arria-formula meeting on "Women and the Afghan Peace Process: Ensuring Women's Participation and Promoting their Rights" was held via VTC. It was co-organised by Afghanistan, Germany, Indonesia, and the UK. Rula Ghani, the First Lady of Afghanistan, was the keynote speaker while concluding remarks were provided by Baroness Fiona Hodgson of Abinger, member of the UK House of Lords and honorary member of the Group of Friends of Women in Afghanistan. The panellists were Hasina Safi, Afghanistan's Minister of Women's Affairs; Dr Habiba Sarabi, member of the Afghan government negotiating team; Ghezal Haris, head of the Afghanistan Ombudsperson's Office; Special Representative Lyons; and Sheikha Alya Ahmed bin Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of Qatar to the UN.

All of the participants expressed their strong support for the meaningful participation of women in the upcoming intra-Afghan negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban. They further stressed that any eventual peace agreement must safeguard women's rights and preserve the gains made in the past 20 years towards the empowerment of women and girls in Afghanistan. The panellists emphasised the need to hear input from women across all of Afghan society, including women residing in rural areas, before and during the negotiations process. Several speakers called on the Taliban to include women in their negotiations team, while Dr. Sarabi noted that the international community should convey to the Taliban that their legitimacy will be questioned if their team has no female representation.

### Key Issues and Options

The main issue for the Security Council in September will be the renewal of UNAMA's mandate. Council members will closely follow the progress towards the commencement of intra-Afghan negotiations. They may wish to discuss possible modifications to UNAMA's mandate to correspond with developments in the peace process. A key

issue for the Council will be to consider how the mission can play a constructive role with regard to the peace talks. Looking ahead, some Council members may wish to discuss ways in which UNAMA's role may change in the event of a possible withdrawal of US and NATO troops from Afghanistan in accordance with the US-Taliban agreement.

Several members may seek strengthened language on the role the mission can play in the promotion of women's rights, considering how members such as Belgium indicated during the 27 July Arria-formula meeting on women's participation in the Afghan peace process that they expect the promotion of women's rights to remain at the centre of UNAMA's work.

Regarding the peace process, the Council could request that Khalilzad brief members in an informal interactive dialogue on recent developments. This would be an opportunity for members to learn more about the agreement and solicit insights from Khalilzad, an Afghanistan-born former US ambassador to the UN (2007 to 2009), on how the Council can best support negotiating efforts.

Because of the importance of regional support for the peace process, Council members may also consider inviting the Special Representative and head of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), Natalia Gherman, to brief the Council in the upcoming quarterly meeting. Since Council members usually receive updates on UNRCCA's activities in closed consultations, a briefing in an open meeting could help facilitate a broader discussion about initiatives by Central Asian states in support of the Afghan negotiations.

### Council Dynamics

Council members are united in their support for the peace process in Afghanistan and for UNAMA's work. However, controversy arose during negotiations on UNAMA's mandate renewal in 2019 because of disagreements between China and the US on whether to maintain a reference to the Chinese "Belt and Road Initiative" (language that had been included in preceding resolutions) in the context of welcoming regional economic cooperation.

In March 2019, the impasse almost led to a vote on two competing drafts, resulting in an adoption of a six-month technical

# Afghanistan

rollover of the mandate. In resolution 2489 adopted in September 2019, which most recently renewed UNAMA's mandate for 12 months, an apparent compromise reference

to “regional cooperation and connectivity” replaced the explicit reference to the Belt and Road Initiative.

Germany and Indonesia are the

co-penholders on Afghanistan, and Ambassador Dian Triansyah Djani (Indonesia) chairs the 1988 Afghanistan Sanctions Committee. The US is the penholder on the sanctions file.

## COVID-19

### Expected Council Action

The Security Council is expected to hold a summit level debate on global governance post-COVID-19 during the virtual high-level week of the General Assembly. Expected briefers are Secretary-General António Guterres and Chairperson of the AU Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat.

### Key Recent Developments

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on 11 March. Twelve days later, the Secretary-General called for a global ceasefire to combat the pandemic in conflict-affected countries. On 1 July, the Security Council sought to support the Secretary-General's call in resolution 2532—which took a laborious three months to negotiate because of US-China tensions—by demanding a cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda and calling for all conflict parties to engage in a humanitarian pause for at least 90 days.

A sticking point in the negotiation of resolution 2532 was US opposition to mentioning the WHO, which the administration of President Donald Trump has criticised during the crisis, in addition to its criticism of China. China, conversely, wanted a reference to the UN agency, which is mentioned in previous Council resolutions on health crises. A compromise was finally reached by adding language that said the Council had “considered” the General Assembly's 2 April resolution on “Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)”; that resolution acknowledged the crucial role played by the WHO and called for the application of the agency's relevant guidelines.

Since the pandemic began, the Council has had three specific meetings on the crisis

at which members considered the risks that COVID-19 poses to peace and security by worsening conflict drivers. At the Council's 9 April closed videoconference (VTC), the Secretary-General identified these as increasing tensions from the socio-economic fallout of the pandemic and around upcoming elections, eroding trust in public institutions and aggravating pre-existing grievances. He recalled these at the Council's 2 July ministerial-level open debate.

The Council more recently discussed the crisis at a high-level open debate on “Pandemics and the Challenges of Sustaining Peace” via VTC on 12 August. In addition to Guterres, former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, now with the organisation The Elders, briefed. Ban criticised the Council for its delayed agreement on resolution 2532, saying that “valuable months were wasted in arguments over the details of the text”. Sarah Cliffe of New York University's Center on International Cooperation described the significant economic threats, including rising inequality, that could result from the pandemic and noted research showing that conflict risks rise significantly when economies contract by five percentage points. She said the global economy is likely to experience a 5-6 percent contraction in 2020. Cliffe also highlighted the pandemic's secondary impacts on peace processes and elections as well as increased food insecurity, declining remittances and the potential of unequal access to vaccines as conflict drivers. She underscored the importance of conflict prevention activities and for the UN system to integrate more conflict-sensitive analysis.

Council members have discussed the impact of the pandemic in most country-specific and thematic meetings. At a briefing

on conflict-induced hunger in April, World Food Programme Executive Director David Beasley warned about rising food insecurity from the pandemic, estimating that the number of people world-wide facing crisis levels of food insecurity would almost double by the end of 2020 from 135 million to 265 million, mostly as a result of the pandemic's economic and trade impacts.

The pandemic has been a concern for the AU and the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC). AU Commission Chairperson Faki issued an appeal similar to the UN Secretary-General's for a ceasefire on 27 March. In a 14 April communiqué, the PSC reiterated this call by Faki and Guterres, asking “all belligerents to fully embrace and uphold the Global Ceasefire in order to facilitate efforts being deployed against the COVID-19 pandemic”. Since April, the PSC has held at least nine meetings on the impact of COVID-19, including its peace and security implications; progress in controlling its spread; its impact on displaced persons, the security and welfare of children, multilateral cooperation, and electoral processes in Africa; and socio-economic effects on peace and security in Africa.

### Women, Peace and Security

A joint policy brief titled “COVID-19 and Conflict: Advancing Women's Meaningful Participation in Ceasefires and Peace Processes” was published in August by the Department of Political Affairs (DPPA) and UN Women. It examines how the COVID-19 pandemic has a different impact on women in conflict settings, what conditions are conducive to the meaningful participation of women in peace processes and how these conditions are affected by the pandemic. According to the policy brief, women are increasingly exposed to the virus, caused by their disproportionate roles in unpaid and paid care work; a rise in domestic violence; and overwhelmed health care systems. This results in a loss of access to sexual and

**UN DOCUMENTS ON COVID-19** [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2532](#) (1 July 2020) demanded a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on the Council's agenda and called upon all parties to armed conflicts to engage immediately in a 90-day humanitarian pause. [Security Council Letter S/2020/663](#) (8 July 2020) contained the records of the briefings and statements from the 2 July open debate on the peace and security implications of pandemics and international health crises. [General Assembly Document A/RES/74/270](#) (2 April 2020) reaffirmed the General Assembly's “commitment to international cooperation and multilateralism and its strong support for the central role of the UN system in the global response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic”.

---

## COVID-19

reproductive health care and livelihoods. At the same time, a shift in resources away from support for women's political participation carries a risk of "harmful intergenerational consequences for women's rights". Those consequences include issues such as women's economic empowerment and education for girls. The policy brief argues that an enabling environment is essential for women to meaningful participate in peace processes. It lists elements constituting such an environment as including equality before the law, inclusivity as a social and cultural norm, security and protection from violence, social services such as childcare, access to knowledge and training, financial support, and logistics support such as transportation. These elements are in danger by the effects of the pandemic. DPPA and UN Women therefore call for gender-responsive COVID-19 commitments to be included in ceasefire and peace agreements. Women's civil society organisations have further underlined the need to have provisions in such agreements related to topics like humanitarian and public health access, social protection and economic assistance in order to support women's rights.

### Key Issues and Options

One purpose of the high-level session is to discuss the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and how to adapt the global security architecture to respond to such events in the future. The Council's consideration of the pandemic over the recent months, and the response of the world system in general, demonstrate the need to re-evaluate how existing mechanisms address non-traditional security threats that can emanate from pandemics but also, for example, from climate change,

environmental disasters or economic crises. Discussion may also include the issue of making unilateral sanctions more flexible during such crises—sanctions have hindered some countries' ability to respond more effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic—as well as debt relief and post-pandemic economic recovery.

In addition to a possible presidential statement of the Council and a summary by the presidency of the interventions, the Council may continue to hold regular meetings to consider and stay aware of the potentially destabilising impacts of the pandemic. Such meetings could help prepare the Council to react to looming peace and security threats as a result of the COVID-19, but perhaps more significantly, bringing attention to these socio-economic impacts and linkages to peace and security could prompt other relevant actors to address identified problems.

### Council Dynamics

Health crises are a non-traditional security threat, but after China and South Africa raised initial concerns in March about the link between the pandemic and peace and security, members have not questioned the Council's discussing the pandemic. Members have highlighted concerns about how the pandemic exacerbates frequent conflict drivers such as economic conditions and social tensions during Council debates. Russia and South Africa have at times stressed that it was important for Council discussions about the pandemic to focus on situations

on its agenda and not to involve itself in, for example, economic aspects, which are the responsibility of other UN organs and entities—though during last month's open debate, South Africa underscored the socio-economic impacts of the crisis in its statement, perhaps reflecting an evolution in its view. Members have diverging positions on the issue of waiving sanctions that can undermine countries' capacity to respond to the pandemic, an action which the Secretary-General has previously suggested.

The protracted negotiations on resolution 2532 stemmed from US-China tensions, fuelled by US criticism of and rhetoric about China regarding the pandemic amid the major US outbreak. Developing countries on the Council that are more reliant on the WHO expressed concerns during negotiations about the negative signal that would be sent by not mentioning the agency.

Elected members have actively sought to have the Council address the pandemic. Tunisia served as co-penholder with France on resolution 2532. The Council's first meeting on COVID-19 was held at the request of nine elected members (with South Africa being the exception). Germany and Indonesia organised debates in July and August, and, with Niger and the UK, organised an informal interactive dialogue on the pandemic with Peacebuilding Commission representatives in July.

---

## Libya

### Expected Council Action

In September, the Security Council is expected to renew the mandate of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), set to expire on 15 September. Briefings by the Acting Special Representative and head of UNSMIL, Stephanie Williams, and the chair of the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee, Günter Sautter, the Deputy Permanent Representative of

Germany, are also scheduled. If the measures implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic are still in place, the meetings are likely to be held as videoconferences (VTCs).

The authorisation given by resolution 2491 (to inspect vessels suspected of being used for migrant smuggling or human trafficking) expires on 3 October, and that of resolution 2526 (to inspect vessels believed

to be in violation of the arms embargo) expires on 5 June 2021. Measures related to the illicit export of petroleum from Libya expire on 30 April 2021, and the mandate of the Panel of Experts assisting the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee expires on 15 May 2021.

---

**UN DOCUMENTS ON LIBYA** Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2526 (5 June 2020) renewed for 12 months the authorisation for member states, acting nationally or through regional organisations, to inspect vessels on the high seas off the coast of Libya bound to or from the country that they have reasonable grounds to believe are violating the arms embargo. S/RES/2510 (12 February 2020) endorsed the conclusions of the Berlin Conference on Libya; it was adopted with 14 votes in favour and one abstention (Russia). S/RES/2509 (11 February 2020) renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts assisting the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee until 15 May 2021 as well as the measures related to the illicit export from Libya of petroleum until 30 April 2021; it was adopted with 14 votes in favour and one abstention (Russia). S/RES/2491 (3 October 2019) renewed for 12 months the authorisation for member states, acting nationally or through regional organisations, to inspect vessels on the high seas off the coast of Libya that they have reasonable grounds to suspect are being used for migrant smuggling or human trafficking. S/RES/2486 (12 September 2019) extended UNSMIL's mandate until 15 September 2020.



# Libya

## Key Recent Developments

After 13 months of fighting, armed groups aligned with the internationally recognised and UN-backed Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA) halted General Khalifa Haftar's offensive against the capital, Tripoli. All positions in greater Tripoli held by forces allied with Haftar, the head of the eastern-based militia known as the Libyan National Army (LNA), had been retaken by the GNA by 4 June. Both the GNA and the LNA receive foreign military support in violation of UN sanctions. Last November, the GNA and Turkey signed two agreements, one on cooperation on military and security matters, and the other on maritime boundary delimitation, including drilling rights for Turkey in the Mediterranean. After a failed attempt to induce Haftar to sign a ceasefire agreement brokered by Turkey and Russia in January, Turkey increased its military support to Libya, eventually turning the conflict in favour of the GNA.

According to the International Organisation for Migration, 229,295 people have become internally displaced persons (IDPs) since the beginning of the offensive in April 2019, bringing the total number of IDPs in Libya to 401,836 as at 31 July.

On 20 June, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi said that Egypt might intervene to protect its borders if the GNA advanced towards the city of Sirte, which is about 800 kilometres from the Egyptian border. Sirte has strategic significance because of its proximity to Libya's oil crescent (where most of Libya's oil export terminals are located), which is part of the two-thirds of Libyan territory that remains under Haftar's control. Since the beginning of the year, militias and mercenaries allied with Haftar have blockaded Libya's major oil facilities, resulting in a complete loss of revenue from oil products, according to the Libyan National Oil Cooperation (NOC). After the NOC was temporarily able to start oil exports again on 10 July, militias and mercenaries allied with the LNA again took over the facilities and blocked such efforts. The NOC, in a 12 July statement, claimed that the order to renew the blockade had come from the United Arab Emirates (a military supporter of Haftar). On 13 July, the House of Representatives (HoR, the Libyan parliament aligned with Haftar and based in the eastern city of Tobruk) passed a

motion asking Egypt to intervene in Libya's conflict. On 20 July, the Egyptian parliament approved the deployment of Egyptian forces outside its territory. At the time of writing, the military situation around Sirte remained unchanged. Several high-level bilateral phone calls between France, Russia, Turkey and the US have taken place in the past weeks, without publicly-declared outcomes so far. On 21 August, Libyan Prime Minister Fayez al-Serraj, head of the GNA, announced a unilateral ceasefire. Aguila Saleh, the head of the HoR, called for a ceasefire by both the GNA and the LNA. El-Sisi also supported al-Serraj's announcement. UNSMIL welcomed the ceasefire statements, as did the Secretary-General. The Gulf Cooperation Council (of which the United Arab Emirates are a member) also welcomed the step. On 23 August, the LNA dismissed the announcement by al-Serraj, arguing it was made in bad faith.

On the political situation, as a result of the Berlin Conference on Libya in January, negotiations between Libyan parties along three tracks (economic, political and security) are underway, with varying levels of progress. The participants at the Berlin Conference further agreed to establish an International Follow-Up Committee to coordinate efforts to implement the Berlin Conference conclusions. The Council endorsed the conclusions of the Berlin Conference in resolution 2510 of 12 February, on which Russia abstained.

In its latest "Civilian Casualties Report" covering 1 April to 30 June, UNSMIL described an increase in civilian casualties of 173 percent compared to its previous report covering 1 January to 31 March. Of the 358 confirmed civilian casualties (106 dead and 252 injured), UNSMIL attributed 80 percent to forces allied with the LNA, 11 percent to forces allied with the GNA, and the remaining nine percent as undetermined.

On 8 July, the Council held an open VTC on Libya chaired by the German foreign minister, Heiko Maas. Representatives from the AU, Algeria, Chad, Congo, Egypt, the EU, Greece, Italy, the League of Arab States, Libya, Morocco, the Netherlands, Qatar, Sudan, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates also participated. Secretary-General António Guterres briefed. He warned that "the conflict has entered a new phase with foreign interference reaching unprecedented levels, including in the delivery of sophisticated

equipment and the number of mercenaries involved in the fighting". He further said that UNSMIL was working on solutions, including "a possible demilitarized zone". That idea, for Sirte and Al-Jufra, has since been echoed by a number of Council members. As part of his 21 August ceasefire announcement, al-Serraj called for the demilitarisation of Sirte.

On 28 July, the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee held a closed "informal informal" VTC meeting with Libya, regional member states, and regional organisations to discuss the implementation of UN sanctions, as requested by Libya.

The Secretary-General has yet to appoint a successor to Ghassan Salamé, who announced he was resigning as Special Representative and head of UNSMIL on 2 March. Candidates put forward by the Secretary-General so far have not been able to garner unanimous support from Council members. It also seems that the US is pushing to divide the role into two positions: a head of UNSMIL and a Special Envoy for Libya. Briefing the Council on 8 July, Guterres emphasised that designating a successor "will greatly facilitate" UNSMIL's efforts and that he counted on the Council to expedite the process.

COVID-19 case numbers in Libya continue to rise sharply. As of 31 August, Libya had 13,423 confirmed cases of COVID-19. According to calculations by the ICRC, the number of cases as they stood on 20 August (9,463 cases, as reported by the WHO) represented an increase by 1,500 percent in less than two months. The UN's 2020 humanitarian response plan for Libya of \$129.8 million has been funded at 85.4 percent, with \$18.9 million outstanding.

## Key Issues and Options

An immediate issue for the Council is the renewal of UNSMIL's mandate. The ongoing military conflict in Libya and related non-compliance with the arms embargo by multiple international actors have been ongoing issues for the Council, together with the implementation of the Berlin Conference's conclusions. Council members could use their influence individually to put pressure on the conflict parties and proxy powers to adhere to the arms embargo and engage in a political solution in good faith.

---

# Libya

## Council and Wider Dynamics

The Council continues to be divided over Libya. Council outcomes routinely call upon UN member states to cease support for parallel institutions in Libya, but some countries, including members of the Council, fail to respect these calls. Haftar's wide territorial control and past claims to be uniting the country and fighting terrorism have resulted in political and military support from a number of countries inside and outside the

Council. France has shown political support for Haftar while his largest military backer is the United Arab Emirates.

A confidential report by the Panel of Experts assisting the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee that was leaked to the press in early May said that the Russian private military company Wagner Group has deployed around 1,200 mercenaries to fight for Haftar, according to the media. The Kremlin denies ties to the Wagner Group despite accusations

to the contrary by various sources.

Mercenaries from several countries are reportedly fighting on both sides. All foreign sponsors but Turkey deny their role in Libya.

The UK is the penholder on Libya, sharing the pen with Germany on the sanctions file. Günter Sautter, Germany's Deputy Permanent Representative, chairs the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee.

---

# Syria

## Expected Council Action

In September, the Security Council expects to hold its monthly meetings on political issues, the humanitarian situation, and the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

## Key Recent Developments

Violence appears to have increased in several parts of Syria since mid-July. Special Envoy Geir O. Pedersen, briefing the Council on 23 July, noted that there had been "sustained clashes" between armed opposition groups in the north-west, as well as a "brief uptick in pro-government airstrikes south of the M4 [security corridor]" and shelling by government forces in north-west Syria. In addition, there have been regular road blockages as well as attacks on the joint Russian-Turkish patrols along the M4 that have been conducted since Russia and Turkey signed a 5 March ceasefire agreement. On 13 August, a Russian foreign ministry spokesperson announced that Russia intended to suspend participation in the joint patrols, given its security concerns, but it appears that this decision was superseded by the resumption of joint patrols four days later. On 17 August, another joint Turkish-Russian patrol monitoring the M4 came under attack by unknown assailants, causing damage to a Turkish military vehicle, although there were no injuries. There have also been reports of a build-up of Syrian forces and Syrian rocket attacks in areas south-west of Idlib.

In recent weeks, high-profile violent

attacks have also intensified in other parts of Syria. On 3 August, the Israeli military struck Syrian military targets, killing three Syrian soldiers. According to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), the attack was in retaliation for an attempt by unidentified militants based in Syria to place explosives near the Golan Heights. On 17 August, two US helicopters attacked a Syrian army checkpoint in Syria's north-east near Qamishli, killing one Syrian soldier and injuring two others. According to media reports, on 18 August an improvised explosive device (IED) was detonated next to a Russian convoy near Deir-ez-Zor in eastern Syria, killing a Russian major general and injuring two Russian soldiers.

Syria's precarious humanitarian situation has worsened because of a growing outbreak of COVID-19 and the ongoing deleterious impact that Syria's economic crisis is having on food security, education and access to jobs. Briefing the Council on 29 July, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock noted that COVID-19 was now a countrywide problem, with cases reported in all but one governorate. According to OCHA, COVID-19 is causing Syria's weak economy to contract even further, reducing remittances from abroad and increasing unemployment from 42 percent in 2019 to nearly 50 percent in August. Children have also been affected: already, some 2.5 million children—one-third of all school-aged children

in Syria—are unable to attend school, a figure that OCHA believes is likely to spike as more schools are closed down due to COVID-19.

According to figures from the Syrian Ministry of Health, the number of COVID-19 cases in Syria still appears to be relatively small: officially, the number of people confirmed to have COVID-19 has reached only 1,677. The number of cases in Syria's north-west, as of 7 August, stood at 40, with 36 in Syria's north-east. However, Lowcock said the "true number of cases is certainly higher", given the limited testing capacity and "a reluctance, among some people, to acknowledge an infection" likely to mask the real scale of COVID-19's spread. According to some estimates, including a recent investigative media report using excess deaths as a basis for determining the size of a possible outbreak, there may be up to 85,000 COVID-19 infection cases in the Damascus region alone.

Regarding the political process, Pedersen briefed the Council on 19 August and in his briefing included the announcement that the Constitutional Committee was scheduled to hold in-person meetings in Geneva from 24 August.

## Human Rights-Related Developments

At its 44th session, the Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted, on 17 July, resolution 44/21, which "strongly condemns" the Syrian government for serious human rights violations, including enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, torture, and sexual violence. The vote was 22 in

---

**UN DOCUMENTS ON SYRIA** [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2533](#) (11 July 2020) renewed the authorisation for cross-border humanitarian aid into Syria through one border crossing (Bab al-Hawa) for 12 months. [Secretary-General's Report S/2020/401](#) (14 May 2020) was on the review of the UN's cross-line and cross-border operations. [Security Council Letters S/2020/758](#) (29 July 2020) was a letter from the president of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the permanent representatives of Council member states containing the record of the 29 July open videoconference (VTC) meeting on Syria. [S/2020/743](#) (23 July 2020) was a letter from the president of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the permanent representatives of Council member states containing the record of the 23 July open VTC meeting on Syria.

## Syria

favour, two against, and 17 abstentions. The resolution also requests the Commission of Inquiry to prepare a report on arbitrary imprisonment and detention in the Syrian Arab Republic and present the report to the Council at its 46th session, scheduled for 22 February to 19 March 2021. The resolution further notes that “parties to armed conflict bear the primary responsibility to take all feasible measures to account for persons reported missing as a result of hostilities” in accordance with Security Council resolution 2474 and underscores the need for all parties to the conflict to “engage meaningfully in the political process under the auspices of the Special Envoy” in accordance with Security Council resolution 2254.

### Key Issues and Options

In the wake of the 11 July adoption of resolution 2533, which re-authorised the Bab al-Hawa crossing for 12 months but did not re-authorise the crossing at Bab al-Salam, the contentious issue of humanitarian access is, at least temporarily, not on the Council’s front burner. When briefing the Council last month, Lowcock did not address the effect of its decision on the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Syria’s north-west. As the dual impacts of the closure of Bab al-Salam and the severe disruption to a key humanitarian

assistance delivery logistics hub caused by the recent massive explosion at the region’s main port in Beirut become evident, Council members may wish to consider other options moving forward. These could include consideration of re-authorising Bab al-Salam or, in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 in Syria’s north-east or a lack of further improvements in cross-line delivery, reinstating the AlYarubiyah border crossing between Syria and Iraq. Given the very difficult negotiations that surrounded the adoption of 2533, these options may, however, be implausible.

The Council is also closely following progress on the political file. With the Special Envoy’s 19 August confirmation that the Constitutional Committee meeting would go ahead in person in Geneva, members may seek ways to offer support to this body. On 8 October 2019, the Council adopted a presidential statement welcoming the Secretary-General’s 23 September announcement of the agreement by the Syrian government and opposition for “a credible, balanced, and inclusive Constitutional Committee facilitated by the United Nations in Geneva”. While there appears to be agreement among

Council members that the formation and continuing work of the Constitutional Committee is a positive development, some members have noted that this is only the first step in a political process that should lead to free and fair elections under UN supervision.

### Council Dynamics

The Council remains deeply divided on Syria. Negotiations leading up to the adoption of resolution 2533 exposed deep rifts within the Council not only on the importance of the cross-border delivery mechanism but also on such issues as the impact of sanctions and the weight and confidence that the Council places on cross-line assistance. Recent violence in north-west Syria, and particularly attacks on the joint Russian-Turkish patrols and the Russian convoy in Deir-ez-Zor, are also likely to expose the differing standpoints from which Council members see the conflict in Syria, with Russia and China in particular arguing that stronger emphasis must be placed on ridding Syria of terrorists.

Belgium and Germany are the penholders on humanitarian issues in Syria.

## Cooperation between the UN and Regional Organisations: the Role of the International Organization of La Francophonie

### Expected Council Action

In September, Niger is expected to organise a ministerial-level open debate on cooperation between the UN and regional organisations, focusing on the role of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF). Expected briefers are the Secretary-General of the OIF, Louise Mushikiwabo; a representative of the UN Secretariat; and possibly a civil society representative. A concept note will be circulated; no outcome is expected.

### Key Recent Developments

The OIF—also sometimes referred to as La Francophonie or, in English, as the International Organisation of La

Francophonie—represents 84 UN member states and governments that share French as a common language. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the OIF. Headquartered in Paris, the OIF has the following goals, according to its website:

- promoting the French language and cultural and linguistic diversity;
- promoting peace, democracy and human rights;
- supporting education, training, higher education and research; and
- developing economic cooperation for sustainable development.

Louise Mushikiwabo has been Secretary-General of the organisation since 1 January

2019. She previously served as Rwanda’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. The OIF has had observer status at the UN since 1998. As almost two-thirds of UN peacekeepers are deployed in Francophone areas, for more than 15 years, much of the OIF’s UN-related work has been focused on aspects of peacekeeping. OIF has partnered with France, for example, to hold training sessions to increase the preparedness level of French-speaking contingents to respond to operational, ethical, and cross-cutting issues. A significant priority for the OIF has been advocating for increased participation of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. For instance, the OIF has given grants

**UN DOCUMENTS ON COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UN AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS** Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2019/5 (13 June 2019) encouraged the holding of an annual briefing by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and the holding of an annual informal meeting between members of the Security Council and the Council of the LAS. Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.8711 (30 January 2020) was a briefing on cooperation between the UN and ASEAN. This was the first Council meeting focused on cooperation with ASEAN. S/PV.8626 (25 September 2019) was a ministerial-level debate focusing on the role of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. S/PV.8079 (27 October 2017) was the annual open debate on women, peace and security that included a briefing by the Secretary-General of the International Organisation of La Francophonie, Michaëlle Jean.

---

# Cooperation between the UN and Regional Organisations: the Role of the International Organization of La Francophonie

to an organisation in Madagascar that supports women's involvement in security sector reform and, in response to COVID-19, created a solidarity fund to support vulnerable women in Africa and the Caribbean called "La Francophonie avec Elles".

Women's participation is a subject on which the OIF has spoken before. On 27 October 2017, then-Secretary-General of the OIF Michaëlle Jean participated in the annual open debate on women, peace, and security with other briefers. She mostly focused her remarks on the implementation of resolution 1325, which recognised the importance of women's participation in ending conflict. She called on international organisations, regional groups, civil society, and states to do more to promote the inclusion of women and gave examples of the OIF's work in this area.

The OIF has had intermittent official interactions with the Council on other occasions. On 7 November 2016, the Council held a ministerial-level open debate on "Peace operations—facing asymmetric threats", with a briefing by Jean. On several occasions, the OIF has also joined the UN and other international organisations in statements on countries on the Council agenda, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic.

## Key Issues and Options

This open debate is expected to address different aspects of the role played by the OIF, including its contribution to addressing

peace and security issues, strengthening the rule of law, and providing specialised training and capacity-building for troop-contributing countries. More specifically, Council members and briefers may discuss the OIF's contribution in terms of conflict prevention, especially around contested elections. According to the OIF's supporters, it has valuable expertise that can help address such issues and prevent potential disputes.

## Council and Wider Dynamics

The Council's interactions with regional organisations have occurred in the spirit of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, which encourages the resolution of local disputes by regional arrangements or agencies as long as their efforts are consistent with the principles and purposes of the UN. The understanding of "regional organisations" is somewhat broad: the OIF, headquartered in Paris, has six regional offices and permanent representations to the UN (in New York and Geneva), the EU, and the AU. It also has wide international membership. The discussion of such organisations at the Council falls under the item referring to regional organisations.

The AU and the EU have had the most developed relationships—including regular briefings and visits—with the Security Council. Over the past few years, discussions with regional organisations have become more common, with Council presidencies from the respective region taking the initiative. On 13 June 2019, Kuwait convened a high-level

briefing on cooperation with the League of Arab States (LAS). In a presidential statement adopted following the meeting, the Council encouraged the practice of receiving an annual briefing by the Secretary-General of the LAS and convening an annual informal meeting between Security Council members and the members of the Council of the LAS. On 25 September 2019, Russia organised a ministerial-level meeting on the work of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the Commonwealth of Independent States, with a focus on their role in counter-terrorism efforts. On 30 January, under the presidency of Viet Nam, the Council held its first ever briefing on cooperation between the UN and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

More generally, the Council often invites representatives of regional or other international organisations to participate in its meetings, particularly as briefers. For example, the Community of Lusophone-Speaking Countries often spoke about peacebuilding at meetings on Guinea-Bissau.

As for the OIF, supporters of its work see it as an important tool to gather a wide variety of delegations for dialogue and planning. They believe this helps increase inclusive discussions on Council agenda items with the wider membership. OIF members may also want to see the OIF's extensive contributions to crisis prevention, crisis resolution, peacebuilding, and development acknowledged on a wider stage.

---

## Children and Armed Conflict

### Expected Council Action

As Council president in September, Niger is planning to convene an open videoconference (VTC) debate on "attacks against schools: a grave violation of children's rights" with a focus on the Sahel region. The meeting will coincide with the first "International Day to Protect Education from Attack", which will take place on 9 September, in line with General Assembly resolution 74/275 adopted on 12 May. The anticipated briefers are Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict

Virginia Gamba and a representative from the Global Coalition for the Protection of Education from Attack (GCPEA). UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore, and a child civil society representative may also brief.

Niger and Belgium, the chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, are co-authoring a draft presidential statement on attacks against schools that may be adopted ahead of the debate.

### Background

Attacks against schools and hospitals are one of the six grave violations included in the UN-led Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) for violations against children established by resolution 1612 in 2005. Resolution 1998, adopted in 2011, designated these attacks as a grave violation that could trigger a listing of parties in the annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict. In 2014, the Council further addressed this issue by adopting resolution 2143 on the

---

**UN DOCUMENTS ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT** [Secretary-General's Report S/2020/525](#) (9 June 2020) was the annual report on children and armed conflict. [Security Council Letter S/2020/594](#) (26 June 2020) contained a record of the statements made at the open debate on children and armed conflict, held on 23 June 2020. [Security Council Press Statement SC/14224](#) (23 June 2020) condemned the scale of violations against children and expressed concern at the effect of COVID-19 on the situation of children.

## Children and Armed Conflict

military use of schools, which urged parties to conflict to respect the civilian character of schools and encouraged member states to consider measures to deter the use of schools by armed forces and non-state armed groups.

Council members held a focused discussion on the issue of attacks against schools in an October 2017 Arria-formula meeting organised by France, Italy, Sweden, and Uruguay. The briefers at the meeting were Gamba; Joy Bishara, a student kidnapped by the rebel group Boko Haram in 2014; and Zama Neff, co-chair of the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack. Bishara provided a first-hand account of the impact of attacks on schools, and member states shared experiences about their efforts to protect schools from military use.

### Key Recent Developments

Threats to children's rights to education remain a major concern as attacks against schools in many conflict areas around the world persisted in 2019. These difficulties were significantly compounded in 2020 by the closure of schools because of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict, issued on 9 June, the UN verified 494 attacks on schools and 433 attacks on hospitals in 2019. It said that the highest numbers of verified attacks on schools and hospitals were in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Afghanistan, and Somalia, noting that such attacks by state actors had nearly doubled globally. The report mentioned two new situations of concern—Burkina Faso and Cameroon—which will be included in the next annual Secretary-General's report. In both countries, the grave violations against children included attacks on schools.

In 2019, the Sahel region experienced a sharp increase in attacks against schools. UNICEF reported that by the end of the year violence had caused more than 3,300 schools in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger to close or become non-operational, affecting 650,000 children and 16,000 teachers. The number of school closures in 2019 constituted a six-fold increase since April 2017. A UN policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 on education, issued on 5 August, noted that nationwide school closures in the Sahel region brought about by the pandemic exacerbated existing challenges to children's access to education.

On 23 June, the Security Council convened an open VTC meeting on children and armed conflict. Gamba presented the Secretary-General's annual report, and the Council was also briefed by UNICEF's Fore and Mariam, a child civil society briefer who was only addressed by her first name for security reasons. Following the meeting, members of the Security Council issued a press statement that noted the occasion of the 15-year anniversary of resolution 1612, which established the MRM and the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. They welcomed the achievements made by both mechanisms since their establishment, including the demobilisation and reintegration of more than 150,000 children, and condemned the scale of violations against children affected by conflict.

The Secretary-General's annual report provides information on the six grave violations against children committed in situations on the agenda of the Council, as well as in other situations of concern. The six grave violations are child recruitment and use; killing and maiming; abductions; rape and other forms of sexual violence; attacks on schools and hospitals; and the denial of humanitarian access. The latest Secretary-General's report generated criticism from some members of the Security Council and civil society organisations because of the de-listing of certain parties from the annexes of the report, which list parties that have committed grave violations against children. One focus of the criticism was the decision by the Secretary-General to de-list the Saudi Arabia-led Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen for the violation of killing and maiming, despite the fact that the annual report showed that it had committed 222 such violations in 2019. Another criticism was of the decision to de-list the Myanmar Armed Forces, known as the Tatmadaw, for the violation of recruitment and use, although they were responsible for eight cases of new recruitment and 197 cases of use in 2019, according to the findings of the annual report.

The report explained the removal of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition as the result of a "sustained significant decrease in killing and maiming due to air strikes" and the signing and implementation of a memorandum aimed at reducing violations against children. The decision to remove the Tatmadaw was made "following a continued significant decrease in recruitment, ongoing prosecutions and an agreement to continue to trace

and release cases that were identified in previous years". The report emphasised that both entities will remain under UN monitoring and that failure to further reduce violations will result in an automatic re-listing for the relevant violation in the next annual report.

At the 23 June debate, several Council members emphasised the importance of upholding the impartiality and integrity of the listing and de-listing mechanism of the annexes of the annual report. Some Council members, including Belgium and the Dominican Republic, talked about the premature de-listing of parties, with the former noting that such a practice could remove the leverage of the listing mechanisms on offending parties. Germany said that it was crucial that the findings of the report correspond to the listing and de-listing of parties and asked the Secretary-General to clarify his approach to the annexes. Estonia and the UK emphasised the need for a consistent application of the criteria for listing and de-listing parties, which were set out in the Secretary-General's 2010 annual report. That report said that a party would be de-listed if the UN had verified that it "has ceased commission of all the said grave violations" for which it was listed.

Member states, including several Council members, also made direct demarches to the Secretary-General, expressing concern regarding discrepancies between the violations described in the annual report and the listing of the parties in the annexes. On 22 June, three Security Council members met with the Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General and Gamba on the matter. In addition, the Group of Friends of Children and Armed Conflict, an informal network of 45 member states representing the five regional groups of the UN, sent a letter to the Secretary-General expressing its concern that an uneven application of the listing and de-listing criteria might call into question the credibility of the monitoring and reporting mechanism and undermine the tools at the UN's disposal to address violations against children. In addition, 24 NGOs sent an open letter to the Secretary-General in which they called for greater transparency in the listing and de-listing process and for a due diligence procedure which will guarantee that the annexes to the annual report reflect the information collected by the MRM.

---

## Children and Armed Conflict

### Developments in the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict

Since June, the Working Group held six closed VTC meetings for briefings, the introduction of country-specific reports on children and armed conflict, and a discussion of conclusions adopted by written procedure. The Working Group adopted conclusions on the Secretary-General's reports on children and armed conflict in Colombia, Iraq and Somalia. To date, the Working Group has adopted eight sets of conclusions since Belgium assumed the chairmanship of the Working Group in January 2019.

### Key Issues and Options

The persistently high number of attacks against schools in the Sahel region and globally is a key concern for the Security Council. Secretary-General's reports on children and armed conflict in countries in the Sahel region have demonstrated that there are instances of spillover of armed groups' activities which affect other countries, including cross-border attacks on schools. Members may call for enhanced monitoring and reporting on the impact of regional and subregional dynamics on violations committed against children in the Secretary-General's country reports on children and armed conflict,

with the aim of obtaining data that could help tailor better protection solutions. Council members may also call on states to ratify and implement normative frameworks, such as the Safe Schools Declaration. The declaration, a voluntary political commitment from governments not to use schools for military purposes and to protect them during military operations, was opened for endorsement in 2015. As of 2020, 104 states had endorsed the declaration. While many view the declaration as a possibly useful tool in obtaining greater commitment from governments to address ways of protecting children and their right to education, several Council members—including China, Russia and the US—have not endorsed it.

A crucial issue for the Council is having the Secretary-General's annual reports serve as an effective tool in supporting the implementation of the children and armed conflict agenda. As such, addressing the concerns about the perceived discrepancies between the information contained in the report and the de-listing of parties from the annexes is paramount. In addition to calling for the consistent application of the de-listing criteria contained in the 2010 Secretary-General's report, Council

members could also ask for an independent review of the listing and de-listing process.

### Council Dynamics

There is strong support overall for the children and armed conflict agenda among Council members. However, political sensitivities in the Council over issues such as Syria and Myanmar have filtered down to the subsidiary body level, resulting in protracted negotiations before consensus could be reached on some conclusions.

The advent of working remotely has meant that the Working Group has not been able to hold face-to-face negotiations. Over the years, members of the Working Group have developed strong ties because of their regular contacts, which have been useful in reaching agreement on outcomes. The negotiations on the anticipated draft presidential statement are likely to provide a clearer picture of how meeting and negotiating remotely has affected the dynamics among Working Group members.

Ambassador Philippe Kridelka (Belgium) chairs the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict.

---

## Peacekeeping Operations

### Expected Council Action

In September, the Security Council will receive its annual comprehensive briefing on UN peacekeeping reform as required by resolution 2378 of 20 September 2017. Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix is expected to brief.

### Key Recent Developments

In addition to requesting the Secretary-General to provide a comprehensive annual briefing to the Council on UN peacekeeping reform, resolution 2378 also called for the Council to receive updates, as part of this briefing, on the continuing efforts to fill the existing gaps in force generation and capabilities, and on other needs for peacekeeping

to respond effectively and appropriately to peace and security challenges. The briefings have focussed on progress in advancing Secretary-General António Guterres' "Action for Peacekeeping" (A4P) initiative. On 28 March 2018, the Secretary-General highlighted the urgent need for "a quantum leap in collective engagement" and announced the launch of A4P to renew the UN's political commitment to peacekeeping operations. To date, 154 member states and four regional organisations have endorsed the A4P's "Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations", which contains 45 commitments across the following eight thematic areas:

- advancing lasting political solutions;

- implementing the women, peace and security agenda;
- strengthening the protection provided by peacekeeping operations;
- improving the safety and security of peacekeepers;
- supporting effective performance and accountability;
- strengthening the impact of peacekeeping on sustaining peace;
- improving peacekeeping partnerships; and
- strengthening the conduct of peacekeepers and peacekeeping operations.

During last year's comprehensive briefing, Lacroix briefed on the efforts of UN peace operations to facilitate the pursuit of political solutions, the importance of prioritised

---

**UN DOCUMENTS ON PEACEKEEPING** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2538](#) (28 August 2020) was on the role of women in peacekeeping. [S/RES/2518](#) (30 March 2020) was on improving the safety and security of peacekeepers. [S/RES/2436](#) (21 September 2018) was on peacekeeping performance. [Security Council Presidential Statements S/PRST/2019/4](#) (7 May 2019) was on peacekeeping training and capacity-building. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.8612](#) (9 September 2019) was a debate on peacekeeping reform that featured a briefing by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix, required by resolution 2378. [S/PV.8521](#) (7 May 2019) was the open debate on "Investing in peace: improving safety and performance of United Nations peacekeepers". [S/PV.8349](#) (12 September 2018) was the first briefing under resolution 2378.

---

## Peacekeeping Operations

and sequenced mandates, and initiatives to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers. Lacroix maintained that improved and context-specific training was important for enhancing the security of peacekeepers. He also noted that peace operations had “embarked on an ambitious programme of health reform to formally establish a chain of reliable and safe care from the point of injury to the hospital”. Since that briefing, the Council has held several meetings on issues covered by the Declaration of Shared Commitments, such as the annual briefing with the heads of UN police components on 6 November 2019 and a briefing on 30 January on cooperation between the UN and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), whose members contribute some 5,000 troops to UN peacekeeping missions.

In a follow-up to the issue of improving the safety and security of peacekeepers, China, as president of the Council in March, had planned a debate on “UN peacekeeping operations: Better capacity building, more safety and security”. Originally scheduled for 24 March, the debate had to be cancelled because of COVID-19 concerns. According to the concept note China disseminated to Council members on 6 March, the open debate was envisioned to address ways member states could help build capacity through training and provision of equipment and other resources; how the Security Council, the Secretariat, troop- and police-contributing countries, financial contributors and host countries should respond to the challenges presented by complex situations and dangerous environments; how the UN could improve its training system; and what uniform deployment standards for peacekeepers should be established. Despite the cancellation of the open debate, the Council adopted resolution 2518 on 30 March, emphasising the importance of enhancing the safety and

security of UN peacekeepers and calling on host states to facilitate access and freedom of movement for UN peacekeepers and their equipment consistent with a mission’s mandate, including for casualty and medical evacuation. It also requested the Secretariat to instruct all peacekeeping missions to systematically document violations of status-of-forces agreements.

On 7 July, under the German presidency, the Council held an open debate on the topic of peace operations and human rights. The aim of the open debate, according to the concept note prepared by Germany, was to discuss how peace operations can contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights more effectively.

Most recently, on 28 August, then Council president Indonesia announced the result of the written voting procedure on a resolution on women in peacekeeping operations. Adopted unanimously, resolution 2538 called on member states, the Secretariat, and regional organisations “to strengthen their collective efforts to promote the full, effective, and meaningful participation of uniformed and civilian women in peacekeeping operations” and highlighted a series of measures that stakeholders could take to that end. It also requested the Secretary-General to report on the progress of the implementation of the resolution in his comprehensive annual briefing mandated by resolution 2378.

### Issues and Options

Council members and the larger UN membership have differing views on several issues related to peacekeeping. While there is a degree of unity on issues such as the safety and security of peacekeepers and the key role of training and capacity-building prior to and during their deployment, negotiations on resolution 2518 most recently demonstrated that several contentious peacekeeping issues persist, including

intelligence gathering and the impact of climate change on peacekeeping operations.

Other issues, such as funding modalities of AU-led peace support operations authorised by the Security Council, have also been divisive: indeed, such funding issues prevented the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) from adopting its annual report in 2019. This past March, however, using a new report structure based on the “A4P” programme and, according to many of its members, working in a spirit of “give-and-take”, the C-34 reached consensus on its 2020 annual report.

The upcoming Council briefing will be an opportunity to assess progress on, and take stock of, the A4P’s Declaration of Shared Commitments. Building on the apparent positive momentum from the C-34 as well as the adoptions of resolution 2518 in March and resolution 2538 in August, Council members could identify the areas where more work needs to be done and aim to develop a plan to deliver on these commitments.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

With almost universal endorsement of the Declaration of Shared Commitments on Peacekeeping Operations and buy-in at the highest levels by a large majority of member states, the Secretariat has tried to use the declaration as an impetus for reinvigorating fresh thinking on peacekeeping. Although all its members have endorsed the declaration bilaterally, the Council itself has not done so. A 7 May 2019 presidential statement welcomed “efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General to mobilize all partners and stakeholders in support of more effective United Nations peacekeeping through his initiative ‘Action for Peacekeeping’”. The statement specified that it recognised the added value brought by the declaration to training and capacity building.

---

## Yemen

### Expected Council Action

(VTC), with Special Envoy for Yemen

Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock, and

General Abhijit Guha, who heads the UN Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement

---

**UN DOCUMENTS ON YEMEN** Security Council Resolution S/RES/2534 (14 July 2020) extended the mandate of UNMHA until 15 July 2021. Security Council Letters S/2020/808 (18 August 2020) was a letter from the Secretary-General on the “potential disastrous consequences” of an oil spill from or fire on the FSO Safer oil tanker. S/2020/648 (3 July 2020) was from the Yemeni government, requesting a Council special session on the FSO Safer. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.8753 (28 July 2020) was a briefing on Yemen. Security Council Press Statement SC/14233 (29 June 2020) expressed deep concern at the slow pace of negotiations, calling on the parties to agree rapidly to mediated proposals.

# Yemen

(UNMHA). The mandate of UNMHA expires on 15 July 2021.

## Key Recent Developments

Fighting continues between the Houthi rebel group and the Yemeni government, backed by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, as Griffiths works to broker a ceasefire agreement. Meanwhile, according to OCHA, Yemen's humanitarian situation has continued to deteriorate, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, worsening economic conditions and a major funding shortfall for relief efforts.

Griffiths' efforts to mediate a joint declaration by the government and the Houthis on a nation-wide ceasefire, humanitarian and economic measures, and the resumption of peace talks have been ongoing for the past five months. The main sticking points have apparently been over some of the economic and humanitarian measures, in particular arrangements for re-opening Sana'a airport, paying civil service salaries, and facilitating imports into Hodeidah and Saleef ports. On the ground, the Houthi offensive and military pressures continue against the government stronghold of Marib governorate, with ongoing fighting on other front lines.

In southern Yemen, on 29 July, the government and the separatist Southern Transitional Council (STC) renewed their commitment to the November 2019 Riyadh Agreement, according to an announcement by Saudi Arabia, which mediated the talks following a ceasefire announcement between the sides in June. In accordance with the 29 July announcement, a new governor and security director for Aden—Ahmed Hamid Lamlas, and General Mohammad Ahmed Salim al-Hamedi, respectively, both from the STC—were appointed on 2 August. Talks continued on forming a new government to comprise an equal number of ministers from northern and southern Yemen, including representatives of the STC. On 25 August, the STC announced it was suspending its participation in the Riyadh Agreement because of ceasefire violations, military build-ups, delays in paying salaries and the collapse of the currency.

On 18 August, Security Council members held a closed VTC with Griffiths, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Ramesh Rajasingham and General Guha of UNMHA. The meeting included an update by Rajasingham on the UN's ongoing

discussions with the Houthis over the FSO Safer oil tanker moored off Hodeidah governorate, which threatens to cause an environmental, humanitarian and economic crisis in the event of a major oil spill or explosion. The ship, which has not been maintained since March 2015, nearly sank in May, adding new urgency for a UN-led technical team to access the vessel's condition and possibly make repairs. Rajasingham apparently noted some movement in negotiations with the Houthis, who he said had granted entry permits for the UN team on 16 August, while also submitting a detailed list of equipment and supplies that the team should bring and specifying repairs that should be made.

After the meeting, Council members issued press elements emphasising their steadfast support for Griffiths; welcoming the 29 July announcement of the renewed commitment to implementing the Riyadh Agreement; and calling on all parties to cease hostilities, particularly in Marib, to prevent a further exacerbation of the humanitarian situation. Members expressed deep concern at the funding shortfall and called on all donors, including from the region, to step up pledges. On the FSO Safer, members called for concrete action by the Houthis without further delay, including granting entry permits, providing a safe travel route to the tanker, and all other logistical arrangements, to facilitate unconditional access for UN technical experts to inspect the tanker's condition, conduct any possible urgent repairs and make recommendations for potentially extracting the oil.

In a 29 August statement, the Special Envoy said he was deeply concerned by the major fuel shortages in Houthi-controlled areas, which have "devastating and widespread humanitarian consequences". Griffiths called for the parties to work with his office to reach a solution that provides for Yemenis' fuel needs and that uses the associated revenues to pay civil servants' salaries.

## Human Rights-Related Developments

On 6 August, Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said in a statement that she was "appalled by the high number of human rights violations against journalists across Yemen—including killings, disappearances and death sentences". According to the statement, since the beginning of April OHCHR has documented one assassination, one abduction, three cases of arbitrary arrest and detention,

the sentencing of four journalists to death in violation of international human rights law, the jailing of six others, three physical assaults, and threats of physical violence. The situation is going "from bad to worse", Bachelet said, repeatedly emphasising that the journalists are intentionally targeted for "trying to shine a light on the brutality of this crisis". Since the start of the conflict in March 2015, OHCHR has documented 357 human rights violations and abuses against journalists.

## Sanctions-Related Developments

On 14 August, the Council's 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee discussed with the Yemen Panel of Experts the panel's mid-term update. As anticipated, the issue of external arms flows to the Houthis, including Iranian arms, was considered. The US reported several arms interdictions off the coast of Yemen in November 2019 and in February and June. As for the panel's recommendations, it seems that the most significant were proposals to designate individuals for violations related to sexual violence. The panel flagged the issue in its January report, which depicted the repression of women who were critical or perceived to be critical of Houthi rule.

## Key Issues and Options

Agreement between the government and the Houthis on a joint declaration for a nation-wide ceasefire and restarting a political process remains a critical issue. Since fighting intensified between the government and Houthis in January, Council members have called for a cessation of hostilities in multiple press statements, and Griffiths' efforts gained greater urgency in March as a result of COVID-19 and the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire to combat the pandemic. In support of his appeal, the Council adopted resolution 2532 on 1 July demanding a cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda. The Marib offensive could undermine negotiations and exacerbate the humanitarian situation for the hundreds of thousands of displaced persons hosted in the governorate.

Perhaps the most urgent issue is the threat posed by the FSO Safer oil tanker. The implications of this situation have been brought home by the explosion on 4 August at the port in Beirut and the oil spill in Mauritius: with 1.14 million barrels of oil, a spill involving the Safer could be much greater than the 7000 barrels reportedly released so far in Mauritius. A serious oil spill would, among other consequences, destroy the Red Sea ecosystem for decades, prevent use of the critical port of Hodeidah for up to six months, and



---

# Yemen

destroy livelihoods for 1.6 million Yemenis on the country's west coast in addition to millions of others in the region.

Regarding the humanitarian situation, Yemen's deteriorating economy—notably the near-depletion of central bank reserves, a decline in remittances, and the fuel shortage—have exacerbated already dire conditions. OCHA, which has been warning of worsening food insecurity since July, has said that the current funding crisis facing relief efforts is largely due to a sharp reduction in pledges and payments from Gulf countries.

If agreement is reached on the joint declaration, the Council may adopt a resolution to

welcome or endorse the deal. Regarding the FSO Safer, the Council may try to maintain pressure on the Houthis to enable access for the UN technical team. In future statements, Council members could recall the Houthis' previous commitments to provide the UN with access, point out any further failures to abide by these assurances, and recall the potentially devastating effects of a spill or explosion on the environment, the livelihoods of Yemenis and the humanitarian situation.

## Council Dynamics

Council members appear aligned in their support of the Special Envoy, desiring a

ceasefire and resumption of a political process. They further share concerns about the humanitarian situation, the COVID-19 outbreak in Yemen and the FSO Safer. Tunisia is the Arab member on the Council that traditionally champions positions of the Saudi-led coalition supporting the Yemeni government. The US, which is seeking to maintain restrictions on Iranian arms transfers that are set to expire later this year, often points to what it perceives as Iran's destabilising role in Yemen.

The UK is the penholder on Yemen. Ambassador I. Rhonda King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) chairs the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee.

---

# Sudan

## Expected Council Action

In September, the Council is expected to receive a briefing on the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) and the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The chair of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Sven Jürgenson (Estonia), will provide the quarterly briefing on the committee's work.

UNAMID's mandate expires on 31 December 2020 while the UNITAMS mandate expires on 3 June 2021.

## Key Recent Developments

On 3 June, the Security Council adopted resolution 2524, establishing UNITAMS for an initial period of 12 months and setting out four strategic objectives for the mission. These are: assisting Sudan's political transition; supporting peace processes and implementation of future peace agreements; assisting peacebuilding, civilian protection and rule of law in Darfur and the Two Areas (that is, South Kordofan and Blue Nile); and supporting the mobilisation of economic and development assistance and coordination of humanitarian assistance. The resolution also requested that the Secretary-General provide the Council "with a suggested structure and geographical deployment within 60 days

of the adoption of this resolution". However, on 23 July, the Secretary-General requested a 30-day extension because of "considerable challenges linked to...COVID-19". The report is expected in September.

Resolution 2525, also adopted on 3 June, extended UNAMID's mandate until 31 December, maintaining its troop and police ceilings. It also requested the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the AU Commission to provide the Security Council with a special report no later than 31 October 2020, assessing, among other things, "the impact of the peace process on the security situation in Darfur, the capacity of the Government of Sudan...to protect civilians in line with the strategy outlined in the Government of Sudan's letter addressed to the President of the Security Council dated 21 May 2020 (S/2020/429), and recommendations on the appropriate course of action regarding the drawdown of UNAMID".

Since June, the situation in Sudan, and, in particular, Darfur, has been challenging, with numerous reports of violent incidents in several parts of the country. On 25 July, 61 people were reportedly killed and another 88 injured when approximately 500 armed men attacked Masteri, a village in West Darfur. On 13 July, unidentified armed men attacked the

Fata Bornu camp for internally displaced persons in Kutum, North Darfur, killing nine people and injuring 20. According to OCHA, at least seven violent events were reported in West Darfur from 19 to 26 July, leaving "dozens of people dead or injured, several villages and houses burned down", and leading to "increased displacement, compromising the agricultural season, causing loss of lives and livelihoods and driving growing humanitarian needs". Violence in early August between people from the Bani Aarem and Nuba tribes in Port Sudan led to the deaths of 25 people and, according to media reports, resulted in a lockdown being imposed on parts of the city.

In early August, heavy rains and flooding exacerbated Sudan's humanitarian situation by causing landslides, severe infrastructural and housing damage, loss of crops, and reduced food production in South Darfur, West Kordofan and El Gezira. Over 185,000 people were affected. On 6 August, OCHA noted that the escalating violence and flooding have increased the challenges faced by Sudan in containing COVID-19 (as of 14 August, Sudan has had 12,115 coronavirus cases and 792 fatalities, according to WHO).

In response to the rising violence in Darfur, Security Council members discussed the

---

**UN DOCUMENTS ON SUDAN (DARFUR) Security Council Resolutions** S/RES/2525 (3 June 2020) maintained UNAMID's current troop and police ceilings until 31 December 2020. S/RES/2524 (3 June 2020) established the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) for an initial period of 12 months. **Secretary-General's Report S/2020/202** (12 March 2020) was the special report of the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the AU Commission, requested in resolution 2495. **Security Council Letters S/2020/497** (4 June 2020) was from the president of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the permanent representatives of Council member states on the outcome of voting on resolution 2525. **S/2020/496** (4 June 2020) was from the president of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the permanent representatives of Council member states on the outcome of voting on resolution 2524. **S/2020/336** (28 April 2020) contained the records of the briefings and statements made during the open part of the 24 April 2020 Council videoconference meeting on UNAMID.

---

## Sudan

situation under “other matters” (also known as “any other business”) on 11 August at the request of the UK and Germany, the co-penholders on Darfur. During a previous “any other business” discussion on 29 July, the UK and Germany requested that Council members meet in closed consultations to discuss the increase in violence in Darfur and assess how UNAMID could assist the government’s response. However, this request failed to garner the requisite support among Council members to be included on the Council’s August programme of work.

At the time of writing, it appeared that progress had been made on the political front in Sudan. On 31 August, the government of Sudan signed a peace agreement in Juba with several rebel groups—the Justice and Equality Movement, the Sudan Liberation Army- Minni Minnawi, a faction of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), the Transitional Council Movement and the Coalition of Sudan Liberation Movement. Among its elements, the deal addresses power-sharing at the local and national levels, revenue sharing, the integration of rebels into the armed forces, and transitional justice. The Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid and one branch of the SPLM-N did not sign the agreement.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

At its 44th session, the Human Rights Council (HRC) heard the oral reports from the government of Sudan and the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Nada Al-Nashif, on progress towards the opening of a country office as requested in HRC resolution 42/35. Al-Nashif informed the Council that the office in Khartoum was fully operational and working on “six key areas”, which match the government’s priorities. They are: advancement of sustainable

development through human rights; strengthening rule of law and accountability; enhancing participation and protecting civic space; strengthening equality and countering discrimination; preventing violations and strengthening protection of human rights; and increasing the implementation of the outcomes of the international human rights mechanisms. Al-Nashif emphasised that the OHCHR office in Sudan worked in “close coordination” with the UNAMID Human Rights Section and is ready to “support the implementation of UNITAMS’ human rights mandate, as mandated by the Security Council”. In her oral report, Al-Nashif also commended the government of Sudan for “enhancing the protection and promotion of human rights”.

### Key Issues and Options

The increase in violence in Darfur is an issue that Council members will be following closely, with some members concerned that such violence causes harm to civilians and puts a strain on UNAMID’s protection of civilians mandate. If violence persists or worsens, Council members may decide to hold additional consultations on the matter, notwithstanding the failed attempt to do so in early August.

The 31 August peace agreement is likely to be welcomed by Council members. They may consider ways in which they can assist the parties in implementing the agreement. One potential option would be for the Council to adopt a presidential statement to signal its support for the agreement and to encourage non-signatory parties to join it.

The transition from UNAMID to UNITAMS is also a priority for the Council. According to resolution 2524, the Secretary-General was expected to “swiftly initiate the planning for and establishment of UNITAMS, with a view to reaching full operational capacity as soon as possible” and to start delivering the mission’s strategic objectives by 1 January 2021.

The “suggested structure and geographical deployment” that the Secretary-General is scheduled to report on will also be of keen interest, as will the impact of COVID-19 and of delays in the appointment of critical UNITAMS leadership positions on the mission’s build-up. Resolution 2524 requested the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative for Sudan and head of Mission of UNITAMS, and a Deputy Special Representative to serve as UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, but at the time of writing these posts have yet to be filled.

### Council Dynamics

The drawdown and exit of UNAMID and the establishment of UNITAMS have been contentious issues for some time. Despite the unanimous adoption of resolutions 2524 and 2525 in June, there were clear disagreements during the negotiations over references to monitoring and reporting on progress in the implementation of Sudan’s Constitutional Document, the provision of technical assistance in the areas of rule of law and security sector reform, and reporting on the human rights situation. There were also strong differences on the mission’s potential tasks relating to protection of civilians. While a number of members believed that the new mission should have a mandate to protect civilians, others (Russia, China and the three African members among them) opposed the inclusion of such tasks in the mandate. The lack of sufficient support on the Council for discussing the escalating violence in Sudan in closed consultations in August strongly suggests that deep divisions persist over Sudan.

The UK and Germany are co-penholders on Sudan. Estonia chairs the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee.

---

## South Sudan

### Expected Council Action

In September, the Security Council expects to hold a meeting on South Sudan, during which it will discuss the quarterly report on the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and developments in the country. Special

Representative and head of UNMISS David Shearer is the most likely briefer.

### Key Recent Developments

After significant delays, the parties to the September 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict (R-ARCSS) in South

Sudan have made progress in allocating senior state-level positions. On 17 June, they decided that the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement in Government (SPLM-IG), led by President Salva Kiir, would be accorded six of the ten state governorships while three would be chosen by

---

**UN DOCUMENTS ON SOUTH SUDAN Security Council Resolutions** S/RES/2521 (29 May 2020) renewed the South Sudan targeted sanctions and arms embargo until 31 May 2021 and the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 1 July 2021. S/RES/2514 (12 March 2020) renewed the mandate of UNMISS until 15 March 2021. **Security Council Letter S/2020/582** (25 June 2020) was a compilation of the briefings and statements from Council members’ VTC on South Sudan on 23 June.

## South Sudan

the SPLM in Opposition (SPLM-IO), led by First Vice President Riek Machar, and one by the South Sudan Opposition Alliance (SSOA). On 10 August, the parties reached another power-sharing arrangement on state-level positions, agreeing to allocate state deputy governorships as follows: three each to the SPLM-IG, the SPLM-IO, and the Other Political Parties (OPP) and one to the SSOA.

In spite of this progress, a key impasse remains with regard to naming the governor of oil-rich Upper Nile State as the SPLM-IG has not accepted the SPLM-IO's proposed candidate for this post. On 2 July, Ateny Wek Ateny, a spokesman for President Kiir, told a local radio station that the candidate, SPLM-IO General Johnson Olony, would not be appointed because "he is a warmonger" who is "still in the bush and [whose] forces have not yet gone into cantonment sites".

On 14 July, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) held a summit via videoconference (VTC), during which it issued a communiqué underscoring a broad range of challenges facing its constituent member states. While the communiqué thanked South Sudan's leadership for their determination to implement provisions of the September 2018 peace agreement, it nonetheless highlighted a number of additional steps that it believed needed to be taken to advance the peace process. In this regard, the communiqué:

- urged the government to provide the requisite funds and logistical support to expedite security arrangements, "particularly the completion of the training, graduation, and redeployment of the national unified forces";
- requested the government "to provide adequate financial support to the Disarmament and Demobilization Commission (DDRC) to undertake a comprehensive reintegration process"; and
- appealed to President Kiir to dissolve the current Transitional National Legislative Assembly before 26 July and to the parties to constitute a new assembly, as stipulated by the September 2018 peace agreement, within seven days of its dissolution.

At the time of writing, these measures had yet to be taken.

The South Sudan military's recent disarmament campaign led to significant violence and loss of life in Warrap state's Tonj region starting on 9 August, when civilians

at a marketplace would not relinquish their weapons to the military. On 14 August, the spokesperson of the UN Secretary-General said local authorities had reported that at least 150 people had died in the fighting and that 5,000 families had been displaced. He added that UNMISS—which had deployed 45 troops, two military observers and two community liaison officers to the area—was conducting patrols to prevent a recurrence of violence and to assist in reconciliation efforts.

While the ceasefire in South Sudan has generally held, there have nonetheless been reports of violations. For example, during the week of 22 July, the South Sudan People's Defence Force (SSPDF), the government's forces, clashed with the National Salvation Front (NAS) in parts of Central and Western Equatoria states.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread in South Sudan, contributing to the difficult humanitarian and economic situation in the country. At 28 August, 2,514 cases and 47 deaths from the novel coronavirus had been officially reported in South Sudan although the numbers could be much higher given the limited testing capacity in the country. Barney Afako, a member of the UN Human Rights Council's (HRC) Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, noted in a 14 August commission press release that "on-going conflict and the departure of humanitarian staff due to COVID-19 are severely overburdening and stretching thin the ability of aid actors to reach vulnerable populations". He added: "In a country where approximately 6.5 million individuals remain food insecure, conflict is severely exacerbating the spiralling food prices and inflation due to COVID-19".

Council members held a VTC meeting on South Sudan on 23 June. Special Representative Shearer and Edmund Yakani, executive director of the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization, provided the briefings. Shearer highlighted the impact of COVID-19 on South Sudan. In addition to noting the direct impact of the virus, he expressed particular trepidation about its potential effect on the country's fragile health care system. "Disruption to vaccinations, maternal health services or routine treatment for curable diseases like malaria, diarrhoea and pneumonia will result in a devastating increase in deaths—likely greater than the predicted loss of life from COVID-19," he said. Shearer further

commented on the political undertones of intercommunal conflict in states such as Jonglei, Unity, Warrap, and Western Equatoria, noting that uniformed fighters have been observed in these skirmishes, "suggesting that organized forces may be joining the conflict, which risks unraveling the ceasefire". He added that a "truly unified national leadership would have acted promptly and stepped in to curb the conflict", instead of allowing it to unfold.

Yakani said the political will to fulfil the peace agreement in South Sudan in a timely way was not present. Among other things, he called on the Council to enhance support for local peacebuilding efforts, to support the immediate creation of transitional justice mechanisms outlined in the peace agreement, and to ensure that the parties adhere to the ceasefire in South Sudan.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

The 14 August press release of the HRC Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan also noted with great concern the escalation in violence in six of the ten states, marked by the "killing and injury of hundreds of civilians, and the displacement of more than 80,000 others". Commission Chair Yasmin Sooka underscored that "the levels of violence and suffering particularly against women, the elderly and children are deeply disturbing, and demonstrate an utter disregard for human life, making the revitalized peace agreement a mockery". The commission noted that notwithstanding the formation of the Revitalised Government in February 2020, the government response to these attacks remains "woefully inadequate", which was also conceded by President Kiir in his 8 July address to the nation. In the press release, the commission acknowledged the President's statement and efforts but remained concerned at the "complete lack of accountability" and absence of "systematic investigations". "While 9 out of 10 state governors have been appointed, the slow pace of establishing functioning local governments has created a vacuum of state authority, which permits on-going inter and intracommunal violence," the commission observed.

At its 43rd session, the HRC on 22 June adopted resolution 43/27 without a vote, urging the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity to "establish all transitional institutions in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Revitalized Agreement". The HRC also extended the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan for one year and requested it to "convene two workshops on transitional justice" as well as to "work collaboratively with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights".

## South Sudan

### Key Issues and Options

A number of significant political and security challenges persist in South Sudan related to the delays in implementing the 2018 peace agreement. Among the key issues facing the transitional government are filling the remaining governorship in Upper Nile State and reconstituting the National Legislative Assembly.

Several security issues also pose hindrances to the peace process. Cantonment and training of security forces, which are a prerequisite to forming a unified national army, have faced significant difficulties. In this regard, the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (RJMEC), which is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the peace agreement, said in its report covering 1 April-30 June that “there are persistent reports of several of the cantonment sites being abandoned due to a lack of food and essential life support resources”.

Given the many delays in implementing the peace agreement, the Council could consider holding an informal interactive dialogue (IID) with key RJMEC officials to exchange ideas about how to support the parties in meeting their obligations under the agreement. The IID

is a closed format that, unlike consultations, allows for the participation of non-UN officials.

The Council could also consider adopting an outcome such as a presidential statement that:

- emphasises the urgency of making progress on security arrangements and reaching an agreement on a governor for Upper Nile state;
- underscores the importance of forming a reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly;
- appeals to UN member states to provide financial and technical support to the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM), which consists of personnel from 15 countries, echoing the call for such support in IGAD’s 14 July communiqué; and
- reiterates the Council’s support for IGAD’s mediation efforts in South Sudan.

### Council Dynamics

Council members agree that the formation of the Transitional Government of National Unity on 22 February was an important achievement. In this regard, several members

are likely to encourage the progress that has been made in filling state-level positions during the September meeting. However, strong concerns are also likely to be expressed about the delays in implementing key elements of the peace agreement (such as the transitional security arrangements or the establishment of a new Transitional National Legislative Assembly), ongoing intercommunal and political violence, and the economic and humanitarian crises that have been exacerbated by COVID-19.

There are stark divisions on the Council regarding the utility of UN sanctions on South Sudan. While some members believe that they help to foster stability in the country, others have reservations about their utility in the current context. When the Council last renewed the South Sudan sanctions in May, resolution 2521 was adopted with 12 votes in favour and with China, Russia and South Africa abstaining.

The US is the penholder on South Sudan. Ambassador Dang Dinh Quy (Viet Nam) chairs the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee.

## The Impact of Environmental Degradation on Peace and Security

### Expected Council Action

In September, Niger plans to hold a ministerial-level open debate on the humanitarian impact of environmental degradation on peace and security. The focus will be on the Sahel region, although participants are also encouraged to broaden the geographical scope of the discussion. Senior officials from the Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the ICRC are expected to brief, as is a civil society representative. No formal outcome is anticipated at this time.

### Key Recent Developments

The Council has discussed a number of other issues related to the environment in recent years, such as ways in which the illegal exploitation of natural resources can degrade the environment, the management of transboundary waters, and most prominently, the security implications of climate change.

Two Arria-formula meetings have been held on the protection of the environment in armed conflict in the last two years. The first, on 7 November 2018, was co-hosted by Kuwait and Germany; the second, on 9 December 2019, by Estonia, Germany, Kuwait, and Peru. Several common themes were emphasised in

these meetings: the need to hold accountable those that damage the environment in armed conflict, the importance of respecting the civilian nature of the environment, and the need for UN peacekeeping operations to promote a light environmental footprint.

During a visiting mission to the Lake Chad region in March 2017, interlocutors such as Nigerien President Mahamadou Issoufou and Nigerian Vice-President

Yemi Osinbajo highlighted how climate change had negatively affected the security situation in the region. President Issoufou told Council members that he did not believe that the rebel group Boko Haram would have

**UN DOCUMENTS ON THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION ON PEACE AND SECURITY** Security Council Resolutions [S/RES/2531](#) (29 June 2020) renewed the mandate of MINUSMA until 30 June 2021. [S/RES/2524](#) (3 June 2020) established UNITAMS. [S/RES/2520](#) (29 May 2020) reauthorised AMISOM until 28 February 2021. [S/RES/687](#) (3 April 1991) contained the terms for Iraq of a ceasefire in the context of its invasion of Kuwait. **Security Council Presidential Statements** [S/PRST/2020/7](#) (28 July 2020) expressed concern about the potential of the COVID-19 pandemic to exacerbate existing fragilities in West Africa and the Sahel. [S/PRST/2020/2](#) (11 February 2020) emphasised the need for free, fair, credible, timely and peaceful elections in West Africa and the Sahel during 2020 in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Niger, Mali and Togo. **Security Council Letters** [S/2020/808](#) (18 August 2020) was from the Secretary-General to the president of the Security Council with an update on the FSO Safer situation. [S/2020/751](#) (28 July 2020) was a compilation of briefings and statements from the ministerial-level open debate on “climate and security” in open VTC format held on 24 July. [S/2020/721](#) (17 August 2020) was from the president of the Security Council containing the text of the 15 July briefings on the FSO Safer oil tanker.

# The Impact of Environmental Degradation on Peace and Security

“taken root” without the shrinking of Lake Chad, which had a devastating effect on local livelihoods.

Since that visiting mission, the need for risk assessments and management strategies with regard to the destabilising effects of climate change and other ecological factors has been incorporated into Council outcomes on the Lake Chad region, Mali, Somalia, the Central African Republic, Central Africa more broadly, West Africa and the Sahel, and Sudan as well as in the thematic resolution that the Council adopted on “Silencing the Guns in Africa” in February 2019. In renewing the mandate of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in December 2019, the Council also recognised the adverse effects of climate change, ecological changes and other factors on the stability of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and welcomed the “leadership of the DRC in the development of national strategies to address these issues”. During the current year alone, climate-security language has been integrated into two presidential statements on West Africa and the Sahel, the reauthorisation of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the resolution establishing the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), and the resolution renewing the mandate of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

On 24 July, Security Council members held a ministerial-level open debate on “climate and security” in an open videoconference (VTC) format. The debate was co-sponsored by ten Council members: Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, the UK, and Viet Nam. Briefers included Miroslav Jenča, Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas; Colonel Mahamadou Seidou Magagi of Niger, Director of the Centre National d’Études Stratégiques et de Sécurité (CNESS-Niger); and Coral Pasisi of Niue, Director of the Sustainable Pacific Consultancy.

Jenča spoke about the ways climate change exacerbates the risk of conflict in different regions. With regard to the Lake Chad Basin, he said that “insecurity and governance

challenges have impeded climate adaptation efforts, affecting livelihoods, social cohesion, and ultimately human security, which Boko Haram has proven adept at exploiting”.

Magagi described the negative impacts of climate change on peace and security in the Sahel region. He maintained that weather changes and natural disasters have diminished resources such as water and land for pasture, sparking increased conflict between herders and farmers in countries and regions such as Niger, northern Nigeria and central Mali. He also referred to a 2019 survey by CNESS-Niger that found that “the successive floods of 2012 and 2013 boosted Boko Haram recruitment as young people who lost their crops turned to the extremist movement as an alternative”.

Pasisi spoke about the adverse effects of climate change on Pacific Small Island Developing States. She said that without strong mitigation and adaptation measures “saltwater intrusion, coastal erosion and coral reef degradation” could lead to the forced “displacement and migration of thousands of people and cause huge loss and damage”.

On 15 July, Council members held an open VTC, followed by a closed VTC, on the FSO Safer oil tanker moored off Ras Isa, Yemen. Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme Inger Andersen and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock provided the briefings. Andersen said that “an oil spill or an explosion would have a massive impact on the livelihoods and the health of the people relying on the area’s natural resources, including fisheries”. Lowcock updated members on negotiations with the Houthi rebels to permit a technical mission led by the UN to conduct an assessment of the ship and make initial repairs.

Following the 4 August explosion in Beirut that claimed at least 181 lives, the World Health Organization and the American University in Beirut undertook an environmental assessment and developed guidance regarding steps the public could take to protect itself from the pollutants resulting from the blast. This information was disseminated on social media.

## Key Issues and Options

Key issues that could be discussed in the meeting include:

- the need to enhance understanding of the humanitarian and security implications of environmental degradation and climate change;
- the importance of developing the analytical capacities of the UN system to assess the connections between environmental degradation and humanitarian and security risks; and
- what role the Security Council can play in addressing this issue and how it can develop synergies with other UN entities in doing so.

Niger could consider producing a chair’s summary capturing the main elements of the debate. Given that many Council members believe that the Council has a role to play in addressing the security implications of environmental issues, another option is for these members to continue to work together to highlight such non-traditional threats to peace and security during their Council presidencies. Council members could continue to learn about environmental challenges in specific conflict situations—as was done in the July meeting on the Safer oil tanker—and discuss ways of preventing environmental disasters or mitigating their impact.

## Council Dynamics

Several Council members are likely to emphasise how environmental degradation can fuel violent extremism and inter-communal violence (such as between herders and farmers) and jeopardise peace consolidation efforts. They are also likely to talk about the humanitarian impacts of environmental degradation and underscore that factors such as drought, desertification, and water and food scarcity are conflict “risk-multipliers”. Other members with a more conservative view of what constitutes a threat to peace and security are likely to be more reluctant for the Council to engage on environmental issues in a thematic context, although they may be more amenable to Council involvement in specific country cases when there is evidence of a threat to peace and security.

With regard to the Safer oil tanker, there is widespread concern in the Council about the potentially devastating impact of an explosion of the tanker or large-scale oil spill.

# Iraq (UNITAD)

## Expected Council Action

In September, the Security Council is expected to renew the mandate of the UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD), which expires on 21 September.

## Key Recent Developments

UNITAD was set up through resolution 2379 of 21 September 2017 for an initial period of two years and was renewed for another year in resolution 2490 of 20 September 2019. The Council had asked the Secretary-General to establish an investigative team to support Iraqi domestic efforts to hold the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) accountable for crimes it committed in the country “by collecting, preserving, and storing evidence in Iraq of acts that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide”. Additionally, the investigative team is responsible for promoting accountability globally for atrocity crimes committed by ISIL in order to counter ISIL narratives that have led people to join the terrorist group. On 31 May 2018, the Secretary-General appointed Karim Asad Ahmad Khan as Special Adviser and head of UNITAD. In July, the Iraqi government requested the Secretary-General to reappoint Khan for a year. The investigative team formally began its work on 20 August 2018. To date, the Special Adviser has submitted and briefed the Council on four reports.

According to resolution 2379, UNITAD is to be “impartial, independent, and credible”, operating within its terms of reference, the UN Charter, UN best practices and relevant international law, including international human rights law. The investigative team has an assessed budget of around \$21 million for 2020, covering core infrastructure and staffing needs. Additionally, it relies on voluntary contributions made to the trust fund established by resolution 2379 and on in-kind contributions, including the provision of expert personnel. Current contributors to the trust fund are Cyprus, Denmark, the EU, Germany, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Qatar, Slovakia, the UK, the United Arab Emirates and the US. Commitments to the trust fund currently amount to about

\$5 million. UNITAD’s overall staff stands at about 150. Expert personnel from Australia, Finland, Germany, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Sweden and the UAE are currently seconded by their respective governments.

As required by resolution 2379, UNITAD is implementing its mandate according to “UN best practices”, meaning that no evidence may be shared for criminal proceedings in which capital punishment may be imposed. The death penalty, however, is incorporated into the Iraqi legal system. The international crimes UNITAD is mandated to investigate are not yet incorporated as such into Iraq’s domestic legal system. Acts falling under crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes are currently prosecuted as terrorist crimes. Draft legislation, suggested by Iraqi President Barham Salih last November, would amend the Iraqi High Tribunal Law; it is currently before the Iraqi parliament. The amendment would allow for the prosecution of ISIL members for international crimes.

UNITAD’s investigative strategy focuses on the mass killing of unarmed Iraqi air force cadets from Tikrit Air Academy (also known as “Camp Speicher”) in June 2014, attacks committed by ISIL against the Yazidi community in the Sinjar district in August 2014, crimes committed by ISIL in Mosul between 2014 and 2016, and crimes against the Christian, Kaka’i, Shabak, Shi’a, Sunni, and Turkmen communities. UNITAD’s investigations are focusing on those ISIL members who bear the greatest responsibility among the leadership as well as regional and mid-level commanders.

Resolution 2379 says that the Iraqi authorities are “the primary intended recipient” of evidence collected by UNITAD. So far, no evidence has been shared with the Iraqi authorities, but discussions continue about the transmission of evidence. The resolution also refers to the possibility that evidence collected by the investigative team could complement “investigations carried out by authorities in third countries at their request”. The investigative team is currently supporting cases in Finland, France and Germany. UNITAD has received a further five formal requests from states as well as indications by other states that they intend to request support.

## Human Rights-Related Developments

During its 44th session, the Human Rights Council (HRC) on 8-9 July considered the report (A/HRC/44/41/Add.1) of Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, the HRC Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Jimenez-Damary conducted an official visit to Iraq from 15 to 23 February 2020, travelling to Baghdad, Erbil, Ninewa governorate (including Mosul), and Dohuk. Her report said that because 6 million people were displaced between 2014 and 2017 as a result of the conflict with ISIL, Iraq has struggled to support the humanitarian needs and achieve sustainable solutions for some 1.4 million people who are still displaced, as well as addressing the difficulties encountered by those who returned to their places of origin. Jimenez-Damary’s report raised concerns about the “access constraints faced by humanitarian actors operating in Iraq” and recent camp closures, leading to forced returns and secondary displacement. The report also addressed the reports of sexual and gender-based violence against IDPs.

## Key Issues and Options

The immediate issue for the Council is the renewal of UNITAD’s mandate. If the government of Iraq continues to support UNITAD in its current form and requests its extension, an option for the Council would be to renew UNITAD without changes.

## Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members are generally supportive of UNITAD, as is the Iraqi government. Members whose national jurisdictions do not have the death penalty remain concerned that evidence shared by the investigative team with the Iraqi authorities might be used in criminal proceedings in which the death penalty could be imposed. Other members are of the opinion that the use of the death penalty is Iraq’s sovereign right, a point routinely emphasised by Iraq as well. Another issue frequently raised by some members is the prosecution of foreign terrorist fighters currently on Iraqi soil. Some of the governments concerned have been reluctant to take back their nationals in order to prosecute them, leading to criticism that they are outsourcing their legal obligations. Some members also continue to emphasise the need to include in the Iraqi national legal system the international crimes that UNITAD is mandated to investigate.

The UK is the penholder on UNITAD.

**UN DOCUMENTS ON IRAQ Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2490** (20 September 2019) extended the mandate of UNITAD until 21 September 2020. **S/RES/2379** (21 September 2017) established an investigative team to collect, store and preserve evidence of international crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq. **Security Council Letters S/2020/547** (17 June 2020) was from the president of the Security Council containing the briefing given by Karim Asad Ahmad Khan, the Special Adviser and head of UNITAD, on 15 June. **S/2018/773** (15 August 2018) was from the Secretary-General, notifying the Security Council that he had appointed Karim Asad Ahmad Khan to be the Special Adviser and head of the investigative team on 13 July and that the investigative team was to begin its work on 20 August 2018. **S/2018/118** (9 February 2018) was from the Secretary-General, conveying the terms of reference for the investigative team.

# Colombia

## Expected Council Action

In September, the Security Council is expected to renew the mandate of the UN Verification Mission in Colombia, which expires on 25 September.

## Key Recent Developments

The situation in Colombia remains complex as the country continues to experience high levels of violence and political polarisation while it contends with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. As of 31 August, Colombia reported 607,938 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 19,364 fatalities from the virus.

Violence against communities, including indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, and the killing of former Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) members, human rights defenders and social leaders—which had been prevalent prior to the pandemic—have continued unabated. According to the Secretary-General's report from 26 June, illegal armed groups have been taking advantage of lockdown measures imposed to stem the spread of the pandemic to strengthen their control over strategic illicit trafficking routes. In some areas, these groups have imposed unauthorised social control measures, such as additional lockdown and curfew measures, harshly punishing breaches, as well as set up illegal checkpoints.

A spate of violent attacks that took place between 10 and 16 August illustrates the precarious security trend in rural areas of Colombia, which are characterised by weak state presence. According to media reports, two young boys were killed on 10 August in the city of Leiva in the southern Nariño department when they were caught in cross-fire between warring armed groups. On 11 August, five minors of Afro-Colombian descent were found dead with signs of torture in the city of Cali in the western Valle del Cauca department. On 16 August, eight young people were killed in a massacre in the town of Samaniego in the Nariño department.

The UN country team in Colombia and the Verification Mission issued a statement condemning the 16 August massacre and other attacks in previous weeks. The statement noted that since the beginning of the year, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for

Human Rights has documented 33 massacres and received reports of 97 killings of human rights defenders, 45 of which have been verified. The Verification Mission has verified the killings of 41 ex-combatants, bringing to 215 the number of former combatants killed since the signing of the 2016 Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace between the government of Colombia and the former rebel group FARC-EP.

According to the statement, these events illustrate the urgency of the comprehensive implementation of the 2016 peace agreement, which sets out various mechanisms for security guarantees. The statement further underlined the need for the National Commission on Security Guarantees, the body charged under the peace agreement with developing a public policy for dismantling criminal organisations and their support networks, to make advances in its work. President Iván Duque convened the commission on 12 August after a long hiatus since he last did so on 9 January.

On 7 August, Colombia's Supreme Court ordered that former Colombian president Álvaro Uribe be detained. He was placed under house arrest amid investigations into charges of fraud, bribery and witness tampering. Uribe, who served as president from 2002 to 2010, is a polarising figure among Colombian society and political elites. Supporters of Uribe, including President Duque, credit him for subduing the FARC insurgency. Critics of Uribe, however, accuse him of overseeing heavy-handed tactics by the army in his bid to fight the FARC. Those tactics reportedly led to the death of thousands of innocent civilians. The Security Council last discussed Colombia on 14 July, when it received a briefing from Special Representative and head of the UN Verification Mission in Colombia Carlos Ruiz Massieu and held consultations on the topic. At the meeting, Ruiz Massieu identified outstanding challenges in the implementation of the peace agreement while stressing that violence against former FARC-EP members, human rights defenders, and communities poses the "most serious threat to peacebuilding in Colombia". He further noted that urgent support is needed to address the challenges to productive projects of former combatants caused by the pandemic, including

through technical assistance and land allocation. The Council was also briefed by Clemencia Carabali Rodallega, a representative of the Municipal Association of Women (ASOM) in the north of Cauca department and a defender of ethnic and territorial rights. Rodallega made several requests to the Colombian government and to the international community to take action to address the grave security risks posed to social leaders.

On 16 July, members of the Council issued a press statement that expressed grave concern over the targeting and killing of former combatants, social leaders and indigenous, Afro-Colombian and other communities. They recalled resolution 2532, which endorsed the appeal of the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire in response to COVID-19 and called on the parties in Colombia to halt violence and facilitate pandemic response.

On 14 August, the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict adopted its conclusions on the Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict in Colombia, which covers the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019. It expressed concern about the expanded territorial presence of armed groups, including the guerrilla group Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) and groups of former FARC-EP who have taken up arms, and the continued recruitment and use of children, including children from indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities and refugee and migrant children.

## Key Issues and Options

The main issue for Council members in September will be the renewal of the Verification Mission's mandate. The current mandate of the mission, as set out in the 2016 agreement, focuses on verifying aspects of the agreement related to the political, economic and social reincorporation of the former FARC-EP combatants and personal and collective security guarantees, which include comprehensive programmes of security and protection measures for communities and organisations in conflict-affected areas.

Council members may wish to discuss possible modifications to the mission's mandate to correspond with developments in the implementation of the agreement. In this regard,

**UN DOCUMENTS ON COLOMBIA** [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2487](#) (12 September 2019) renewed the mandate of the UN Verification Mission in Colombia until 25 September 2020. [Secretary-General's Report S/2020/603](#) (26 June 2020) was the 90-day report. [Security Council Press Statement SC/14255](#) (16 July 2020) reiterated the support of Council members for the peace process in Colombia. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.8749](#) (14 July 2020) was the quarterly meeting on Colombia.

# Colombia

members may consider the 16 June request of the Colombian government that the mandate be expanded to include the monitoring of the implementation of sentences handed down by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP), the judicial component of the transitional justice system established by the 2016 peace agreement. The SJP has the authority to issue sanctions against those who acknowledge responsibility for crimes committed during the conflict, which can include up to eight years of confinement to one municipality to carry out work and activities that count as reparations for victims. Those who will not acknowledge responsibility for crimes will be subject to the Colombian penal code and may face imprisonment of up to 20 years.

The government's request followed a letter sent to them by the president of the SJP noting that the SJP will soon begin issuing sentences and asking that the Verification Mission undertake this additional task. Members of the FARC political party have also indicated their support for the mission to take on this task. While the 2016 agreement stipulated that the SJP would have the support of an international mechanism, to be part of the UN political mission, there had been no request to include this aspect of the agreement in the mandate of the Verification Mission because it was previously unclear when exactly the SJP will start issuing sanctions. In April, the SJP issued guidelines on the sanctions and the tasks it will impose on those under its jurisdiction, and it is expected to begin handing down sentences in early 2021.

In their 16 July press statement, Council members "took note with interest" of the request by the parties for the mission to assume a role in verifying compliance with SJP sanctions. In addition, during the 14 July Council meeting, Belgium, the Dominican Republic, France and the UK expressed support for the Verification Mission to take on this additional role.

Ahead of the mandate renewal, Council members may request additional information from the Secretariat on operational issues relating to the possible expansion of the mission's mandate, such as which sanctions will be verified or whether additional personnel with specific expertise will be required. Members can request such information in the form of a Secretary-General's letter, or they could convene a meeting to hear a briefing from a Secretariat official before the start of negotiations on the mandate renewal.

A main priority for the Council remains to support the full implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia. In this regard, addressing the political polarisation in Colombia is a key concern. The house arrest of Uribe takes place against the backdrop of an already tense political atmosphere, as members of congress from the ruling party publicly express intentions to introduce measures to reform the SJP. Council members may wish to echo the Secretary-General's call, contained in his 26 June report, urging political actors in the country to avoid divisive rhetoric and achieve unity.

## Council Dynamics

Council members are unified in their support for the peace process in Colombia, and they continue to showcase engagement in the country as a rare bright spot among several other conflict situations where the Council struggles to play an effective role. While members have generally been deferential towards the government, some differences in tone emerged in 2019. For example, several members have been critical of the government on such issues as the continuing security vacuum in areas from which the FARC-EP withdrew under the agreement and the government's uneven approach to implementing different aspects of the agreement.

The UK is the penholder on Colombia.

## Security Council Report Staff

**Karin Landgren**  
Executive Director

**Joanna Weschler**  
Deputy Executive Director

**Shamala Kandiah Thompson**  
Deputy Executive Director

**Paul Romita**  
Senior Policy Analyst

**Alina Entelis**  
Policy Analyst

**Teale Harold**  
Policy Analyst

**Lindiwe Knutson**  
Policy Analyst

**Robert Schupp**  
Policy Analyst

**Vladimir Sesar**  
Policy Analyst

**Vanessa Tiede**  
Policy Analyst

**Benjamin Villanti**  
Policy Analyst

**Robbin VanNewkirk**  
Website Manager

**Audrey Waysse**  
Operations Manager

**Maritza Lopez**  
Administrative Assistant

**Anna Haven**  
Research Assistant

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

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](http://securitycouncilreport.org)  
[whatsinblue.org](http://whatsinblue.org)

Follow @SCRtweets on Twitter