

# Monthly Forecast

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## Overview

In July, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) will hold the presidency of the Security Council.

The DRC plans to organise two signature events. One of these is a high-level open debate on “[Natural resource governance: the foundation of peace, security and prosperity](#)” under the “[Maintenance of international peace and security](#)” agenda item. DRC President Félix Tshisekedi is expected to chair the meeting. UN Secretary-General António Guterres is expected to brief.

The other signature event is an open debate on [conflict-related sexual violence \(CRSV\)](#) under the theme “[Honouring the promise of international law to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence](#)”. The open debate will be chaired by DRC Prime Minister Judith Suminwa Tuluka. Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict Pramila Patten and one or more civil society representatives are the anticipated briefers.

The Security Council will also convene an open debate to discuss the [Secretary-General’s report to be submitted pursuant to resolution 2788 of 22 July 2025](#), which was authored by Pakistan and focused on the peaceful settlement of disputes. The report is expected to provide concrete recommendations on strengthening the mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Guterres is expected to brief.

In July, the Security Council will hold its quarterly open debate on “[The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question](#)” (MEPQ).

Other Middle Eastern issues on the programme include:

- [Syria](#), monthly meeting on the political and humanitarian tracks;
- [Yemen](#), renewal of the monthly reporting requirement on Houthi attacks on merchant

and commercial vessels in the Red Sea, originally mandated by Security Council resolution 2722 of 10 January 2024; and

- [Lebanon](#), consultations on the Secretary-General’s report on the implementation of resolution 1701. (Adopted in 2006, resolution 1701 called for a cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah.)

African issues on the programme of work in July are:

- [Central African Republic \(CAR\)](#), renewal of the CAR sanctions regime and the mandate of the Panel of Experts assisting the 2127 CAR Sanctions Committee;
- [Sudan](#), the semi-annual briefing of the International Criminal Court (ICC) on the ICC’s Darfur-related activities; and
- [West Africa and the Sahel](#), briefing and consultations on the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).

Issues in the Americas on the programme include:

- [Colombia](#), the quarterly meeting; and
- [Haiti](#), meeting on the situation in the country.

Regarding European issues, Council members are expected to hold consultations on the [UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus \(UNFICYP\)](#).

The only Asian issue anticipated this month is the biannual consultations on the [UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia \(UNRCCA\)](#).

Meetings could be convened on other issues—including [Iran](#) and [Sudan](#)—during the month, depending on developments.

In July, Council members will continue meeting with candidates for the position of [UN Secretary-General](#). They are also expected to begin conducting “straw polls” to gauge support for the candidates.

### 1 July 2026

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# In Hindsight: A Second Year of Delays in the Allocation of Subsidiary Body Chairs

In the past two years, Council members have taken an unusually long time to reach agreement on the allocation of subsidiary body chairs and vice-chairs. In 2025, the presidential note on the allocation was issued on 29 May, shortly before the General Assembly held elections for the next cohort of elected Council members. This year, disagreements have persisted even after the 3 June elections, making it the longest period with no subsidiary body chairs and vice-chairs since this decision was first recorded in a presidential note in 1979. This delay has placed significant strain on the work of subsidiary bodies. An added complication is that the lack of clarity on the available positions may delay the negotiations of the incoming members on the 2027-2028 subsidiary body chair positions.

This *In Hindsight* explores the reasons for the current impasse, discusses the prolonged delay's ramifications on the Council's work, and proposes potential modifications to the subsidiary body allocation process.

## The Appointment Process

The chairs of the Security Council's subsidiary bodies, which include sanctions committees and working groups, are responsible for several important aspects of the work of these bodies, including chairing meetings, briefing the Council on the work of the relevant subsidiary body, and managing relevant casework, such as listing and delisting requests. The Council's subsidiary bodies have traditionally been chaired by elected members (E10), with a few exceptions.<sup>1</sup>

The 2017 version of Note 507 on working methods stipulates that members "should make every effort" to provisionally agree on appointing the chairs by 1 October each year and, with that deadline in mind, should start an informal consultation process "as soon as possible" after the Security Council elections. The newly elected members are to be consulted as part of the process, which should be undertaken in a "balanced, transparent, efficient and inclusive way".

As a result, the incoming five elected members (I5) now first agree on the list of chairs for available subsidiary bodies among themselves and the continuing E10 members before the chair of the Working Group on Documentation and Procedural Questions (IWG) transmits it to the permanent members (P5) for final approval. Members tend to view the list of chairs as a package deal, which means that it can only be finalised once agreement has been reached on who will chair each body. If agreement has been reached by the end of the year, a Note by the President listing the bureaux of the Council's subsidiary bodies with its chairs and vice-chairs is published in early January of the following year.

In practice, the target of provisionally agreeing on chairs and vice-chairs by 1 October has never been met. For instance, prolonged negotiations over the allocation of chairs in 2021 and 2023 led to final decisions in early January and late January of the following years, respectively. As noted above, the negotiations on the 2025 allocations also took an unusually lengthy period of time, only concluding in late May of that year.

In 2023, after negotiations on the allocation of subsidiary body

chairs continued into January, Council members adopted a presidential note (S/2023/615) outlining a contingency measure intended to ensure the continuous functioning of the subsidiary bodies. The note decided that if members are unable to agree on appointing chairs by 1 January, then the responsibilities of all chairs will devolve to the president of the Council during January. This contingency measure, which was included in the 2024 version of Note 507 on working methods, was implemented for the first time in 2025. Although the 2023 note did not stipulate what should happen if members were unable to agree by the end of January, there appears to have been an informal agreement among Council members that the Council presidents during the ensuing months would also fulfil this role.

(For background and more information on the appointment process, see the *In Hindsight* on the delay in allocation of subsidiary body chairs in our May 2025 *Monthly Forecast*.)

## Developments in 2026

Soon after their election in June 2025, the then I5 members—Bahrain, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Latvia, and Liberia—began negotiating the allocation of subsidiary body chairs for 2026. After a suggested allocation was agreed upon among the I5 and the continuing E10 members, the proposed list was presented by October 2025 to the P5 members, who conveyed their response only in late December 2025. It seems that the US expressed opposition to Colombia's bid to chair the 2653 Haiti Sanctions Committee. This position apparently stemmed from tensions at the time between US President Donald Trump and Colombian President Gustavo Petro Urrego, which have abated this year.

To facilitate consensus, Colombia agreed in December 2025 to relinquish its request to chair the 2653 Haiti Sanctions Committee. At that point, several Council members apparently believed that agreement on the allocations could be achieved by January; however, a more intractable disagreement emerged over the 1737 Sanctions Committee concerning Iran.

The disagreement stems from disputes among Council members over the triggering of the "snapback" mechanism to reimpose the UN sanctions on Iran that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Iran's nuclear programme and resolution 2231 of 20 July 2015 had suspended. China and Russia have contested the legal and procedural validity of the invocation of the snapback mechanism and argued that all Security Council sanctions on Iran were permanently lifted on 18 October 2025, when the JCPOA and resolution 2231 were originally set to expire. On the other hand, the P3 members (France, the UK, and the US) and other like-minded Council members have argued that the triggering of the snapback mechanism was valid and have maintained that all previous UN sanctions measures on Iran have been re-activated and that the Security Council's 1737 Sanctions Committee has been restored. (For more information, see our 11 March *What's in Blue* story.)

China and Russia have reiterated on numerous occasions that they do not recognise the 1737 Committee and do not consider

<sup>1</sup> For instance, the UK chaired the 1267 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee in 1999 and the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee from 2001 to 2003, whereas France chaired the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict from 2005 to 2008.

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themselves bound by the Iran sanctions regime. They have therefore conveyed that they would not accept having the 1737 Committee as part of the subsidiary body allocation. The P3 and other like-minded Council members who believe that the 1737 Committee has been reactivated insist that it should be part of the package. The dynamics surrounding this issue have been further complicated by the crisis in the Middle East triggered by the joint US-Israeli strikes on Iran that began on 28 February and Iran's subsequent retaliation against Israel and regional countries.

Starting in late March, with agreement on the allocations remaining elusive, Colombia hosted several informal meetings of the Council's political coordinators (PCs) to discuss possible solutions to the impasse. Some of these meetings were only among the E10, while others involved all 15 members. It seems that Colombia, which also served as the E10 coordinator in March, has been entrusted with a coordinating role on the subsidiary body allocation negotiations in light of its constructive approach to resolving the earlier impasse over the 2653 Haiti Sanctions Committee.

Based on the discussions at the informal meetings, and input from members such as Denmark and Latvia, Colombia as facilitator presented a plan to address the disagreement over the 1737 Committee, which apparently consisted of four steps:

- The holding of an informal meeting among the 15 Council PCs to agree on the next steps of the process. During this meeting, there would be an informal verbal agreement on who will chair the 1737 Committee.
- The holding of a meeting of the respective E10 and P5 coordinators with the Security Council Affairs Division (SCAD) to verbally convey what Council members agreed to in the first step.
- The holding of a meeting of the 1737 Committee, during which its chair would be appointed. This step of the plan was apparently based on a 1998 Presidential Note (S/1998/1016), which determined that “the bureau of each sanctions committee shall be appointed by that committee, following consultations between Council members, either at its first meeting if that meeting takes place in January, or in writing at the instance of the Presidency of the Council under a no-objection procedure”.
- After the holding of the 1737 Committee meeting, a Note by the President will be issued, detailing the allocation of all subsidiary body chairs save for the 1737 Committee, since that chair would have already been in place by that point.

It seems that most Council members agreed to the proposed plan. This represented a concession from the P3 members, who had been strongly opposed to de-coupling the 1737 Committee from the rest of the allocation. China and Russia, however, were apparently uncomfortable with the proposal as it involved convening a meeting of the 1737 Committee.

As the elections for the next cohort of elected Council members approached, the E10 members collectively called for closed consultations on the subsidiary body allocations for 21 May. During that meeting, it seems that Denmark (the E10 coordinator at the time) delivered a joint statement on behalf of the E10, which emphasised the urgency of resolving the issue, noting that the lack of agreement is undermining the Council's credibility and integrity, as well as its ability to fulfil its responsibilities under the UN Charter. The

meeting did not result in progress on the matter, however.

At the time of writing, it did not appear that Council members were discussing any new bridging proposals. It seems that some members believe that a political solution to the conflict in Iran would help settle questions relating to the 1737 Sanctions Committee, thereby facilitating agreement on the subsidiary body allocations. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed between Iran and the US on 17 June offers only a glimmer of hope, however, as it defers agreement on matters relating to Iran's nuclear programme until the signing of a “final deal” and as ongoing exchanges of fire between the US and Iran test the ceasefire agreed by the countries.

### Effects of the Impasse on the Security Council and its Subsidiary Bodies

As in the first five months of 2025, Council presidencies this year have continued to perform certain tasks of subsidiary body chairs, in line with the contingency measures outlined in the 2023 presidential note on the matter. This has entailed only carrying out select, urgent duties of the subsidiary body chairs, due partly to the amount of work involved in addition to their responsibilities as president. Some members also apparently think that if these bodies conduct their business as usual, there will be less pressure to reach agreement on the allocation of chairs.

Tasks carried out by presidencies have included the chairing of informal consultations to give members the opportunity to discuss the reports of the Panel of Experts (PoEs) assisting those committees. Between March and the end of June, seven such meetings took place, namely those of the 1267/1989/2253 Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee, the 2653 Haiti Sanctions Committee, the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee, the 2140 Yemen Sanctions Committee, the 2745 Central African Republic (CAR) Sanctions Committee, and the 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee.

Council presidents have also generally processed requests for exemptions to measures imposed by the Council's sanctions regimes and new designation requests. At times, the president has briefed the Council on the work of subsidiary bodies. For instance, in March, the US delivered the annual report on the work of the 1540 Committee, whereas the UK and China delivered briefings on the 90-day reports regarding the work of the 1718 Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Sanctions Committee in February and May, respectively.

There have been instances, however, in which some members chose not to perform certain duties because of their national positions. For instance, Colombia scheduled a briefing on the work of the 1737 Committee in early June, which required the circulation of the Committee's report under a no-objection procedure in late May to allow members sufficient time to review the report. China, however, preferred not to do so during its presidency due to its position on this committee, resulting in Colombia circulating the text once it took over as president in June.

The “bare-minimum” approach to the functioning of subsidiary bodies has numerous immediate and long-term effects. Sanctions committees have been unable to receive briefings from UN agencies on relevant issues or from the experts assisting them in between the

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publication of their reports, and the broader UN membership has not had the benefit of briefings organised by many of these committees on the reports of the PoEs.

Regarding working groups, the effects have been particularly pronounced in the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, one of the Council's busiest subsidiary bodies. With only half a year to negotiate conclusions on the Secretary-General's country reports in 2025, the Working Group was only able to adopt conclusions on one report, on the DRC. There is a backlog of seven reports published in 2025 for which it has not adopted conclusions—Burkina Faso, Mali, Yemen, South Sudan, Myanmar, Syria, and Somalia—which would make it difficult to achieve the general aim of 14 conclusions adopted over a two-year period. The delayed adoption of conclusions weakens an important tool for accountability that helps compel conflict parties to end and prevent violations against children.

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa has not yet been able to meet to discuss the next annual joint consultative meeting with the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC), which is scheduled to take place in New York in October. Given the lack of agreement on the allocation of subsidiary body chairs, Greece (which will serve as the Council president in October) and Somalia requested meetings under “any other business” in April and June, respectively, to discuss preparations for the meeting.

More broadly, this situation hinders continuity in the Council's work. The chairing of a subsidiary body allows a Council member to gain in-depth knowledge on a given file, including through visits to concerned countries. Chairs often use this expertise to inform their work on the file, including during negotiations on relevant Council resolutions. Additionally, whereas presidencies perform only necessary technical tasks related to the functioning of a subsidiary body, a chair is more likely to follow up on issues to ensure smooth operations.

### Possible Recourses

Over the years, several interlocutors have made suggestions on how to reform the process of allocations of subsidiary bodies, including SCR; Loraine Sievers, co-author of “The Procedure of the UN Security Council” (4th Edition); and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) Group. Developments in the past two years have brought into sharp focus the need to urgently consider such proposals to facilitate the continued functioning of these bodies.

One option is to only discuss the seats that become available each year, with continuing Council members retaining their chair and co-chair positions, and without opening up the whole allocation for

discussion. This would also preclude the option of split terms, which has been a contentious issue in past negotiations. It would mean that those bodies that have chairs from the year before could continue operating, even if agreement on the chairs of remaining bodies is being negotiated. While there are advantages to this, some members may argue that there may be less incentive to resolve any issues concerning the positions available in a given year.

A way to address an impasse over chairs of the remaining subsidiary bodies would be to have in each subsidiary body at least one vice-chair that remains in the Council, who would assume the responsibilities of the departing chair if there was no decision by 1 January. This would also require making the role of the vice-chair, which to date has been largely symbolic, more robust, in order to allow the vice-chair to perform the more substantive chairing duties on short notice. Such an outcome could be beneficial in general, as vice-chairs could help the chairs manage their busy workloads throughout the year. With a number of vice-chair positions held by P5 members, this arrangement would also address the issue of equitable distribution of labour and burden-sharing among the Council's permanent and elected members.

Another option is to “automate” the process of allocations, including by determining subsidiary body allocations according to alphabetical order, regional rotation, or by a randomised draw. While this would remove the problem of agreeing on subsidiary bodies and would facilitate earlier preparation and smooth functioning of the bodies from the start of the year, some members may not be keen on a system that does not allow for some choice. In this regard, it could mean that members might be asked to chair committees not aligned with their interests and capacities.

Developments over the past two years have also demonstrated the need to better codify what is expected from presidencies serving as interim chairs, as well as to clarify that such arrangements extend beyond January. A presidential note expanding on contingency measures in the event of a prolonged delay in the appointment of the chairs and vice-chairs could be considered to that end.

In conclusion, while the work of subsidiary bodies is often less visible, their activities are vital to the Council's ability to fulfil its mandate to maintain international peace and security. A continued impasse over the allocation of subsidiary body chairs can promote an impression that these bodies are not significant in the eyes of the Council and deprive the body of well-functioning monitoring, reporting, and accountability tools that are a mainstay of its efforts to maintain international peace and security. Increased flexibility and creativity will be required to get these essential bodies back on track.

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## Status Update since our June Forecast

### Threats to International Peace and Security

On 1 June, the Council held a briefing under the “Threats to international peace and security” agenda item (S/PV.10162). The meeting was requested by Romania in a 29 May letter (S/2026/447) and

supported by the Council's European members. Romania's letter alleged that a Russian drone carrying explosives entered Romanian airspace overnight between 28 and 29 May and added that the drone was involved in Russian attacks against civilian infrastructure targets

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in Ukraine near Romania's border, was tracked by radar systems as far as the southern area of the Galați municipality, and crashed on the roof of a residential apartment building, injuring two people. Kayoko Gotoh, the Director and Officer-in-Charge for Europe, Central Asia, and the Americas in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations (DPPA-DPO), briefed.

On 29 June, the Council held a briefing under the “Threats to international peace and security” agenda item to discuss an alleged 7 June Ukrainian drone strike that had hit a bus carrying Belarusian schoolchildren in Russia's Bryansk region (S/PV.10187). The meeting was requested by Belarus and supported by Russia. Assistant Secretary-General for Africa in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations (DPPA-DPO) Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee briefed.

### Yemen

On 5 June, Council members issued a press statement (SC/16378) reaffirming their condemnation of the detentions by the Houthis of personnel from the UN, non-governmental and civil society organisations, and diplomatic missions. The statement demanded the unconditional, safe, and immediate release of the detainees and reiterated that all threats to humanitarian personnel are unacceptable and worsen the dire humanitarian situation in Yemen. The press statement was authored by the UK.

On 16 June, the Security Council held a briefing on the situation in Yemen (S/PV.10174). UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Tom Fletcher briefed. Yemen participated in the meeting under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

### Afghanistan

On 8 June, the Security Council held an open briefing on Afghanistan (S/PV.10165). The briefers were: Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Political) and Officer-in-Charge of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) Georgette Gagnon, Director of the Crisis Response Division at the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Edem Wosornu, and founder of the Afghanistan Justice Archive Metra Mehran. Afghanistan, India, Iran, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan participated in the meeting under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

On 15 June, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2822, extending the mandate of UNAMA for another year, until 17 June 2027.

### Ukraine

On 8 June, the Security Council held a briefing on Ukraine (S/PV.10166). The meeting was requested by Ukraine in a 2 June letter and supported by the Council's European members (Denmark, France, Greece, Latvia, and the UK). The briefers were: Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo and Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Indrika Ratwatte.

The Council held another briefing on Ukraine on 22 June (S/PV.10179). The meeting was requested by Ukraine in a 15 June

letter and supported by the Council's European members. The briefers were: Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations (DPPA-DPO) Mohamed Khaled Khiari and Director of the Crisis Response Division at the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Edem Wosornu.

### UNOCA (Central Africa)

On 9 June, the Security Council held a briefing (S/PV.10167) on the Secretary-General's semi-annual report on the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) and the implementation of the UN's regional strategy to combat the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) (S/2026/445). Assistant Secretary-General for Africa in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations (DPPA-DPO) Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee briefed.

### Iran (Non-Proliferation)

On 9 June, the Security Council held an open briefing on the work of the 1737 Sanctions Committee concerning Iran under the “Non-proliferation” agenda item (S/PV.10168). Prior to the meeting, Russia requested a procedural vote on the provisional agenda, reiterating its position that “Non-proliferation” had been removed from the list of matters of which the Council is seized. Colombia—the Council president in June—subsequently put the agenda to a vote. It was adopted with 11 votes in favour, two against (China and Russia), and two abstentions (Pakistan and Somalia).

### Somalia

On 15 June, the Security Council convened for a private meeting on the African Union (AU) Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) under the agenda item “The situation in Somalia” (S/PV.10172). Deputy Special Representative for Somalia and Officer in Charge of the UN Transitional Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNTMIS) Raisedon Zenenga and Special Representative of the AU Commission Chairperson (SRCC) for Somalia and Head of AUSSOM El Hadji Ibrahima Diene briefed.

### UNDOF (Golan)

Council members held consultations on the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on 16 June. Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix briefed.

On 25 June, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2824 renewing the mandate of UNDOF for six months, until 31 December 2026.

### Women, Peace and Security

On 17 June, the Security Council held an open debate on women, peace and security (WPS) titled “Peace is decided with women: Emerging from conflict by enhancing their participation” (S/PV.10175). The briefers were: UN Women Executive Director Sima Sami Bahous; Nobel Peace Laureate and Founder and President of the Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa Leymah Gbowee; and the Executive Director of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, Kaavya Asoka.

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## Status Update since our June Forecast

### Libya

On 18 June, Hanna Serwaa Tetteh, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), briefed the Council on the most recent developments in Libya, including the progress on the UN-facilitated political roadmap (S/PV.10176). She informed the Council that the Structured Dialogue, a core pillar of the political roadmap, has produced a set of recommendations to address Libya's structural issues. She noted that the main task now is to translate these recommendations into action that would lead to Libyan-led implementation.

### UN Peacekeeping

On 23 June, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2823, which focuses on ensuring accountability for crimes against peacekeepers (S/PV.10180). The resolution, co-authored by Denmark and Pakistan, garnered the support of 153 co-sponsors.

### Arria-formula Meeting on the Implementation of Resolutions

On 23 June, Security Council members China and Pakistan convened an Arria-formula meeting titled "Bridging the Implementation Gap: Security Council Resolutions and the Maintenance of International Peace and Security". The briefers were Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations (DPPA-DPO); Shamala Kandiah Thompson, the Executive Director of Security Council Report (SCR); and Richard Gowan, Programme Director of Global Issues and Institutions at the International Crisis Group.

### Children and Armed Conflict

On 24 June, the Security Council held its annual open debate on children and armed conflict (S/PV.10182). Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict Vanessa Frazier presented the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict, dated 16 June (S/2026/357). UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell and Country Director for Haiti at Plan International André Prosper Raymond briefed. A youth civil

society representative was initially scheduled to brief at the meeting. However, it seems that one Council member raised a procedural issue, and the youth representative did not ultimately brief. In her statement at the outset of the open debate, Frazier regretted the fact that a young person from a conflict-affected area "was ultimately unable to brief the Council, despite appropriate safeguards having been put in place to protect her identity". She added that "this serves as a reminder that we must continue to create safe and practical avenues for children to be heard in the very forums where decisions concerning their future are made".

### Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 26 June, the Security Council held a briefing and consultations on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), including the work of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) (S/PV.10185). Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the DRC and Head of MONUSCO James Swan briefed based on the Secretary-General's latest report on the mission, which was published on 19 June and covers developments since 19 March (S/2026/507).

On 29 June, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2825 renewing the 1533 DRC sanctions regime until 1 July 2027 and the mandate of the Group of Experts assisting the 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee until 1 August 2027.

### International Criminal Tribunals

On 12 June, the Security Council convened its semi-annual debate on the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT). The IRMCT's President, Judge Graciela Gatti Santana, and its Chief Prosecutor, Serge Brammertz, briefed (S/PV.10170). They also met with the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals prior to the debate. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Rwanda, and Serbia participated in the meeting under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

At the time of writing, Council members are still negotiating a resolution on the IRMCT, as they have yet to reach agreement on renewing the Mechanism's mandate.

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## Women, Peace and Security

### Expected Council Action

In July, the Security Council will hold its annual open debate on conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). One of the signature events of the presidency of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the open debate will be titled: "Honouring the promise of international law to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence". The open debate will be chaired by the Prime Minister of the DRC, Judith Suminwa Tuluka. Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict Pramila Patten and one or more civil society representatives are the anticipated briefers.

### Key Recent Developments

The Secretary-General's annual reports define CRSV as "rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls and boys, that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict". According to the reports, CRSV "also encompasses trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual violence and/or exploitation", when committed in situations of conflict.

This year's report on CRSV covers the period from January to

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY** Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2467 (23 April 2019) recognised the need for a survivor-centred approach to preventing and responding to CRSV. It passed with 13 votes in favour and two abstentions (China and Russia). S/RES/1960 (16 December 2010) requested the Secretary-General to add an annex to the annual report on CRSV listing conflict parties credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of CRSV. S/RES/1820 (19 June 2008) was the first Security Council resolution focused on CRSV. **Secretary-General Report S/2026/321** (21 April 2026) was the Secretary-General's annual report on CRSV.

## Women, Peace and Security

December 2025 and will inform the July open debate. According to remarks to the press by Patten on 29 May, the report documents 9,788 UN-verified cases, which represent a sharp increase from 2024, when the UN recorded 4,617 cases. This figure is understood to be an undercount that does not capture the totality of incidents. In her remarks, Patten said that this year's report documents cases of rape, gang rape, abductions, and sexual slavery by state and non-state actors, often accompanied by extreme physical violence. She also noted that expenditures linked to rising militarisation have strained national budgets and, coupled with acute funding cuts for UN entities, had "a devastating impact", with services for survivors "being slashed when women and girls caught up in conflict need them most".

The report covers 21 conflict-affected situations, with incidents affecting persons aged one to 70 years old. The vast majority of cases documented in the report affected women and girls. Most of the reported incidents against men and boys occurred in detention. The report also says that LGBTQI+ people were at acute risk of sexual violence, in particular in detention settings.

Haiti is the situation with the highest number of UN-verified cases in this year's report. The UN Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) verified cases affecting 1,668 women, 187 girls, two men, and six boys. Most cases were attributed to armed gangs. Among other things, the report notes that patterns of sexual violence in the country suggest "that sexual violence against children forms an integral part of strategies employed by gangs to assert control". The report notes that the Haitian National Police was "also implicated in some incidents".

With consistently elevated numbers of UN-verified incidents of CRSV, the DRC has been a recurring focus of the Secretary-General's annual reports. According to the report, this year marks an 86 percent increase from 2024. In 2025, the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) documented 1,534 cases of CRSV, 32 of which occurred in previous years. Non-state actors were responsible for 1,229 cases, of which 439 were attributed to the *Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23)*. State actors were responsible for 305 cases, most of which implicated the Armed Forces of the DRC. The actual number of cases is likely to be much higher, however, with the report noting that service providers registered over 90,000 cases of sexual violence across five provinces in eastern DRC between January and September 2025.

The report says that CRSV continues to be a "defining feature" of the conflict in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). In 2025, the UN documented cases of CRSV affecting 275 women, 218 girls, five boys, and three men, with the RSF being identified as the perpetrators in the majority of cases. Among other things, the report notes that women and girls, particularly from the Zaghawa and Fur communities, were targeted by the RSF on ethnic grounds, as well as for their real or perceived affiliation with rival forces.

The report also describes continuing "widespread and systematic use of sexual violence as a tactic of war and political repression by the Myanmar military", targeting people based on their gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, or perceived political affiliation. The report notes that the Arakan Army, an armed group based in Rakhine state, and armed groups that oppose the military, were also reportedly implicated in perpetrating CRSV.

As mandated by resolution 1960 adopted in 2010, this year's report again includes an annex listing "parties credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of rape or other forms of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict on the agenda of the Security Council". Over 65 percent of the parties listed in the annex are persistent perpetrators, appearing in the annex for five or more years without taking remedial or corrective action.

New listings this year include the Israeli armed and security forces, the Russian armed and security forces, and three non-state actors in the DRC. Last year's annual report on CRSV introduced a new appendix on parties "implicated in patterns" of CRSV, which were being "put on notice" for potential listing in this year's report. The parties listed in this section were the Israeli and Russian armed and security forces.

This year's report says that, despite the Secretary-General's calls for the Israeli and Russian armed and security forces to cease all acts of sexual violence and implement specific time-bound commitments outlined in resolution 2467 (2019) on CRSV, "consistent denial of access" for UN monitors persisted, and there was "no implementation" of the prevention and accountability measures outlined in the resolution.

Regarding the Israeli armed and security forces, the report says that the UN verified multiple incidents of CRSV against 14 men, seven women, nine boys, and one girl from Gaza and the West Bank, 13 of which occurred in 2025 and 18 in 2023 and 2024. It specifies that these cases "should be seen as indicative of incidents and patterns over multiple reporting periods rather than comprehensive, given the continued denial of access by the Government of Israel to detention settings, as well as to Gaza". While these incidents occurred primarily in detention settings, the report says that violations were also perpetrated at checkpoints and during Israeli military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, noting that survivors included journalists and human rights defenders. The report also describes allegations of sexual violence made by hostages held by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups following their release in 2025, adding that the UN could not verify these reports given Israel's denial of access to competent UN bodies to carry out investigations. Hamas was listed as a perpetrator in the Secretary-General's 2025 CRSV report.

This year's report says that the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) verified 310 cases of CRSV perpetrated by Russian armed and security forces, affecting 280 men, 26 women, and four girls in the context of the war in Ukraine. At least 52 of these cases were perpetrated in 2025 against male prisoners of war and civilian detainees, while the remaining cases, although verified and documented in 2025, took place between February 2022 and December 2024. The HRMMU also documented 31 cases of CRSV implicating Ukrainian armed forces, Security Service, and penitentiary staff, the majority of which occurred prior to 2025.

This year's report no longer includes the new appendix putting parties implicated in patterns of CRSV on notice. At the same time, it notes a decrease in UN-verified cases attributed to the Congolese National Police over the past five years and says that in the next report the Secretary-General will consider de-listing them.

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## Women, Peace and Security

Other situations of concern that are detailed in the report include Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Colombia, Ethiopia, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen, among others.

### Key Issues and Options

The overarching challenge for the Security Council is the growing pushback against women's rights, gender equality, and international law. A key issue remains the full implementation of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda and its impact on the ground. (For background, see the brief on WPS in our June 2026 Monthly Forecast.)

The persistence of CRSV—rooted in enduring patriarchal norms and other interlocking forms of control—is an issue of serious concern. Adopted in 2019, resolution 2467 recognised that CRSV occurs on a continuum of interrelated and recurring forms of violence against women and girls. One option is for Council members to reflect this structural understanding in their discussions by focusing on the continuum of violence and the intersecting inequalities women and girls face in both conflict and peacetime. Council members could also reflect on the nexus of protection and participation and address CRSV from a structural perspective, including through its political aspects and consequences.

The theme of this year's open debate emphasises the importance of international law. Council members should demand the immediate cessation of all forms of CRSV by conflict parties, in line with international law and relevant Security Council resolutions, and monitor compliance with these demands. Council members could also consider ways to better align the parties identified in the annual report on CRSV and those designated under sanctions regimes. Once the appointment of the chairs of the subsidiary bodies is finalised and the subsidiary bodies are functioning again, members could invite Patten to brief the relevant sanctions committees. Members could also consider referring to the International Criminal Court situations where sexual violence, as defined in the Rome Statute, is likely to have been committed.

Council members could also raise the concerning issue of ongoing arms transfers in situations where there is a high risk that weapons will be used to commit serious violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and acts of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

Resolution 2467 recognised the importance of a survivor-centred approach in preventing and responding to CRSV. During the open

debate, members could highlight the importance of guaranteeing sexual and reproductive healthcare and rights to all survivors of SGBV.

The UN80 initiative, a reform agenda aimed at streamlining the UN in response to funding constraints, is expected to result in consolidation and austerity measures. In this context, Council members could continue to support the deployment of women's protection advisers and gender advisers in peace operations, as well as in transition processes from peacekeeping operations to special political missions and country teams.

### Council Dynamics

Council members' views converge on the need to eradicate CRSV. Nevertheless, dynamics on WPS remain difficult. Since the start of President Donald Trump's term in 2025, the US has sought the deletion of references to gender or their substitution with narrower references, converging with Russia's longstanding resistance to incorporating extensive references to WPS and human rights in Council outcomes.

Colombia, Denmark, France, Greece, Latvia, Liberia, Panama, and the UK are the current members of the Shared Commitments on WPS initiative, which was started in 2021 by Ireland, Kenya, and Mexico. Several Shared Commitments members often advocate for the retention of WPS and gender language in Council resolutions and break silence over these issues. On some occasions, they have succeeded in retaining some of these references.

Russia is the first permanent Council member to be listed in the annex of the Secretary General's report. Russia has criticised its inclusion, while the US has expressed strong reservations regarding the listing of Israel.

Russia has opposed the term "CRSV", arguing that it leads to a blurring of crimes of a sexual nature that occur in peace time and during armed conflict, therefore unduly expanding the purview of the Council's mandate; this is an argument that most other Council members do not support and civil society groups working on women's rights reject. In recent years, Russia also objected to Patten briefing in sanctions committee meetings.

The UK is the penholder on WPS, and the US is the penholder on CRSV. Colombia and Denmark are the co-chairs of the Informal Expert Group on WPS. Panama is the coordinator of the Shared Commitments initiative.

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## Sudan

### Expected Council Action

In July, the International Criminal Court (ICC) Deputy Prosecutor Nazhat Shameem Khan is expected to provide the semi-annual briefing to the Security Council on the ICC's activities related to the situation in Darfur.

### Background and Key Recent Developments

More than 17 years after the Council's ICC referral on the situation in Darfur, through resolution 1593 of 31 March 2005, the first trial opened on 5 April 2022 with the case of Prosecutor v. Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman ("Ali Kushayb"). Abd-Al-Rahman, reportedly a former leader of the Janjaweed militia, is accused of 31 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, allegedly committed in

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON SUDAN** Security Council Resolution S/RES/1593 (31 March 2005) referred the situation in Darfur to the ICC. Security Council Meeting S/PV.10092 (19 January 2026) was a briefing by ICC Deputy Prosecutor Nazhat Shameem Khan on the court's work on the situation in Darfur.

# Sudan

Darfur between August 2003 and approximately April 2004. The ICC concluded the trial in December 2024. On 6 October 2025, the ICC found Abd-Al-Rahman guilty of 27 counts of crimes against humanity and war crimes, including ordering Janjaweed forces to commit murder and rape as war crimes and crimes against humanity, and intentionally directing attacks against a civilian population. On 9 December 2025, the Court sentenced him to 20 years of imprisonment.

The ICC Prosecutor's most recent report to the Security Council, submitted on 24 June, noted that, on 10 March, both the Prosecution and the Defence filed appeals against the Trial Chamber's sentencing judgment in the Abd-Al-Rahman case. The report indicated that the Appeals Chamber is expected to issue its decisions on the appeals against both the trial judgment and the sentencing judgment in the first half of 2027.

Four arrest warrants issued by the ICC remain outstanding—against Omar Al Bashir, former Sudanese President; Ahmad Muhammad Harun, former Sudanese Minister of State for the Interior; Abdel Raheem Muhammad Hussein, former Sudanese Minister of National Defence; and Abdallah Banda Abakaer Nourain, commander-in-chief of the Justice and Equality Movement at the time of the warrant. Pursuant to resolution 1593 and the subsequent orders of the ICC, Sudan remains under obligation to surrender the four remaining suspects to the court.

On 13 July 2023, ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan announced that the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) had commenced an investigation into alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur since the outbreak of hostilities on 15 April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), and their allied armed groups. The ICC Prosecutor's 24 June report, noted that, over the previous six months, the OTP conducted a series of key interviews that strengthened the evidentiary record and broadened its understanding of crimes committed in El Geneina, the capital of West Darfur, between April and July 2023. It added that the OTP had prioritised investigations into gender-based crimes and crimes against children committed in El Geneina.

The report also described progress in the OTP's investigation into crimes committed in El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur state, including through the deployment of investigators to Sudan and neighbouring countries to interview victims and insider witnesses. According to the report, the evidence collected to date depicts the commission of war crimes in El Fasher and its surrounding areas, including murder and outrages upon personal dignity. These investigations encompass crimes committed during the RSF's October 2025 offensive and subsequent takeover of El Fasher, which was accompanied by widespread violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL), including reports of mass killings, summary executions, abductions, arbitrary detention, and other abuses against civilians.

The ICC Prosecutor's 24 June report also described the OTP's cooperation with the Sudanese authorities, including the deployment of investigators to Sudan to identify potential witnesses in relation to crimes committed during the events in El Fasher in late October 2025. The report noted that other planned missions to Port Sudan could not proceed because the relevant authorities or persons of interest were unavailable. During the reporting period, the OTP

submitted four requests for assistance to the Sudanese authorities, two of which received positive responses, while one could not be executed because of insufficient information and another remained pending following the reported relocation of relevant government offices to Khartoum.

## Human Rights-Related Developments

At the 62nd session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights Awa Dabo warned that the conflict in Sudan has continued to deepen and expand, marked by a sharp increase in the use of armed drones by the parties to the conflict. She said that between January and May, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) documented more than 1,000 civilians killed in drone strikes, representing around 80 percent of all conflict-related civilian deaths recorded this year. She also highlighted the unprecedented scale and brutality of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), including gang rape, sexual torture, and sexual enslavement. Dabo added that CRSV is being used as a weapon of war to terrorise civilians and target individuals based on perceived party affiliation and ethnic identity.

Dabo called for an immediate end to attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, full compliance with the Security Council's arms embargo in Darfur, and greater efforts to prevent the transfer of arms, including drones, used in violation of IHL across the entire territory of Sudan. She also urged member states to support the work of the ICC in Darfur and to make greater use of universal jurisdiction to ensure accountability for atrocity crimes.

In a 15 June press release, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan (IFFM), established by the HRC in October 2023, warned that the increasing use of arbitrary detention, torture, and enforced disappearances by the parties to the conflict as tools of control over civilian populations is exacerbating Sudan's civilian protection crisis. It added that widespread violations of IHL and IHRL, including war crimes committed by both parties, show no sign of abating and may also amount to crimes against humanity. In light of these findings, the IFFM called for support for victims, cooperation with the ICC, the expansion of its jurisdiction beyond Darfur, the establishment of an independent international judicial mechanism working in close cooperation with the ICC, the systematic collection and preservation of evidence for future criminal proceedings, and targeted sanctions.

## Key Issues and Options

An underlying issue for the Security Council remains how to effectively promote justice and accountability for both past atrocities committed in Darfur and the ongoing violations of IHL and IHRL being perpetrated by Sudan's warring parties across the country. Broadly, the continued violence, insecurity, and targeted attacks against civilians remain a major concern for Council members in the context of the current conflict. The failure to ensure accountability for crimes committed over the past two decades has contributed to the recurrence of violence and impunity in the current conflict.

A key challenge for the Council is how to strengthen cooperation between the ICC and relevant Sudanese authorities, as well as non-state actors, third states, and international and regional organisations. This includes facilitating the execution of outstanding arrest warrants; supporting the ICC's ongoing investigations; and enabling the safe collection, preservation, and transmission of evidence. In this regard, the ICC Prosecutor's 24 June report noted that the RSF had failed to respond to the OTP's repeated requests for cooperation, despite previous assurances that they would do so.

Another key issue is how to support the documentation, preservation, and analysis of evidence in an increasingly insecure and fragmented operating environment. According to the Prosecutor's 24

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## Sudan

June report, the OTP continues to face significant operational challenges, including limited or no access to relevant locations, ongoing hostilities, and the continued exercise of authority by individuals allegedly responsible for crimes. The report noted that the absence of direct access to crime scenes has constrained the OTP's ability to conduct on-site examinations, recover physical evidence, document forensic traces, and independently verify information.

Amid growing political sensitivities and divisions among states regarding the ICC's work, another issue for the Council is how to ensure that the Court receives the political support and resources necessary to advance its mandate, promote accountability, and help break the cycle of impunity.

Council members supportive of the ICC's work in Sudan could consider holding a joint press stakeout following the July briefing to publicly reaffirm their commitment to justice and accountability. They could also consider convening an Arrria-formula meeting with the OTP, OHCHR, the FFM, civil society organisations, and victims' representatives to discuss accountability efforts, evidence preservation, and avenues for strengthening international cooperation with the Court.

Council members could also consider inviting UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk to brief on the broader human rights situation in Sudan. Additionally, members may wish to invite the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, to shed more light on the scale and gravity of CRSV and the protection needs of affected populations.

### Council Dynamics

The Council is divided on the work of the ICC. Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Denmark, France, Greece,

Latvia, Liberia, Panama, and the UK are states parties to the Rome Statute of the ICC. Several of these members have expressed strong support for the ICC's efforts and have commended the OTP for its continued pursuit of accountability for crimes committed in Darfur.

Russia has been particularly vocal in its criticism of the ICC, accusing the Court of selective justice and political bias. Russia's view hardened following the Court's announcement on 17 March 2023 that it had issued arrest warrants for Russian President Vladimir Putin and Commissioner for Children's Rights Maria Lvova-Belova for allegedly committing the war crime of "unlawful deportation" and "unlawful transfer" of children from Ukraine to Russia.

While the US has traditionally supported the ICC's efforts concerning Sudan, it criticised the ICC for issuing arrest warrants in November 2024 against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant for crimes against humanity and war crimes linked to Israel's military actions in Gaza since at least 8 October 2023. In response, on 6 February 2025, US President Donald Trump issued an executive order authorising sanctions against foreign nationals involved in ICC investigations or prosecutions targeting US citizens or nationals of allied countries that are not parties to the Rome Statute. On 5 June 2025, the US also sanctioned four individuals serving as ICC judges for their roles in authorising investigations into US personnel in Afghanistan and issuing arrest warrants for Israeli officials.

Several Council members, supportive of the ICC's work on Darfur, have expressed concern over efforts to undermine the Court's independence, including through the use of sanctions and political pressure. These members have condemned any attempts to intimidate the OTP, warning that such measures could hinder the Court's ability to carry out its mandate not only in Sudan but also in other jurisdictions.

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## West Africa and the Sahel

### Expected Council Action

In July, the Security Council will hold an open briefing, followed by closed consultations, on West Africa and the Sahel. The Special Representative and Head of the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Leonardo Santos Simão, is expected to brief.

### Key Recent Developments

On 19 February, the Council agreed to issue a letter responding to the Secretary-General's 20 January letter recommending the extension of UNOWAS' mandate. In its letter, the Council extended UNOWAS' mandate until 31 January 2029 and expressed its intention to convene two regular UNOWAS briefings annually, while noting that additional briefings could be requested as needed. It also requested the Secretary-General to submit two annual reports on UNOWAS' activities. The Council welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to conduct an independent strategic review of UNOWAS' mandate and activities and requested that the review be finalised and submitted by 30 September.

On 25 April, fighters from Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), an al-Qaeda-affiliated group, and Tuareg separatists belonging to the Azawad Liberation Front (FLA) launched coordinated attacks across several locations in Mali, including Bamako, Kati, Gao, Mopti, and Sévaré. The attacks marked one of the most significant escalations in Mali's security crisis in recent years, highlighting the growing operational capabilities of armed groups in the country. Simultaneously, JNIM reportedly carried out a series of attacks in southern Mali that killed several senior military officials, including Defence Minister General Sadio Camara, who was killed in a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (IED) attack targeting his residence in Kati, near Bamako.

Following the attacks, media reports citing the Africa Corps—the successor to the Wagner Group, which reportedly operates under the direct oversight of the Russian Ministry of Defence—indicated that its forces had withdrawn from the northern town of Kidal pursuant to an agreement with the FLA that guaranteed their safe passage

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON UNOWAS** [Security Council Letter S/2026/83](#) (19 February 2026) extended UNOWAS' mandate until 31 January 2029 and expressed the Council's intention to convene two regular UNOWAS briefings annually, while noting that additional briefings could be requested as needed. [Security Council Press Statement SC/16360](#) (15 May 2026) condemned the terrorist attacks in several locations across Mali on 25 April and in the days that followed, including 6 May.

## West Africa and the Sahel

from the area. The FLA subsequently claimed control of Kidal and called for the complete withdrawal of Africa Corps personnel from Mali. Reports suggest that the remaining Africa Corps forces have largely consolidated around Bamako following their withdrawal from northern Mali. The FLA has also reportedly expanded its presence in and around Gao.

In the weeks that followed, JNIM reportedly expanded its operations across central and northern Mali, carrying out attacks against military installations, imposing blockades on key transport routes, including those leading to Bamako, and increasing pressure on government-controlled areas. On 6 May, the group launched a new wave of attacks that included an arson attack on trucks carrying food supplies to the capital. The campaign appeared designed to further isolate Bamako and disrupt supply chains. The attacks were reminiscent of JNIM's fuel blockade of Bamako, which has reportedly been in place since September 2025 and has disrupted access to fuel and other essential goods.

Meanwhile, fighters affiliated with Islamic State in the Sahel Province (ISSP) reportedly entered Mali's northeastern town of Ménaka in the aftermath of the 25 April attacks before subsequently withdrawing, after which Malian forces reasserted control over the area.

In response to the deteriorating security situation, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger reportedly conducted coordinated air strikes against suspected terrorist positions in Mali. These countries formed the collective defence arrangement, Alliance of Sahel States (AES) in 2023, and formally withdrew from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in January 2025.

On 15 May, Security Council members issued a press statement condemning the terrorist attacks in several locations across Mali on 25 April and in the days that followed, including 6 May. They underlined the need to hold perpetrators, organisers, financiers, and sponsors of these acts of terrorism accountable and bring them to justice.

According to media reports, on 18 June, gunmen attacked Niamey's international airport, which was later claimed by JNIM. Nigerien authorities said that 11 members of the armed forces and two civilians were killed in the attack, while 22 of the assailants were killed by security forces. The airport reportedly serves as a military base and hosts facilities associated with the AES. The attack followed a similar assault on the airport in January, which was carried out by ISSP.

Nigeria has intensified military operations against Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in the country's northeast amid persistent insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin region. These have included a series of air and ground operations targeting suspected militant strongholds. On 16 May, US Africa Command (AFRICOM), in coordination with the Nigerian forces, conducted an operation in northeastern Nigeria that killed multiple Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) leaders, including Abu-Bilal al-Minuki, who served as the second-in-command of ISIL globally. On 18 May, AFRICOM and Nigerian forces conducted additional strikes targeting ISIL militants in the country's northeastern region.

### Key Issues and Options

The expanding and evolving threat posed by terrorist groups across West Africa and the Sahel remains a key concern for Council members, as the region continues to experience an increase in the frequency, scale, and sophistication of terrorist attacks. The

escalation of attacks by terrorist and armed groups, coupled with their increasing use of advanced weaponry, ability to conduct coordinated attacks against strategic military and civilian targets, and capacity to contest and hold territory, underscores the growing operational capabilities of these groups and the limitations of existing regional security arrangements.

The latest security developments in Mali and their implications for the wider sub-region are likely to remain an issue of concern for Council members. These events have heightened concerns about the risk of cross-border spillover, the expansion of terrorist networks, and the further deterioration of security across West Africa and the Sahel.

Members could consider convening closed consultations or a meeting under "any other business" to respond promptly and effectively to developments. Members might find value in organising informal briefings with expert analysts to examine emerging trends in the region. They could also adopt a presidential statement to reaffirm their commitment to addressing the evolving challenges in the region, underscoring the importance of a coordinated regional and international response.

Another key issue for the Council is how to support effective regional counter-terrorism efforts in the face of an increasingly complex security landscape and constrained financial and operational resources. Regional mechanisms continue to face significant challenges, including political divisions, fragmented security architectures, limited intelligence-sharing, and persistent funding constraints, all of which have complicated coordinated responses to the growing terrorist threat.

One option for Council members would be to encourage greater dialogue and practical cooperation among regional and subregional actors, including AES, ECOWAS, the African Union (AU), and the UN, with a view to strengthening intelligence-sharing, border security, and coordinated counter-terrorism efforts. Members may wish to build on the informal interactive dialogue held on 14 July 2025 on enhancing regional counter-terrorism cooperation in West Africa and the Sahel by convening an open debate to assess evolving regional security dynamics, identify gaps in existing counter-terrorism mechanisms, and explore ways to strengthen cooperation among regional organisations and international partners.

An underlying key issue is the structural conflict drivers in the Sahel, such as poor governance, underdevelopment, severe humanitarian conditions, and climate change, which remain key challenges in promoting regional security and sustainable economic development. One option for Council members would be to strengthen collaboration with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to support locally-led initiatives that promote good governance and enhance regional and cross-border cooperation, including within the framework of the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS).

### Council Dynamics

There is broad concern among Council members about the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in West Africa and the Sahel, particularly the expanding threat posed by terrorist groups and the growing risk of regional expansion. Council members also continue to support the preventive diplomacy and good offices role

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## West Africa and the Sahel

of UNOWAS and recognise the importance of strengthening cooperation with regional organisations. Several members have underscored the need for the Council to maintain sustained attention on the region, including by exploring ways to support regional efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism while addressing the underlying drivers of insecurity.

During negotiations on the renewal of UNOWAS' mandate earlier this year, some members, including France, advocated increasing the frequency of Council briefings on UNOWAS to three per year to enable closer monitoring of developments in the region, while others, including Russia, favoured maintaining the existing reporting cycle of two briefings annually.

Council members continue to hold differing views on the broader security context in the Sahel, their respective approaches to engaging with the region, and the role of external security partners. The US and European members have expressed concern over Russia's

growing influence and its engagement with military juntas. The withdrawal of Western military assistance has also created a security vacuum in the region, inducing several Sahelian countries to pursue alternative partnerships, most notably with Russia.

Russia, in contrast, has maintained that the current security challenges are rooted in Western interference in the region and has called for collective international support for the AES countries. Moscow has also expanded its footprint in the region through bilateral defence agreements and the deployment of the Africa Corps. However, Russian forces deployed in the region have increasingly come under attack, demonstrating the precariousness of the operating environment. Recent developments in Mali, particularly following the 25 April attacks, have also raised broader questions about the effectiveness of relying predominantly on external security partners to address the region's evolving terrorist threat.

Liberia and Denmark are the co-penholders on UNOWAS.

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## The Red Sea

### Expected Council Action

In July, the Security Council is expected to consider renewing the monthly reporting requirement on Houthi attacks on merchant and commercial vessels in the Red Sea, originally mandated by Security Council resolution 2722 of 10 January 2024. Resolution 2812 of 14 January most recently extended the reporting obligation until 15 July.

The Council adopted resolution 2722—co-authored by Japan and the US—in response to Houthi attacks on shipping. The resolution demanded that the Houthis immediately cease all attacks on merchant and commercial vessels and took note of the right of member states, in accordance with international law, to defend their vessels from attacks, including those that undermine navigational rights and freedoms. It also requested the Secretary-General to submit written monthly reports to the Council “on any further Houthi attacks on merchant and commercial vessels in the Red Sea to inform the Council's future consultations”. It was adopted with 11 votes in favour and four abstentions (Algeria, China, Mozambique, and Russia). The resolution has been renewed four times, in six-month intervals, with the last three renewals (2025–2026) having been co-authored by Greece and the US.

### Background and Key Recent Developments

The Houthis—an Iran-backed Yemeni rebel group also known as Ansar Allah—took control over northern Yemen and the capital Sana'a in 2014, triggering a civil war against the internationally recognised Yemeni government. The war has continued to this day.

In response to the Israel-Hamas war that broke out on 7 October 2023, and in what they characterised as support for Palestinians in Gaza, the Houthis started to use their geographic position and significant drone and ballistic missile arsenal to project military power into the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and against Israel. Over the course of two years, the group launched multiple

attacks targeting Israel and shipping in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, including on commercial ships that were both affiliated and not affiliated with Israel. In response, Israel, the UK, and the US bombed several targets located in Houthi territory. The group temporarily paused its attacks following the October 2025 US-brokered Gaza ceasefire agreement.

The Houthis resumed attacks on Israel following the start of the Israel-US war with Iran, which began on 28 February. On 8 June, the group also threatened to resume targeting Israeli-linked ships in the Red Sea. The next day (9 June), the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Quds Force, Brigadier General Esmail Qaani, warned that continued escalation in the region would trigger a coordinated response by the Axis of Resistance—Iran-backed armed groups which include Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and various Iraqi militias—aimed at establishing a new “security belt” extending from the Strait of Hormuz to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a vital shipping waterway connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden. Like the situation in the Strait of Hormuz, attacks on vessels transiting through Bab el-Mandeb could have wide-scale implications for shipping and the global economy.

Following announcement of the 14 June memorandum of understanding consolidating the ceasefire between Iran and the US, there have been no further Houthi attacks against Israel, and the group has not resumed attacks on maritime navigation.

The latest monthly report from the Secretary-General, dated 9 June, said that the International Maritime Organization (IMO) indicated that no new incidents occurred during the reporting period of 9 May to 9 June. The 10 October 2025 report from the Secretary-General is the most recent one containing information regarding confirmed Houthi attacks on merchant and commercial vessels. It reported on the 31 August 2025 attack on the Liberia-flagged *Scarlet Ray* and the 29 September 2025 attack on the Netherlands-flagged

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UN DOCUMENTS ON THE RED SEA [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2812](#) (14 January 2026) extended the Secretary-General's monthly reporting requirement on Houthi attacks on merchant and commercial vessels in the Red Sea until 15 July. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.10089](#) (14 January 2026) was the meeting record and explanation of votes for the adoption of resolution 2812 on Houthi attacks in the Red Sea.

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## The Red Sea

Minervagracht vessels. It further said that responsibility for both attacks was confirmed by statements from the Houthis.

### Key Issues and Options

The central issue facing the Council is whether to renew the monthly reporting requirement on Houthi attacks in the Red Sea, against a backdrop of changed but still uncertain circumstances. Although no new incidents have been reported in 2026, continued Houthi threats to resume targeting Israeli-linked shipping and the IRGC's warnings underscore that the conditions that gave rise to the resolution have not been resolved. The situation therefore remains fluid, and the reporting mechanism continues to serve an important monitoring function.

In this regard, a likely option for the Council is to extend the reporting requirement for a further six months.

Another option is for Council members to use the renewal as an opportunity to address the broader question of long-term sustainable security in the Red Sea. Council members could consider including language reiterating the call for diplomatic efforts towards an inclusive political process in Yemen under UN auspices, while also emphasising that any solution must also involve regional security guarantees, including the safety and freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. However, given divisions that have characterised Council votes on resolution 2722 and all its renewals, reaching agreement on any additional language beyond a straightforward renewal could prove difficult.

### Council Dynamics

There is no consensus among Council members on how to address the issue of maritime security in the Red Sea. Members who

abstained on resolution 2722 believed at the time that the text insufficiently reflected the link between the Red Sea crisis and the war in Gaza. Despite a ceasefire having been announced in Gaza, the Houthis continue to frame their threats and strikes as a reaction to Israeli attacks against Iran and any of its proxies.

Furthermore, China and Russia have expressed reservations about maintaining the issue prominently on the Council's agenda, particularly where it intersects with military action undertaken by some member states, which they argue risks exacerbating tensions and undermining the political track. Following the adoption of resolution 2722, Russia argued that the language used on states' rights to defend their vessels lacked a clear basis in international law. In contrast, the UK and the US argued that the rights of states to defend their vessels are in accordance with states' inherent right to self-defence in Article 51 of the UN Charter. In a statement before the adoption of the resolution's most recent renewal (resolution 2812), Russia said that it would not block the resolution "owing solely to the requests of regional stakeholders".

Similarly, the Council's five permanent members remain divided on how to approach the Houthis. France, the UK, and the US have argued that the Council needs to increase pressure on the group—which they believe is obstructing a political process and fostering instability in Yemen—including by strengthening the Yemen sanctions regime. The US has adopted a particularly hawkish position on the Houthis, unilaterally sanctioning the group and rebuking Iran's support for it. Conversely, China and Russia have argued that expanding the Yemen sanctions regime would escalate tensions and undermine prospects for a negotiated settlement.

The UK is the penholder on Yemen. Greece and the US are the co-penholders on the Red Sea crisis.

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## Colombia

### Expected Council Action

In July, the Security Council is expected to hold its quarterly meeting on Colombia. Special Representative and Head of the UN Verification Mission in Colombia Miroslav Jenča will brief on recent developments and the Secretary-General's latest 90-day report on the mission (S/2026/528), which was circulated to Council members on 26 June and covers developments since 27 March.

The verification mission's mandate expires on 31 October.

### Key Recent Developments

The second quarter of 2026 saw a significant change in the political landscape in Colombia, as the country concluded the second round of its presidential elections on 21 June. Abelardo de la Espriella of the "Defensores de la Patria" movement, a former criminal defence attorney who ran as an independent candidate, received 49.6 percent of the vote, securing a razor-thin victory over Iván Cepeda of the "Pacto Histórico", who received 48.7 percent of the vote. De la Espriella's victory signifies a shift to the right after the four-year term

of President Gustavo Petro Urrego, Colombia's first leftist president. De la Espriella will begin his four-year term on 7 August.

The Secretary-General's report noted that the elections were held in a generally peaceful manner, although the run-up to the elections saw several significant instances of violence against candidates from across the political spectrum. In a 25 June statement, Secretary-General António Guterres underscored the UN's readiness to work with the incoming administration and to "continue supporting nationally led efforts to advance peace and security, sustainable development and prosperity for all Colombians".

The new administration will take office shortly before the tenth anniversary 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 *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo* (FARC-EP), which will be marked in November. At this crucial juncture, the Secretary-General's report continues to present a mixed picture, noting that important advances in implementation of the agreement occurred

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UN DOCUMENTS ON COLOMBIA [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2798](#) (31 October 2025) renewed the mandate of the UN Verification Mission in Colombia. [Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.10141](#) (21 April 2026) was the latest quarterly meeting on Colombia.

## Colombia

alongside persistent challenges. Petro's administration focused on rural reform, delivering almost 370,000 hectares to peasants, rural women, and victims out of the goal of three million hectares outlined in the peace agreement. The report also stresses that the successful reintegration of the over 11,000 demobilised former FARC-EP combatants remains "key to consolidating lasting peace and security", describing gaps in the allocation of land, housing, and sustainable economic opportunities.

As in the past, the most recent Secretary-General's report describes persistent violence that continues to hinder implementation of several aspects of the peace agreement. During the period covered by the Secretary-General's report, the mission verified the killing of one former combatant, bringing the number of ex-FARC killed since the signing of the peace agreement to 493. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that, between 27 March and 1 June, 5,272 people were displaced and 9,553 confined across 17 municipalities in seven departments, with approximately 58 percent of those affected belonging to ethnic communities. The Secretary-General's report describes several severe security incidents, including a 25 April improvised explosive device (IED) attack in the Cauca Department by the armed group known as Estado Mayor Central (EMC) that hit a passenger bus and other civilian vehicles, killing 21 civilians and wounding 35 others.

De la Espriella has criticised the 2016 peace agreement, arguing that it has failed to bring security to the country. He has also denounced the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP), the judicial component of the transitional justice system established by the accord, threatening to close the Court. Judicial experts have noted that, since the creation of the SJP has a constitutional basis, any attempt to dismantle it would require a constitutional reform approved by Congress through a new legislative act, which would be unlikely.

In a 26 June letter to de la Espriella, signatories to the peace agreement reaffirmed their continued commitment to the accord and urged the government to uphold its obligation to implement the agreement, including by prioritising the issue in the country's 2026–2030 National Development Plan.

Issues relating to insecurity featured prominently during the recent electoral campaign. De la Espriella's platform pledged to crack down on armed groups by increasing military deployments, enhancing coordination with private security companies, and accelerating the eradication of illicit crops through fumigation, among other means. The president-elect has also criticised Petro's "total peace" policy, which involved dialogue efforts with armed groups operating in the country, and has stated that his approach to security does not "involve open negotiations with armed groups".

Some analysts have noted that it remains to be seen which campaign promises would be translated into policies once the new administration takes office. They have warned, however, that past experience in Colombia demonstrates that military means alone have failed to curb violence; have expressed concern about potential adverse effects on civilians; and have emphasised that cautious approaches are needed to resolve the root causes of current insecurity, which is deeply rooted in inequality. Such approaches include fostering economic opportunities that would prevent children and young people from joining armed groups.

The Secretary-General's report similarly underscores that insecurity is driven by disputes among armed groups over the control of territory and illicit economies in areas with limited state presence. It notes in this regard that addressing this situation "will require patient, sustained and coordinated actions to fill these security, governance and development vacuums, ensuring the protection of communities while addressing the deeper underlying causes". It further emphasises that comprehensive implementation of the peace agreement offers a framework to address these challenges, including through its security guarantees mechanisms and provisions aimed at tackling inequality, such as rural reform.

In the past quarter, discussions have continued regarding the establishment of a new mechanism to verify implementation of the ethnic chapter of the 2016 agreement and compliance with sentences handed down by the SJP. Both these tasks were removed from the verification mission's mandate through resolution 2798 of 31 October 2025. (The US insisted that these tasks be removed, while most other Council members strongly advocated for their retention.) The Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement (CSIVI)—the main forum for dialogue between the parties on the implementation of the 2016 agreement—has extended an invitation to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and to the Mission to Support the Peace Process of the Organization of American States (MAPP/OAS) to participate in such a mechanism. Scott Campbell, OHCHR's representative in Colombia, apparently discussed the issue with some Council members and other member states during a mid-June visit to New York.

### Human Rights-Related Developments

Following an 11-day visit to Bogotá, Quibdó, Cartagena, and Cali, the International Independent Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement concluded that structural, systemic, and historical racism persists in Colombia. While recognising good measures undertaken by the government to address these issues, the Mechanism nevertheless observed discriminatory practices against people of African descent during interactions with law enforcement and the justice system, uncovering inhumane conditions of detention, racial profiling, and police violence. In light of these findings, the Mechanism called on Colombia to ensure accountability for cases of racial discrimination and police violence, and to address the humanitarian crisis in transitional detention centres, among other recommendations.

### Key Issues and Options

As there may be some uncertainties during the upcoming transition period in Colombia, sustained international support for the 2016 peace agreement is key. With this month's meeting taking place shortly before a new administration takes office in Colombia, Council members could emphasise the government's responsibility to facilitate implementation of the accord. One option is to convey such messages in a press statement. Such a product could also stress the importance of increased dialogue among the parties to the peace agreement, including through mechanisms such as the CSIVI. In June, the outgoing government issued a decree extending the CSIVI until December 2031.

The effects of the conflict on children in Colombia are an ongoing matter of concern. The Secretary-General's most recent annual report on children and armed conflict, dated 16 June, notes that the UN verified 575 grave violations against 449 children in Colombia in

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## Colombia

2025. In particular, the report expresses concern about the persistently high number of children who were recruited and used (371), including through social media platforms. It further voices alarm about the disproportionate impact of violations on Indigenous and Afro-Colombian children, who “face compounded risks due to structural discrimination and limited access to protection and services”. Council members may seek more information on how the international community can support the Colombian government’s efforts to tackle these issues, including by inviting relevant briefers such as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict or a senior UNICEF official to brief in its July meeting.

### Council Dynamics

Colombia had previously been considered a file that enjoyed Council consensus. However, strains in the bilateral relationship between Colombia and the US, stemming from disagreements between Petro and US President Donald Trump, particularly in 2025, have created

significant challenges in the Council’s engagement on the file. These difficult dynamics were evident in the contentious negotiations on resolution 2798, which last renewed the verification mission’s mandate, and in the fact that Council members have not adopted any press statements on Colombia since October 2024, although it had previously been the practice for them to do so after every quarterly meeting.

The advent of a new administration in Colombia may herald a shift in Council dynamics on the file. Trump has endorsed de la Espriella, praising his commitment to tackling drugs and crime, promoting trade, and curtailing illegal immigration. The president-elect has made cooperation with the US, including on curbing the drug trade from the country, a key pillar of his campaign. It is therefore more likely that Colombia’s positions would now be more aligned with those of the US, both on its own file and in its engagement on other files as an elected Council member.

The UK is the penholder on Colombia.

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## Lebanon

### Expected Council Action

In July, Council members expect to receive a briefing in consultations on the Secretary-General’s latest report on the implementation of resolution 1701. Adopted in 2006, resolution 1701 called for a cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah. The Secretary-General’s report is due on 9 July. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix and a representative of the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL) are the expected briefers. (On 26 June, spokesperson for the Secretary-General Stéphane Dujarric announced that, as of 1 July, Jean Arnault will serve as Officer-in-Charge of UNSCOL following the conclusion of Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert’s term.)

### Key Recent Developments

On 26 June, following several rounds of negotiations in Washington, DC, Lebanon, Israel, and the US signed a Trilateral Framework agreement intended to establish a pathway toward a “full comprehensive peace and security” arrangement. The framework agreement seeks to chart a way out of the confrontation between Israel and Hezbollah that began on 2 March when, shortly after the US-Israeli attacks on Iran, Hezbollah fired projectiles at Israel, which responded with large-scale airstrikes in several parts of Lebanon and sustained ground operations in the south of the country, carrying out demolitions and deploying to an area of up to 10 kilometres north of the Blue Line. (The Blue Line is a withdrawal line set by the UN in 2000 to confirm Israel’s withdrawal from southern Lebanon. While not an international border, the Blue Line acts in practice as a boundary between Lebanon and Israel in the absence of an agreed-upon border between the two states.)

In the agreement, Israel and Lebanon declared their intent to “end the conflict, address its underlying causes, and to therewith formally conclude any state of war between them”. They also committed to a process by which the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) will “restore effective sovereign authority over all Lebanese territory, pending the verified disarmament of non-state armed groups and dismantlement of associated infrastructure, enabling the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to progressively redeploy out of the Lebanese territory”. The agreement says that details of this process will be contained in a future security annex to be developed with the support of the US. It nonetheless states that the LAF will “gradually assume full and effective security responsibility in pilot zones”, two of which have already been agreed upon by the IDF and the LAF. Once non-state armed groups are disarmed and their infrastructure is dismantled in these zones, the LAF will assume full security responsibility, “internationally supported reconstruction efforts will begin”, and Lebanese civilians will be able to return.

In the agreement, Israel underscored that the termination of the threat posed by Hezbollah would “eliminate any future need for IDF military action or presence in Lebanon” and declared that “it has no territorial ambitions” there. At the same time, Lebanon and Israel affirmed that the framework does not prevent them “from exercising their inherent right to defend themselves”. Israel and Lebanon also agreed to the “cessation of all hostile or adverse actions in international political or legal fora”. The agreement further says that both governments “commit to establishing a military coordination group” with the participation of the US, to ensure the implementation of the framework. The US will simultaneously “rally international partners”

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON LEBANON Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2790** (28 August 2025) extended the mandate of UNIFIL for a final time until 31 December 2026 and established several functions that UNIFIL is authorised to fulfil during the drawdown and withdrawal period. It also requested the UN Secretary-General to explore, by 1 June 2026, “options for the future of the implementation of resolution 1701” following the withdrawal of UNIFIL. **S/RES/1701** (11 August 2006) called for a cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah. It also expanded UNIFIL’s mandate. **S/RES/1559** (2 September 2004) urged the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, and the extension of the Lebanese government’s control over all Lebanese territory. **Security Council Meetings S/PV.10163** (1 June 2026) was the meeting record of a Security Council meeting on Lebanon. **S/PV.10127** (31 March 2026) was the meeting record of a Security Council meeting on Lebanon. **Security Council Letter S/2026/453** (1 June 2026) was a letter from the Secretary-General outlining options for the implementation of resolution 1701 after the withdrawal of UNIFIL.

# Lebanon

to support rebuilding Lebanon, repairing infrastructure, restoring the economy, and “creating opportunities for prosperity”.

Hezbollah officials rejected the agreement, with parliamentarian Hassan Fadlallah warning that enforcing it would require the Lebanese authorities to enter a civil war. Hezbollah Secretary-General Naim Qassem described it as a “grave error” and said it was “null and void”, accusing the government of legitimising a prolonged Israeli presence, and rejecting any linkage between Israeli withdrawal and the disarmament of Hezbollah. He argued that the 17 June memorandum of understanding between Iran and the US—under which the US and Iran “and their allies” declared an “immediate and permanent termination of military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon”—should instead be implemented as the appropriate framework to address the situation in Lebanon.

A 25 June update by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), citing figures from the Lebanese government, reported that 4,230 people have been killed and 12,179 injured in Lebanon since 2 March. The update notes that attacks on healthcare have had a severe impact, with 135 health workers killed and 406 injured. It also highlights that ongoing insecurity, the presence of unexploded ordnance, and extensive destruction continue to pose significant risks, particularly in areas close to the IDF deployment area in Lebanon. According to media reports citing figures provided by Israel, as at 14 June, four civilians were killed in Israel in Hezbollah attacks and 28 IDF soldiers died in Lebanon.

The UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has repeatedly come under attack during the hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah, with seven UNIFIL peacekeepers killed since 2 March. The mission has also reported repeated restrictions on its freedom of movement. In response to attacks against UNIFIL peacekeepers, Council members adopted three press statements on 1 April, 20 April, and 12 June condemning the killing of peacekeepers; reaffirming full support for UNIFIL; and calling on all parties to respect the safety, security, and freedom of movement of UN personnel and to fully implement resolution 1701.

Resolution 2790, which in August 2025 extended UNIFIL’s mandate for a final time until 31 December, requested the Secretary-General to provide options for the future of the implementation of resolution 1701 after the withdrawal of UNIFIL, including regarding “assistance in respect of security and monitoring of the Blue Line” and ways to enhance the support to the LAF’s redeployment south of the Litani River through the UN’s “tools”.

In a 1 June letter to the Security Council, the Secretary General stressed that since the adoption of resolution 2790, the situation on the ground has changed significantly, with recurrent hostilities underscoring the imperative of the full implementation by the parties of resolution 1701. The letter, which outlines three options, said that a UN uniformed presence facilitating de-escalation, dialogue, liaison, and coordination between the parties, and support for the LAF, would be necessary to complement a strengthened UNSCOL Office towards a long-term solution of the conflict. More specifically, the UN, as “the temporary custodian of the Blue Line”, would retain a “vital role” in impartially monitoring and maintaining the Blue Line through observation, reporting, cartography, surveying, marking, and technical deconfliction efforts. Regarding UNSCOL’s expanded

role, the letter says, among other things, that it could assume further responsibilities in the facilitation of dialogue, including in support of arrangements to monitor a cessation of hostilities. Regarding the UN uniformed presence after the end of UNIFIL, the three options are:

- Option 1: A robust deployment of approximately 5,525 uniformed personnel, including 350 unarmed military observers, four infantry battalions of 750 armed troops for force protection, and a force reserve of 700 armed troops. The letter says that this configuration would provide “the capacity to most credibly observe” developments along the Blue Line and up to the Litani River, with strong liaison, inter positioning and deconfliction capacity, and significant ability to verify violations of resolution 1701 and any cessation of hostilities arrangement, and to support LAF deployment. This configuration could carry out verification and investigations of violations, “including north of the Litani River”.
- Option 2: A medium sized presence of approximately 3,370 uniformed personnel, including 285 unarmed military observers, two infantry battalions of 750 armed troops each, and a force reserve of 450 armed troops, focused primarily on the area between the Blue Line and the Litani River, with capacity to conduct verification and investigations of violations of resolution 1701 in this area, but only partial monitoring capacity, more limited liaison and interposition functions, and reduced support to the LAF.
- Option 3: A smaller presence of approximately 1,980 uniformed personnel, including 215 unarmed military observers, two light infantry battalions of 450 armed troops each, and a quick-reaction force of 350 armed troops. This deployment would have no inter-positioning capability and only limited capacity to support LAF deployment. It would also have limited capacity to carry out monitoring and verification; provide information about developments on the ground, including violations; and offer liaison and coordination activities between the parties.

## Women, Peace and Security

On 29 May, the Informal Expert Group (IEG) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) convened on the situation in Lebanon. Deputy Special Coordinator and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Lebanon Imran Riza briefed. It seems that IEG members were briefed on the impact of the conflict in Lebanon on women and girls, including regarding livelihoods, shelters, psychosocial support, and women’s participation in political and conflict-resolution processes. Among other issues, members apparently inquired about the anticipated consequences of the withdrawal of UNIFIL, which, paired with uncertainties over the security arrangements, is expected to have significant socioeconomic consequences. UN Women, as the IEG Secretariat, apparently recommended that members request that technical gender expertise, comprehensive gender analysis, the integration of gender perspectives, and consultations with women’s organisations be central to all options for the UN’s future in Lebanon after the withdrawal of UNIFIL. It seems that UN Women also recommended inviting diverse Lebanese women to brief the Council and ensure that women’s perspectives inform discussions and decisions on Lebanon.

## Key Issues and Options

While the Council is largely uninvolved in facilitating negotiations between Lebanon and Israel, resolution 1701 remains the framework established by the Council towards peace and stability between Lebanon and Israel. The Trilateral Framework agreement does not

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## Lebanon

mention resolution 1701, nor any role for UNIFIL, a successor UN uniformed presence, or for the Security Council. A key issue for the Council is to consider what role it will play in the future in supporting the full implementation of resolution 1701 and in promoting peace and stability between Lebanon and Israel.

A related task for the Security Council is to decide on how to respond to the options outlined by the Secretary-General for the monitoring of the implementation of resolution 1701 after the drawdown of UNIFIL. While consultations among some Council members have apparently been taking place informally, Council members have yet to discuss the options during a meeting. It seems that this was at least in part because members were awaiting the outcome of the negotiations in Washington, DC, among Lebanon, Israel, and the US.

In parallel, on 25 June, France and Italy announced that they will co-lead an “international coalition to support Lebanon in a post-UNIFIL context” and support the establishment of an EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission to Lebanon which “will be consistent with bilateral initiatives in the country”. This would be aimed at avoiding a potential security vacuum in southern Lebanon and supporting Lebanese sovereignty, including the role of the LAF. Key aspects remain undefined, however, including the potential mandate of such a force.

The July closed consultations on resolution 1701 could provide an opportunity to have a frank conversation among Council members and Secretariat representatives on a future UN presence along the Blue Line in light of the evolving diplomatic, security, and humanitarian situation. Another option would be for members to request a separate private meeting focused specifically on discussing the various international arrangements that are being proposed for the post-UNIFIL context. This meeting format would allow Italy to participate.

In their deliberations, Council members can also be guided by the recommendations put forward by UN Women during the 29 May IEG meeting and by resolution 2594 of September 2021, which, among other issues, highlighted the importance of including throughout transition processes a comprehensive gender analysis, gender expertise, and the meaningful participation of women.

A pressing concern remains how to avoid a deterioration in the diplomatic and security situation, which could see Lebanon drawn into a dual crisis, facing both internal strife and a wider regional confrontation. Depending on developments, members may assess whether additional Council engagement this month is warranted beyond the scheduled consultations on resolution 1701.

### Council Dynamics

There is broad consensus among Council members in support of Lebanon’s sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and unity.

Several Council members have accused Hezbollah of dragging Lebanon into a confrontation that the Lebanese population did not seek and expressed support for efforts by the Lebanese authorities to extend state authority over the whole Lebanese territory. On the other hand, Russia does not see Hezbollah as the primary problematic actor and has focused its criticism on Israel and on wider regional dynamics.

Members have expressed strong support for UNIFIL and condemned attacks against peacekeepers. The US, the main driver behind the Council’s decision to terminate UNIFIL by 31 December, has joined Council press statements in response to attacks against UNIFIL. At the same time, it seems unwilling to revisit its position on the mission’s drawdown. In contrast, several other Council members have interpreted the recent escalation as evidence of the need for a sustained UN presence even after UNIFIL’s mandate ends in December.

France is the penholder on Lebanon.

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## Cyprus

### Expected Council Action

In July, Security Council members are expected to receive a briefing in consultations on the situation in Cyprus. Special Representative and Head of the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) Khassim Diagne is expected to brief Council members on the Secretary-General’s forthcoming reports on UNFICYP and on his good offices mission in Cyprus.

UNFICYP’s mandate expires on 31 January 2027.

### Key Recent Developments

Over the past six months, UN efforts to sustain diplomatic momentum on Cyprus have continued through regular engagement with the two Cypriot leaders and renewed attention to trust-building initiatives. While the parties have not agreed on conditions for resuming formal negotiations, the election of Turkish Cypriot leader Tufan Erhürman in October 2025 has contributed to a more sustained

pattern of dialogue with Greek Cypriot leader Nikos Christodoulides, including several meetings under UN auspices and direct meetings without international facilitation.

The Secretary-General’s Personal Envoy on Cyprus, María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar, travelled to the island in late January for consultations with the two leaders. On 28 January, Christodoulides, Erhürman, and Holguín held a trilateral meeting at Diagne’s residence in the buffer zone. The leaders exchanged proposals on moving towards substantive negotiations and reviewed the previously discussed trust-building initiatives. Christodoulides reportedly presented a five-point proposal that included reaffirming the basis of a settlement, tasking the UN with preparing a list of convergences reached before the collapse of talks in Crans-Montana in 2017, convening a new meeting in the expanded 5+1 format, and opening four new crossing points. (The 5+1 format includes the two Cypriot sides and the three guarantor powers—Greece, Türkiye, and the UK—plus the UN.)

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON CYPRUS** [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2815](#) (30 January 2026) extended the mandate of UNFICYP until 31 January 2027. [Secretary-General’s Reports S/2026/8](#) (5 January 2026) was the Secretary-General’s report on the UN operation in Cyprus. [S/2026/9](#) (5 January 2026) was the Secretary-General’s report on his mission of good offices in Cyprus.

# Cyprus

On 11 February, Erhürman met with Secretary-General António Guterres in New York, their first meeting since Erhürman's election. During the meeting, he presented his four-point methodology for the settlement process and reiterated his call for the lifting of restrictions affecting Turkish Cypriots. In a 16 February opinion piece, Holguín described the current phase as one of preparation, arguing that the leaders needed time to build trust, allow ideas to mature, and take small joint decisions before a more formal process could resume. On 24 February, Christodoulides and Erhürman held a one-on-one meeting without international facilitation. Both characterised the meeting, which was held in the buffer zone, as open and frank.

Regional tensions affected the Cyprus issue in March. Following the escalation of hostilities between Israel and the US and Iran, in late February, an Iranian-made drone reportedly struck the runway at RAF Akrotiri, a UK military base in the south of Cyprus, while additional drones were intercepted. In response to the incident, Christodoulides said that the Republic of Cyprus was not participating in any military operation. Subsequent developments, including reported deployments of Greek and Turkish fighter jets to the island and surrounding areas, intensified political rhetoric and renewed debate about the future status of the UK bases.

Tensions also emerged in and around the buffer zone. On 2 April, UNFICYP condemned an incident in Nicosia in which individuals reportedly threw rocks and fireworks at civilians, warning that such acts risked undermining public safety and stability. Later in April, standoffs occurred in Pyla, a village in the buffer zone, after disputes involving Greek Cypriot veterinary inspections and Turkish Cypriot police access, with UN peacekeepers engaging to contain tensions.

Despite these frictions, leader-level engagement continued. On 6 April, Christodoulides and Erhürman met under UN auspices in what the UN described as a "positive atmosphere", exchanged views on substance and the way forward, and tasked their representatives with finalising remaining issues on trust-building initiatives. On 8 May, the leaders held another meeting in the buffer zone and agreed on a framework for a consultative body for civil society engagement. They also agreed to prepare a plan for the conduct of religious services throughout the island, to work towards a coordinated response to foot-and-mouth disease, and establish a subcommittee to discuss products with protected designations of origin or geographical indications.

On 12 May, Diagne said that "limited but meaningful" progress had been recorded in recent months, citing increased willingness by both leaders to engage in dialogue, agree on confidence-building measures (CBMs), and cooperate across the divide. In June, Holguín launched a further round of shuttle diplomacy, travelling to Cyprus, Ankara, Athens, and Brussels, and engaging in efforts aimed at preparing the ground for a possible 5+1 meeting, potentially in late July or early August.

## Human Rights-Related Developments

At the 61st session of the UN Human Rights Council, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ilze Brands Kehris delivered an update on the situation of human rights in Cyprus. In the statement, she underscored that the division of Cyprus since the 1974 Turkish intervention continues to be the most significant obstacle to the full enjoyment of human rights for all people across the island. Effective monitoring and reporting by international human rights mechanisms remain limited owing to the

island's division, contributing to gaps in human rights protection.

Kehris said that the right to non-discrimination and the enjoyment of economic, social, and cultural rights have also been adversely affected, especially for Turkish Cypriot children born from mixed marriages. These children often encounter barriers to free movement and to access to vital services and education due to delays or rejections in their applications for Cypriot nationality. Among other matters, Kehris urged all parties to renew their efforts to resume formal negotiations to attain a just, sustainable solution to the island's division, in order to advance the full enjoyment of human rights for all people living in Cyprus.

## Key Issues and Options

Since the collapse of the 2017 unification talks in Crans-Montana, the key issue for the Security Council has been the absence of sustained progress towards resuming a formal political process. The recent series of meetings between Christodoulides and Erhürman, together with Holguín's continued shuttle diplomacy, suggests that the parties may be willing to explore a path back to substantive negotiations. However, the two sides remain divided over the parameters, sequencing, and guarantees of any renewed process.

An option for the Council would be to use the upcoming consultations to express support for the Secretary-General's good offices and encourage the parties to continue direct engagement. Council members could also encourage the parties and guarantor powers to approach any future 5+1 meeting with a view to identifying realistic steps towards substantive negotiations, without prejudging the outcome of such a process.

Another option would be for Holguín to be invited to brief at the forthcoming consultations on Cyprus or in a separate private meeting, a closed format that would allow for the directly affected parties and other invited member states to participate.

The implementation of CBMs is another key issue. Although the leaders have reached understandings on several practical measures, several earlier initiatives remain unresolved. These include the opening of new crossing points, measures related to the Mia Milia/Haspolat wastewater treatment plant, and other steps intended to improve intercommunal contact and economic cooperation.

Council members could encourage Diagne and UNFICYP to continue supporting the work of the bicomunal technical committees and to help the parties identify practical, time-bound steps for implementing agreed CBMs. They could also request that the Secretary-General include concrete benchmarks for progress in these areas in his next good offices report.

## Council Dynamics

Cyprus remains a low-intensity issue on the Council's agenda. Permanent members with a vested interest in Cyprus include France, Russia, and the UK, which also serves as the penholder on the issue and is one of the three guarantor powers. Greece, which is serving as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2025-2026, is another key stakeholder in relation to UNFICYP and the Cyprus peace process, given its role as a guarantor power.

Council members remain broadly supportive of UNFICYP and of efforts by the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to sustain dialogue between the two sides. The January renewal of UNFICYP's mandate, however, was not unanimous, with Pakistan and Somalia abstaining on resolution 2815 over concerns about certain aspects of

## Cyprus

the Council's approach to mandated language. (For more information, see our 29 January What's in Blue story.)

The Council continues to support a settlement based on a bicomunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as set out in relevant Security Council resolutions. Members differ, however, on how much pressure the Council should place on the parties and on whether benchmarks or timelines should be linked to the political

process or to adjustments in UNFICYP's mandate. Some members have previously supported a comprehensive strategic review of the mission and timed benchmarks for an exit strategy tied to progress in the political process. Russia has consistently opposed external interference or efforts to impose solutions or timelines that could influence the peace talks.

## Haiti

### Expected Council Action

In July, the Security Council is expected to hold its 90-day briefing on the situation in Haiti. Special Representative and Head of the UN Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) Carlos Ruiz Massieu is expected to brief on recent developments in the country and on the Secretary-General's latest report on BINUH, which is due on 14 July. The Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Monica Juma, is also expected to brief on the latest UNODC report on transnational organised crime, including illicit arms trafficking and financial crimes, in Haiti and the region. Special Representative for the Gang Suppression Force (GSF) Jack Christofides may also brief. Closed consultations are expected to follow.

### Background and Key Recent Developments

After the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in July 2021, Haiti descended into a multidimensional crisis characterised by extreme violence, political deadlock, and dire humanitarian conditions. Armed gangs have overrun large parts of Port-au-Prince, the capital, employing tactics including murder, kidnapping, and sexual violence amid widespread impunity.

The situation remains volatile. While security operations have weakened gang control in some Port au Prince neighbourhoods, the ability of the security forces to maintain control remains uncertain. The latest BINUH report on the human rights situation in the country, covering developments from January to March, documents extremely high levels of violence, with 1,642 people killed and 745 injured during the reporting period. The report says that 69 percent of the casualties occurred during security force operations against gangs carried out by the Haitian National Police (HNP), "sometimes supported" by the GSF and a private military company, and during summary executions involving police personnel. According to the report, 196 members of the population not associated with gangs were killed during these operations.

The report says that the private military company supporting security force operations continued to use explosive drones, stating that "[a]t least 69 members of the population were killed or injured by explosive drones, including five children". While the report does not name the private military company, previous UN and media reports identified it as US company Vectus Global, which was hired by the Haitian government to combat gangs.

The report attributes 27 percent of the casualties to gangs, and 4 percent to self-defence groups. During the reporting period, gang members subjected at least 291 women and girls and one man to sexual violence. (For more information on sexual violence in Haiti, see the brief on Women, Peace and Security in our July Forecast.)

The situation of children in Haiti remains particularly concerning. The latest Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict, dated 16 June, documents 2,088 grave violations against 1,661 children in 2025, including large-scale recruitment and use of children by gangs (892 children), many in combat roles. (The six grave violations, as determined by the Security Council, 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 report also records 620 children killed or maimed, mainly during armed confrontations and drone strikes. Other grave violations include sexual violence against children, abductions, and nearly 100 attacks on schools and hospitals. Three gangs (Gran Grif, Kraze Barye, and 400 Mawozo) have been added to the annexes of the Secretary-General's report, which list parties that have committed grave violations against children. (The Viv Ansanm gang coalition was listed in the 2025 report.) The Secretary-General also noted that the number of children killed and maimed by the HNP and the Special Security Task Force—a unit within Haiti's security apparatus operated with support from Vectus Global—increased substantially in 2025, and that "[i]f the high number of violations against children were to be repeated in 2026, without meaningful improvement", the HNP and the Special Security Task Force "should be listed" in next year's report.

The GSF, which the Security Council authorised in September 2025 through resolution 2793, is still in an early deployment phase, with approximately 1,000 personnel reportedly on the ground. Kenyan personnel who formed the bulk of the Multinational Security Support (MSS) mission in Haiti, which preceded the GSF, remained in the country during the initial phase of the transition, but the last Kenyan contingent departed in April. While some contingents from new troop-contributing countries, such as Chad, are already in Haiti, the GSF is not expected to reach full operational capacity until October. (The GSF has an authorised personnel ceiling of 5,550, including 5,500 military and police personnel and 50 civilians.)

Resolution 2793 also requested that the Secretary-General establish a UN Support Office in Haiti (UNSOH) to provide support to the GSF. UNSOH has been fully operational since 1 April.

**UN DOCUMENTS ON HAITI** Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2814 (29 January 2026) renewed BINUH's mandate for a year, until 31 January 2027. S/RES/2793 (30 September 2025) authorised UN member states to transition the MSS mission in Haiti into the GSF for an initial period of 12 months. The text also requested that the Secretary-General establish the UNSOH. Security Council Meeting S/PV.10144 (23 April 2026) was the meeting record of the Council's quarterly open briefing on Haiti.

# Haiti

On 29 May, the Secretary-General issued a report containing options for disarmament, dismantlement, and reintegration (DDR) and stabilisation in Haiti. The report was requested by the Security Council in resolution 2814, which in January renewed BINUH's mandate. In his report, the Secretary General identified four "target groups" requiring differentiated approaches:

- Group one: Children associated with gangs who have disengaged from gang involvement;
- Group two: Low-risk young people and adults associated with gangs;
- Group three: High risk individuals who are "not eligible" for DDR programmes and "will be addressed exclusively through justice and detention mechanisms"; and
- Group four: Vulnerable children and at-risk youth not associated with gangs.

The report outlines three progressively comprehensive options targeting groups one, two and four, which allow for both phased and stand-alone implementation, depending on the level of resources mobilised:

- a "rapid, quick-win programme" establishing the minimum architecture for DDR, but with "limited disengagement and reintegration" support, with an initial duration of 12 months at a cost of \$13.5 million annually;
- a comprehensive DDR programme with structured exit programmes supporting the systematic dismantling of gangs, expanded reintegration and prevention efforts, over an initial 12 month period at a cost of \$34 million annually; and
- a multi year programme delivering a comprehensive package of support to individuals disengaging from gangs, from exit through to long-term reintegration, while supporting broader recovery, peacebuilding, and development efforts, costed between \$100 and \$150 million.

The Secretary General recommended the third option and proposed the establishment of a multi partner trust fund, co chaired by the government of Haiti and the UN, to provide pooled, predictable, flexible, multi year DDR financing.

On the political front, there is uncertainty regarding the holding of general elections, which would be the first since 2016. Following the dissolution in February of the Transitional Presidential Council (TPC)—the temporary body established in April 2024 after a dramatic surge in gang violence—the Prime Minister of Haiti, Alix Didier Fils-Aimé, who was appointed by the TPC in November 2024, remains the country's sole executive authority.

Voters and candidates' registrations, initially expected to take place in April, have been postponed. A dispute between the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) and Fils-Aimé over the text of the draft electoral decree and the designation by Fils-Aimé of the CEP's executive director as director general—interpreted by most CEP members as concentrating control over the electoral process in the hands of the executive—may further delay the electoral calendar. (Haitian authorities had previously indicated that elections were expected to begin in August.) Despite objections from the CEP, on 2 June the government adopted an electoral decree. Nonetheless, Haitian news outlets estimate that the decree may still be amended following ongoing discussions between the CEP and the government over contentious aspects.

The humanitarian situation remains dire. According to a recent International Organization for Migration (IOM) update, internal displacement has reached 1.47 million people, including over 300,000 in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. In addition, more than 25,000 migrants were forcibly returned to Haiti from neighbouring countries in May, many requiring urgent assistance. Nearly 6 million people in the country face acute food insecurity. At the same time, the UN humanitarian appeal for Haiti remains underfunded, limiting the ability of agencies to respond effectively to displacement, food insecurity, and protection needs.

On 25 June, the US Supreme Court allowed the Trump administration to proceed with terminating Temporary Protected Status for Haitian nationals. The US Department of Homeland Security announced the decision in November 2025 following its determination that there are "no extraordinary and temporary conditions in Haiti that prevent Haitian nationals" from safely returning to the country.

The severity of the security crisis and the urgency of international support were among the key messages of Secretary General António Guterres during his visit to Haiti on 16 June. Guterres held meetings with Fils-Aimé and with representatives of the GSF, UNSOH, and civil society. Speaking to the press before concluding his visit, he said that the deployment of the GSF provides an opportunity to push back violence and re-establish state authority. He also stressed the need to respect human rights in the context of security operations, as well as the importance of a functioning justice system, and of stemming the flow of weapons fuelling the violence.

## Human Rights-Related Developments

In a 2 June press briefing note, the spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Marta Hurtado, welcomed the opening of two specialised judicial units in Haiti as "a significant step toward tackling widespread impunity in the country". The two specialised units are expected to address complex corruption cases, including illicit arms trade, and cases of serious human rights violations and abuses perpetrated by gangs, including killings, sexual violence, kidnappings, and child trafficking. The note said that UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk urges the Haitian authorities to promptly implement the units in accordance with international human rights law and best practices, with the support of the international community.

## Key Issues and Options

The Security Council's overarching objective in Haiti is to support the restoration of security, the country's political transition, and efforts to address the root causes of instability.

Secretary General António Guterres, several Council members, and analysts have emphasised that security responses alone will not be sufficient to sustainably reduce violence in Haiti. An option would be for Council members to express their views on the Secretary-General's DDR options during July's briefing on Haiti, including whether they intend to contribute to the multi-partner trust fund for DDR.

An additional issue for the Security Council is how to ensure it receives comprehensive and timely information on the GSF's deployment, oversight arrangements, and operational conduct. Resolution 2793 requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council on the implementation of the resolution as part of his regular reporting on Haiti. The resolution also requested the GSF Special Representative, "in coordination with the government of Haiti and the UN,

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## Haiti

to keep the Security Council abreast of relevant developments”. An option would be for Council members to regularly invite Christofides to brief the Council on such issues as deployment levels, cooperation protocols being established between the GSF and national security forces, and measures to prevent the excessive use of force.

In 2025, the UN received four allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) involving personnel from the MSS mission. All four allegations were substantiated by investigations conducted by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Members could ask Christofides to brief on measures to prevent SEA involving GSF personnel.

### Council Dynamics

Council members are united in their concern about Haiti’s multidimensional crisis and generally agree on the need to tackle escalating gang violence and its impact on the Haitian population. Views also

converge on the continuing need for a sanctions regime and the importance of a Haitian-led political solution that addresses both security and socioeconomic challenges. At the same time, positions differ among Council members on how to appropriately respond to the security situation in Haiti.

The US was the main architect of the transition from the MSS mission to the GSF. China and Russia broke silence during the negotiation of resolution 2793 and, together with Pakistan, abstained in the vote, citing concerns about issues such as rules of engagement, sources of funding, troop composition, oversight, and accountability. While these concerns were shared by many other members, other Council members opted for negotiating the inclusion of language on human rights, child protection, and Haitian sovereignty into the text in an attempt to mitigate these concerns.

Panama and the US are the co-penholders on Haiti.

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## Natural Resources

### Expected Council Action

In July, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) will convene a high-level open debate on the theme “Natural resource governance: the foundation of peace, security and prosperity” under the “Maintenance of international peace and security” agenda item. DRC’s President Félix Tshisekedi is expected to chair the meeting, which is one of the signature events of the DRC’s July presidency. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and a civil society representative are the anticipated briefers.

### Key Recent Developments

Over the years, the Council has explored the link between natural resources and insecurity both as a thematic topic and in the context of country-specific or regional files. More recently, the US convened a briefing on “Energy, critical minerals, and security” under the “Maintenance of international peace and security” agenda item as a signature event of its March presidency. US Secretary of Energy Chris Wright chaired the meeting, and Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo briefed. (For more information, see our 4 March *What’s in Blue* story.)

In July 2025, then-Council member Sierra Leone convened an Arria-formula meeting titled “The Global Race for Critical Minerals: Addressing Resource-Driven Insecurity in Africa”, with the objective of strengthening international awareness of the link between critical minerals and insecurity in Africa and identifying actionable policy measures to address the issue. (For more information, see our 8 July 2025 *What’s in Blue* story.)

In October 2021, Kenya convened a ministerial-level debate on the Great Lakes region that explored ways of curbing the illegal exploitation and trade of natural resources. The outcome of the meeting was the adoption of a presidential statement proposed by the Kenyan presidency, which recognised the adverse effects of the

illegal exploitation and trade in natural resources in fuelling and exacerbating conflict in the region. (For more information, see our 19 October 2021 *What’s in Blue* story.)

Several sanctions committees established to monitor implementation of sanctions measures imposed by the Council—for example, the 2713 Al-Shabaab Sanctions Committee, the 2745 Central African Republic (CAR) Sanctions Committee, the 1718 Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) Sanctions Committee, the 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee, the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee, and the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee—include listing criteria linking the exploitation of natural resources and insecurity. Panels of Experts assisting the work of many of these committees provide insights into the impact of illegal natural resource exploitation in fuelling conflicts.

The 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee, which devotes considerable attention to the issue of natural resource exploitation, has held informal consultations on “DRC-mined gold, tantalum and tungsten: illicit trading in DRC and internationally” on two occasions, on 30 July 2021 and 3 June 2024. The Group of Experts assisting the 1533 DRC Sanctions Committee also regularly covers the illegal exploitation of natural resources in its periodic reports to the sanctions committee and issues recommendations for addressing the problem, including in its most recent final report submitted to the committee in June.

### Key Issues and Options

Enhancing natural resource governance, particularly as a means of addressing resource-driven conflicts, is a key issue for Council members. In this connection, efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of various national, regional, and international mechanisms, such as the Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON NATURAL RESOURCES** Security Council Presidential Statements S/PRST/2021/19 (20 October 2021) was regarding the situation in the Great Lakes region. S/PRST/2007/22 (25 June 2007) was on natural resources and conflict. Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.10114 (5 March 2026) was on energy, critical minerals, and security.

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## Natural Resources

Development (OECD) and the Regional Certification Mechanism of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)—designed to curb the illegal exploitation of natural resources, have been a recurring theme in Council discussions on some country-specific and regional files. One possible option for the DRC, which currently holds the rotating presidency of the ICGLR, is to invite the ICGLR Executive Secretary to brief on the region’s experience in addressing the nexus between natural resources and conflict.

In its past resolutions and presidential statements, the Council has also emphasised the important contribution that voluntary principles and standards, such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), play in encouraging the private sector to adopt responsible business practices and promote the lawful, transparent, and sustainable management and exploitation of natural resources. However, across different conflict zones, armed groups continue to fuel violence and instability by engaging in illicit exploitation of natural resources, taking advantage of gaps in implementing existing regional and international mechanisms.

Enhancing the effectiveness of sanctions measures in curbing the illegal exploitation of natural resources remains an ongoing issue for Council members. Panels of Experts assisting sanctions committees could provide recommendations for strengthening transparency and ensuring traceability, certification, and responsible sourcing throughout supply chains. However, efforts to implement these recommendations require consensus among Council members, which at times could be difficult to achieve because of divergent views over the scope and application of sanctions measures. The fact that sanctions committees are currently operating only on a limited basis due to the lack of agreement on the appointment of chairs of subsidiary bodies may have also constrained Council members’ ability to address the issue effectively.

Another issue is how to integrate natural resources management into conflict prevention strategies and ensure sustainable recovery and peacebuilding. In this regard, the Council could benefit from the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), which has given particular attention to this issue as part of broader efforts to address the root causes and structural drivers of conflict.

Another possible option for the DRC is to pursue a Council

product in due course, building on previous resolutions and presidential statements as well as the discussions during the open debate and other meetings planned during the month.

### Council and Wider Dynamics

Council members appear to be broadly supportive of addressing the linkage between natural resources and conflict. They also recognise the need to tackle the root causes and structural drivers of conflict, including by curbing the illegal exploitation of natural resources, which continue to serve as a source of revenue for armed groups operating across various conflict settings.

Recently, there has been heightened attention around the issue of natural resources in the Council in the context of current geopolitical dynamics. Major powers are competing to secure a steady supply of natural resources, particularly critical minerals, which are essential raw materials for clean energy, electronic technology, national defence, and aerospace industries. It appears that securing critical mineral supply chains has become a central focus of US diplomatic engagement.

The DRC is believed to possess significant reserves of critical minerals and plays a central role in global supply chains, attracting the attention of major powers and multinational corporations. In December 2025, the US and the DRC signed a bilateral strategic partnership agreement after the DRC government offered the US a deal that would allow it to secure critical minerals in the DRC in exchange for US support in the government’s fight against the *Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23)* rebel group in eastern DRC. The DRC, a country that has been at the intersection of natural resources exploitation and insecurity for decades, appears to have made the issue of natural resource governance a priority during its 2026–2027 tenure on the Security Council. It is likely to continue highlighting the issue in the context of the unfolding developments in the eastern part of the country and the broader Great Lakes region, where the illegal exploitation of natural resources continues to fuel conflict and exacerbate regional tensions.

In July, the DRC also intends to convene an Arria-formula meeting under the theme, “Assessment of the normative gap regarding natural resources and peace: foundations and prospects”. The meeting is expected to be chaired by the DRC’s Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Francophonie Thérèse Kayikwamba Wagner.

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## Syria

### Expected Council Action

In July, the Security Council is expected to hold its monthly meeting on political and humanitarian developments in Syria. Deputy Special Envoy for Syria Claudio Cordone and a representative from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) are expected to brief.

### Key Recent Developments

The Syrian interim government—led by President Ahmed al-Sharaa—has continued its efforts to insulate Syria from regional volatility in the Middle East, as it steers the country through the transitional period.

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON SYRIA** [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2025/6](#) (10 August 2025) condemned violence against civilians in Suweida in July 2025, called for unhindered humanitarian access to the region, and called on the Syrian interim authorities to ensure accountability. [Security Council Press Statement SC/16293](#) (12 February 2026) welcomed the comprehensive agreement between Syria and the SDF regarding the integration of northeast Syria, and Syria’s commitment and actions to counter ISIL/Da’esh and Al-Qaida. [Security Council Meeting Records S/PV.10178](#) (22 June 2026) was a meeting on political and humanitarian developments in Syria. [Other S/2026/257](#) (31 March 2026) was a report of a visiting mission to Lebanon and Syria, which took place from 3 to 7 December 2025.

# Syria

Despite the 14 June announcement of a memorandum of understanding consolidating the Iran-US ceasefire, Hezbollah and Israel continued exchanging strikes in Lebanon, complicating efforts to end the Israeli-US war with Iran. On 16 June, US President Donald Trump suggested that Syria assume responsibility for confronting Hezbollah in Lebanon, an idea Washington has reportedly promoted since March. Sharaa has repeatedly rejected military intervention, stating in a 21 June interview that Syria seeks only to support Lebanon and deepen economic integration, while remaining open to dialogue with Hezbollah if it serves Lebanese stability. The following day, Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam reportedly praised Sharaa's position in a call with Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani.

In southern Syria, Damascus continues to face challenges to its own sovereignty and territorial integrity. On 15 June, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that Israeli forces would remain in Lebanese and Syrian territory, areas it characterises as “security zones”. The Secretary-General's 2 June quarterly report on the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), covering 14 February to 14 May, and media reports, indicate that Israel has established positions in Syrian territory beyond the ceasefire line and buffer zone established by the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement between the two countries, conducting hundreds of incursions since December 2024. At the Council's 22 June monthly briefing on Syria, the country's Permanent Representative Ibrahim Olabi said Netanyahu's “statement confirms that Israel is the main obstacle to stability in Syria”. On 25 June, the Council unanimously renewed UNDOF's mandate until 31 December. (For more information, see our 19 June *What's in Blue story* on Syria and the brief on UNDOF in our June 2026 *Monthly Forecast*.)

The situation in Suweida governorate is also fuelling insecurity in southern Syria and poses a threat to the country's unity. Briefing the Council on 22 June, Cordone reported that there had been no progress on implementing the September 2025 Suweida roadmap—announced by Jordan, Syria, and the US—which aims to build confidence between authorities in Damascus and Druze actors in Suweida and to eventually reintegrate the governorate under Damascus' control. He noted that distrust between the actors persists, while calls for secession, internal rivalries among Druze factions, and violence continue to impact the governorate.

In contrast, developments in northeast Syria suggest continued implementation of the 29 January agreement between the Syrian government and the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). In his briefing, Cordone noted that four SDF brigades have been integrated into the national armed forces and are “receiving salaries through national structures”. He also said approximately 1,300 SDF-affiliated detainees have been released, and displaced Kurdish families have started to return to their homes. At the same time, he said that challenges persist, including: the integration of Asayish personnel—the Kurdish internal security and police forces—into the Ministry of Interior; “the future status of the Women's Protection Units; integration of the civilian administration; and the education curriculum”.

The threat posed by terrorism in Syria remains acute. In June, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) claimed several attacks—including in Aleppo, Raqqa, and rural Damascus—which resulted in the deaths of Syrian security personnel and injuries to several others. For its part, Syria has taken significant steps towards

countering the threat posed by ISIL. The Ministry of Interior conducted a three-month counter-terrorism campaign, which led to the dismantling of several cells, the arrest of 235 ISIL operatives, and the seizure of weapons and explosives.

Syria is also facing challenges on transitional justice. In the first half of June, protests calling for accountability for crimes committed under the former government led by Bashar al-Assad erupted across several cities, with some reportedly escalating into mob violence against minorities and individuals associated with the former government. On 15 June, the Syrian interior ministry confirmed that it had arrested nearly 6,000 former regime members, including senior officers. At the 22 June Council meeting, Cordone highlighted the importance of the draft transitional justice law being developed by the National Commission for Transitional Justice and the Ministry of Justice, stressing that to be credible it must address atrocity crimes committed by all parties—not only the former government—and fully account for the experiences of women and survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).

The Secretary-General's latest annual report on children and armed conflict, dated 16 June and covering developments in 2025, noted that the UN had verified 1,374 grave violations against 1,281 children in Syria. (For more information on the grave violations, see the Secretary-General's full report.) Syrian parties that have committed grave violations against children included Syrian government forces, Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the SDF, and the Syrian National Army (SNA)—a former opposition armed group. The report clarified that “most grave violations attributed to Syrian government forces occurred before the formal establishment of the current Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on 29 March 2025” and expressed concern that members of the SNA and HTS have been integrated into Syria's forces. It further noted that Damascus has committed to ensuring that children are not integrated into its forces, to preventing recruitment, and to ensuring that violators of children's rights are held accountable. It also welcomed the government's commitment to engage on a plan to end and prevent grave violations against children and its prioritisation of decontamination and clearance of explosive remnants of war, which are killing and maiming children at alarming rates.

Also briefing the Council on 22 June, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Indrika Ratwatte noted that while there are signs of progress towards recovery, humanitarian needs remain acute and conditions for sustainable returns are uneven across the country. He highlighted that the Euphrates flooding at the end of May affected over 17,600 people, damaging farmland and critical infrastructure. He also noted that conditions in Quneitra and Suweida southern governorates remain particularly fragile. Ratwatte warned that the \$2.92 billion 2026 humanitarian appeal is only 20 percent funded, and called on Council members to sustain flexible funding, support Syria's transition beyond emergency aid, and invest in longer-term recovery and reconstruction.

## Women, Peace and Security

The annual report of the Secretary-General on CRSV, which was circulated to Council members on 28 May, addresses cases of abductions followed by rape and forced marriage, including against Alawite women, and allegations

# Syria

of abductions of Druze and Bedouin women and sexual violence perpetrated against them by armed elements in 2025.

The report states that, following the release of thousands of people from detention facilities after Assad's ouster, the UN documented "multi-year patterns" of rape and sexual violence, including as a form of torture, perpetrated under the regime against detainees as young as 11 years old. The report also refers to sexual violence incidents against four girls perpetrated between October 2022 and December 2024 by Da'esh and the SNA. Additionally, it notes that at least three appointees to the Syrian Armed Forces "have reportedly been implicated in recent or past human rights violations against minorities" in the context of which CRSV "allegedly occurred".

In his recommendations, the Secretary-General called upon the Syrian government to ensure accountability for CRSV crimes within the transitional justice framework and to engage with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, on prevention, protection, and assistance measures for survivors.

## Key Issues and Options

A key issue for the Council is ensuring that Syria's interim government pursues a credible, transparent, and inclusive political transition while navigating a fraught security context compounded by intercommunal tensions, terrorism, and external interference. By maintaining a united position anchored in the principles of resolution 2254, Council members could encourage the Syrian government to make concrete progress on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR); security sector reform (SSR); transitional justice; and social cohesion—including through accountability and reconciliation processes.

A related issue is how the Council should respond to continued violations of the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement and Israel's military presence in and beyond the areas of separation.

To address the many-faceted challenges facing Syria, the Council could consider adopting a presidential statement calling for full respect for Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity, including through adherence to the 1974 Disengagement Agreement and a cessation of Israeli military activity in Syrian territory. Such a statement could also encourage progress on the SDF integration agreement and the Suweida roadmap, urge Damascus to strengthen independent accountability mechanisms, and meaningfully engage victims and civil society on transitional justice—including on CRSV. It could also call for enhanced financial support to address humanitarian needs and long-term recovery.

The Council could also consider encouraging the engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on the Syria file. The PBC's convening role and its capacity to mobilise sustained, coordinated international support for countries navigating fragile transitions could be of value at this juncture. Council members, in close collaboration with Syria, could consider the possibility of requesting written advice from the PBC ahead of the Council meetings on how best to support the country's transition.

An additional issue is how to sustain international support for humanitarian assistance and early recovery. Council members could consider an informal interactive dialogue with relevant UN entities and international financial institutions, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to discuss how international support can be better coordinated to address Syria's humanitarian needs and support early recovery.

The UN's future role in Syria is another key issue. Council members could maintain support for an expedited agreement on Cordone's office relocating to Damascus and enhancing cooperation with the Syrian government, given the importance of a meaningful UN presence in supporting the political transition. They could also press for progress on appointing a Special Envoy following Geir O. Pedersen's October 2025 resignation.

## Council Dynamics

Council members are broadly aligned on the need for the Syrian authorities to advance an inclusive, Syrian-owned and Syrian-led political process based on the key principles of resolution 2254. They broadly agree that the threat of intercommunal violence cannot be addressed without progress on DDR, SSR, and transitional justice, alongside a credible political process. The Council's December 2025 visit to Damascus and its decisions to delist Sharaa, Syria's interior minister Anas Khattab, and HTS from the 1267/1989/2253 ISIL and Al-Qaida sanctions list signalled unified support for Syria's interim government and the overall transition following years of deep divisions on the file.

Furthermore, several Council members have taken steps to normalise bilateral relations with Syria and to support its recovery. High-level officials of the Syrian government have visited all the capitals of the Council's five permanent members. The European Union's 11 May decision to fully resume its 1978 cooperation agreement with Syria and open talks on stronger economic and security ties is likely to translate into European Council members' growing support for the transition.

External threats to Syria's security are also reflected in Council dynamics. Fighting between Hezbollah and Israel in Lebanon continues to pose a proximate security issue for Syria. Trump's suggestion that Syria take on responsibility for confronting Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Sharaa's firm rejection of military intervention, have highlighted a divergence between Washington's expectations—as it continues to cultivate positive bilateral relations with Damascus—and Syria's stated priorities.

Meanwhile, Israel's continued presence in southern Syria is an area of some divergence. While the Council voted unanimously to renew UNDOF's mandate on 25 June, members differ in how strongly they are willing to call for an Israeli withdrawal, with western members tending towards more measured language, while China, Pakistan, and Russia are more likely to condemn Israeli actions in stronger terms. Overall, Council members have so far managed to keep Syria-specific discussions relatively separate from regional tensions, in part due to Syria's efforts to insulate itself from the escalation.

Many Council members agree on the need for the Syrian interim government to take decisive measures to address the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) and ISIL/Da'esh. China has been particularly vocal in calling on Damascus to take a stronger stance on FTF in the country, some of whom have reportedly been integrated into the Syrian armed forces. Several FTF constitute part of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement, which China considers a terrorist organisation and is also listed under the ISIL/Da'esh and Al-Qaida sanctions regime.

# Conflict Prevention and Peaceful Resolution of Disputes

## Expected Council Action

In July, the Security Council will convene an open debate on “Strengthening the mechanisms for peaceful settlement of disputes”. The meeting will take place a year after the Council’s high-level open debate on “Promoting International Peace and Security through Multilateralism and Peaceful Settlement of Disputes”, which Pakistan convened during its July 2025 presidency. At that session, the Council adopted resolution 2788 of 22 July, authored by Pakistan, which requested the Secretary-General to provide, one year following the adoption of the resolution, concrete recommendations to further strengthen mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Secretary-General António Guterres is the anticipated briefer.

## Background and Key Recent Developments

Resolution 2788 was adopted against the backdrop of a deteriorating global peace and security landscape. According to the 2026 Global Peace Index (GPI), global peacefulness declined for the twelfth consecutive year in 2025, with armed conflict remaining the principal driver. The report noted more active state-based conflicts than at any point since the Second World War. In addition, 103 countries had been involved in an external conflict between 2021 and 2025, up from 59 recorded in the 2008 GPI for the preceding five-year period.

The unanimous adoption of resolution 2788 was therefore seen as a timely reaffirmation of the Council’s commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. The resolution urged member states to make greater use of mediation, negotiation, arbitration, judicial settlement, and other peaceful mechanisms. It also encouraged stronger preventive diplomacy, enhanced cooperation between the UN and regional organisations, greater support for the Secretary-General’s good offices and mediation capacity, and more inclusive conflict prevention efforts involving women and youth.

Since then, the need to make better use of Chapter VI tools has been reiterated on several occasions. At a 27 April open debate on the safety and protection of waterways in the maritime domain, convened under Bahrain’s presidency, many member states stressed that the escalating crisis in the Strait of Hormuz underscored the importance of dialogue, preventive diplomacy, and the peaceful settlement of disputes in addressing threats to international peace and security. During the open debate, Guterres argued that the crisis in the Strait of Hormuz required “restraint, dialogue, and confidence-building” and that “the way forward is through peaceful settlement, drawing on Articles 33 and 34 of Chapter VI of the UN Charter”.

At a 26 May high-level open debate on upholding the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and strengthening the UN-centred international system, convened under China’s presidency, many member states reaffirmed the importance of the Charter’s principles, respect for international law, and the peaceful settlement of disputes amid growing geopolitical tensions. Guterres stressed that member states must invest more in conflict prevention, including by pursuing peaceful means of settling disputes, as urged by the Council in resolution 2788.

On 10 June, the Council held a high-level open debate titled “Advancing Political Solutions in the Middle East: Mediation and Dialogue for Lasting Peace” under Colombia’s presidency. Referring

to resolution 2788, Guterres reminded member states that the Council had urged them to make greater use of the peaceful means of dispute settlement set out in Chapter VI, stressing that the conflicts in the Middle East could not be resolved through military means but required political solutions, dialogue, and diplomacy. He added that the UN stood ready to support such efforts through its good offices. In his remarks, Guterres expressed gratitude to Pakistan, which mediated an agreement in an effort to end the US-Iran war, for its “active mediation” in the Gulf crisis.

The Council has also continued to support the use of Chapter VI tools through renewals of Special Political Mission (SPM) mandates and regular briefings by the Secretary-General’s Special Representatives (SRSGs) and Personal and Special Envoys on preventive diplomacy, good offices, mediation, confidence-building, political dialogue, and other related measures in a range of conflict-affected settings. For decades, these mechanisms have been the UN’s principal instruments for the peaceful settlement of disputes. However, in his May 2026 UN80 Progress Report, Guterres cautioned that multiplying conflicts, deepening geopolitical divisions, and growing impunity for violations of international law were increasingly constraining the effectiveness of these preventive tools by narrowing the political space for mediation and diplomacy. He indicated that the ongoing review of UN peace operations would propose updated approaches to SPMs and other political instruments to better respond to today’s conflict landscape, leaving it to the General Assembly and the Security Council to determine how such proposals should be taken forward.

## Key Issues and Options

A central issue for the Security Council is how to move from rhetorical support for preventive diplomacy to ensuring more consistent use of the Council’s Chapter VI powers. Resolution 2788 represents a laudable effort to operationalise the commitments contained in Action 16 of the 2024 Pact for the Future, but it faces many of the same implementation challenges that have historically constrained UN preventive diplomacy, including inconsistent political support for the use of Chapter VI powers. The gap between adopted Council resolutions and their implementation was the focus of an Arria-formula meeting convened by China and Pakistan on 23 June. During the meeting, member states underscored the importance of sustained political commitment, effective follow-up, and oversight to translate Council resolutions into action. In the context of resolution 2788, this suggests that implementation would benefit from regular Council reporting and follow-up beyond the Secretary-General’s anticipated briefing in July.

Another important issue for the Council is ensuring effective early warning. While resolution 2788 emphasises the importance of early warning in preventive diplomacy, the Council has long been unable to translate this commitment into consistent practice. Over the years, Council members have tried various informal briefing formats, such as situational awareness briefings and horizon-scanning sessions, to facilitate discreet discussion of emerging risks before they escalate. More recently, such briefings have been regularly organised by the E10. However, these initiatives often lapse owing to concerns among

**UN DOCUMENTS ON CONFLICT PREVENTION** [Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2788](#) (22 July 2025) was a resolution urging member states to effectively utilise the UN Charter’s mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes, including negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and judicial settlement. [S/RES/2805](#) (26 November 2025) was a concurrent resolution with the General Assembly on the review of the UN peacebuilding architecture.

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## Conflict Prevention and Peaceful Resolution of Disputes

some members that they could pave the way for these issues to be added to the Council's formal agenda. Council members may wish to consider ways of ensuring greater frequency and consistency in the convening of early-warning briefings. They may also wish to develop evidence-based risk criteria, thereby reducing perceptions of selectivity while preserving needed flexibility.

More recently, Council members have developed informal visiting missions as an alternative means of early engagement. Unlike official Security Council missions, which require consensus and UN funding, these visits are organised and financed by individual member states or groups of members. In a politically divided Council, this represents a pragmatic innovation. The Council may wish to consider continuing this and other informal consultation practices that enable members to gather first-hand information, engage with relevant stakeholders and encourage dialogue in the spirit of Articles 33 and 34 in contexts where formal Council action is not feasible.

A related challenge concerns the functioning of the Council's sanctions committees. Political deadlock over the annual allocation of subsidiary body chairs has delayed the work of these committees, limiting opportunities for chairs to engage directly with affected states and undertake visits that provide valuable first-hand information on the implementation and humanitarian impact of sanctions. Council members may wish to consider procedural arrangements that facilitate the timely appointment of subsidiary body chairs so that these bodies can continue to perform their monitoring, information-gathering, and preventive functions without interruption.

At a time when global military spending continues to soar, projected to more than double—from \$2.7 trillion in 2024 to an astonishing \$6.6 trillion by 2035 if current trends persist—a key issue for the Council is how to ensure that the UN is adequately equipped to lead preventive diplomacy and support the peaceful settlement of disputes. During the extrabudgetary donor meeting of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) on 16 June, Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo explained that a decline for the third consecutive year in DPPA's extrabudgetary funding, which supports, among other preventive initiatives, a standby team of senior mediation advisers and related backstopping functions at UN Headquarters, has had tangible consequences. She presented a \$44 million target for 2026 with a current gap of \$23

million. Council members may wish to encourage greater support for DPPA's funding appeal, recognising its role in the implementation of resolution 2788.

Council members may also wish to consider ways of promoting strengthened cooperation with regional and sub-regional organisations and local actors, recognising their comparative advantages in early engagement and preventive diplomacy. Such partnerships, envisaged in both the Pact for the Future and resolution 2788, offer a cost-effective means of strengthening the implementation of preventive mandates. The forthcoming annual joint consultative meeting with the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC), scheduled to take place in New York in October, offers an opportunity to deepen such discussions. Members may wish to discuss these issues in a more informal setting, such as the informal seminar held alongside the 2024 consultative meeting.

Equally important is stronger cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) as called for by the twin resolutions on the 2025 Peacebuilding Architecture Review (PBAR), particularly in situations where the PBC's complementary role can help sustain attention and engagement beyond what the Council, given the demands on its agenda, is able to provide.

### Council Dynamics

While Council members agree that the peaceful settlement of disputes is central to the Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security, divisions persist over how rigorously the Council should promote dispute-settlement mechanisms. Some members underscore strict respect for state sovereignty and insist that any mediation must have explicit consent from the parties, while others argue that the Council has a responsibility to encourage or even recommend recourse to third-party mediation or arbitration when disputes risk escalation, even if one party is initially reluctant.

There are also differing views on follow-up to resolution 2788. Some members are willing to support regular reporting as a way to sustain attention, assess implementation, and ensure that the Council's renewed emphasis on Chapter VI translates into practice. Others are more cautious about institutionalising a regular reporting cycle, raising concerns about the budgetary implications of new reporting requirements.

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## The Middle East, including the Palestinian Question

### Expected Council Action

In July, the Security Council will hold its quarterly open debate on "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question" (MEPQ). The expected briefer is Deputy Special Coordinator and Resident Coordinator at the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) Ramiz Alakbarov.

### Key Recent Developments

July's meeting will take place eight months after the adoption of resolution 2803 of 17 November 2025, which endorsed the US-brokered "Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict". The peace framework established the current ceasefire in Gaza, secured the release of all hostages, and endorsed the Board of Peace (BoP)—chaired by US President Donald Trump—as a

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION** Security Council Resolutions S/RES/2803 (17 November 2025) endorsed the "Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict", welcoming the establishment of a Board of Peace (BoP) and authorising the BoP to establish a temporary International Stabilization Force (ISF) in Gaza. The resolution received 13 votes in favour and two abstentions (China and Russia). S/RES/2334 (23 December 2016) condemned Israeli settlements and called for immediate steps to prevent violence against civilians, including acts of terror. It was adopted with 14 votes in favour and a US abstention. Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.10177 (18 June 2026) was a meeting on "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question". Security Council Letter S/2026/418 (15 May 2026) was a letter from the Permanent Representative of the US addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the first biannual report of the BoP, submitted pursuant to resolution 2803 of 17 November 2025.

## The Middle East, including the Palestinian Question

“transitional governance administration” in the enclave. It also authorised the deployment of an International Stabilization Force (ISF) to monitor the ceasefire and oversee other commitments under the Comprehensive Plan, including Hamas’ disarmament and the withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

On 15 May, the BoP submitted its first biannual report on the implementation of resolution 2803, covering the period from 17 November 2025 to 14 May 2026. The report presented the Gaza ceasefire, the return of all hostages, and increased humanitarian assistance as significant achievements, while asserting that Hamas’ refusal to decommission its weapons and “permit a genuine civilian transition in Gaza” was the principal obstacle to fully implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Hamas has reportedly rejected disarmament proposals because it considers Israel in breach of its own ceasefire obligations by continuing hostilities in Gaza and maintaining restrictions on humanitarian aid.

A central element of the BoP report—and of BoP High Representative to Gaza Nickolay Mladenov’s 21 May briefing to the Council—was a 15-point roadmap that Mladenov and the guarantor states (Egypt, Qatar, Türkiye, and the US) have presented to the parties. It recognises the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG)—the local governing body comprising Palestinian technocrats established in January under BoP oversight—as the sole legitimate transitional authority and requires Hamas to cease all military, policing, and administrative activity under the principle of “one authority, one law and one weapon”. The roadmap’s core provision is the phased, internationally verified decommissioning of Hamas’ weapons, matched by a staged withdrawal of the IDF to Gaza’s perimeter and reconstruction in certified decommissioned areas. According to the report, talks on the roadmap had not been finalised by the end of the reporting period, and the NCAG has been unable to enter Gaza, although it has prepared the transition’s administrative architecture and vetted civilian police candidates, which Egypt is expected to train.

Regarding the ISF, the report notes personnel pledges from Albania, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, and Morocco; a site survey completed in late April; and phased deployment “anticipated” but conditioned on progress in decommissioning Hamas’ weapons. At the time of writing, media reports indicated that Greece had also agreed to participate, and that a small number of Moroccan planning officers had arrived in Israel to join ISF planning—a tentative operational step for a force whose deployment has otherwise stalled. The report estimates first-year humanitarian needs in Gaza at roughly \$3.1 billion and cites \$17 billion in reconstruction pledges, against recovery needs that the UN, EU, and World Bank have jointly assessed at \$71.4 billion.

Despite the ceasefire, hostilities in Gaza have continued and the humanitarian situation remains dire. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), citing local health authorities, more than 1,000 Palestinians had been killed since the ceasefire was announced on 10 October 2025. Nearly all of Gaza’s 2.1 million people remain displaced and are being compressed into increasingly limited spaces by repeated expansions of the territory held by Israel: in late April, the IDF reportedly issued maps showing that they controlled 64 percent of the territory, having

advanced past the initial “yellow line” demarcating the approximately 50 percent of Gaza’s territory that Israel was allowed to hold during the first phase of the ceasefire. On 28 May, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered the IDF to seize control of 70 percent of the enclave.

Humanitarian operations have been further strained by fuel shortages, border closures, and persistent restrictions on the entry of certain goods, including items considered “dual use”. In May, the Israeli High Court upheld new registration requirements that Israeli authorities had introduced in 2025 for international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) operating in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). Several dozen aid groups, including Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and Oxfam, had refused to comply with the new measures—which include a requirement to submit complete staff lists to Israeli authorities—contending that they violate humanitarian principles. Israel subsequently revoked their licences, citing security concerns. The Court, which had previously issued a temporary injunction suspending enforcement of the new measures, gave the de-licensed organisations 30 days to comply with the new screening protocols or cease operations.

On 18 June, at the request of the Council’s ten elected members, the Council held a briefing on the humanitarian situation in Gaza (S/PV.10177). At that meeting, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Tom Fletcher acknowledged certain improvements in the humanitarian situation following the ceasefire but emphasised that needs remain immense and that persistent challenges continue to constrain the response, warning that Gaza is being held together by “humanitarian workarounds”. He also noted that the UN’s OPT Flash Appeal was only 24 percent funded.

Meanwhile, the situation in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continues to deteriorate. In past months, the territory has seen increasing settler violence and settlement expansion, deteriorating economic conditions, and the imposition of administrative measures deepening Israeli control over the territory. On 4 June, at Bahrain’s request, Council members convened for closed consultations to discuss these developments. In that session, it seems that nearly all Council members expressed concern that Israel’s actions in the West Bank—which observers have described as a policy of “de facto annexation”—were jeopardising the viability of the two-state solution. The US, however, apparently blocked draft press elements affirming the Council’s opposition to annexation, despite reiterating its own opposition in this regard. On 29 June, the Council held its quarterly meeting on the implementation of resolution 2334 of 23 December 2016, which demanded that Israel cease all settlement activity in the OPT and called for immediate steps to prevent violence against civilians.

The developments in the OPT have unfolded against a shifting regional backdrop. On 17 June, the US and Iran signed an interim agreement to end the war that began with joint US–Israeli strikes in February and Iran’s subsequent retaliation against the region. Among other provisions, the memorandum of understanding (MoU) provided for the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, a waiver of US sanctions on Iranian oil, and a 60-day negotiating period on a final agreement on Iran’s nuclear programme, as well as a cessation of

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## The Middle East, including the Palestinian Question

hostilities in Lebanon, where Israel has occupied territory and conducted large-scale military operations targeting Hezbollah. On 21 June in Switzerland, Iran and the US held the first round of negotiations on the final agreement anticipated by the MoU. The countries subsequently exchanged limited strikes, however, and the status of negotiations remained unclear at the time of writing.

### Key Issues and Options

An underlying concern for Security Council members and the broader international community is that the regional crisis in the Middle East—now in a fragile de-escalation phase—will continue to draw attention away from the Palestinian question, even as developments in Gaza and the West Bank erode the prospects for a two-state solution.

With regard to Gaza, a central issue is how to translate the strained ceasefire into tangible progress toward the second phase of the Comprehensive Plan, which remains stalled. Eight months after the adoption of resolution 2803, the interlocking steps that it envisaged—the decommissioning of Hamas’ weapons, the deployment of the ISF, a phased IDF withdrawal, and the eventual transfer of authority to a reformed Palestinian Authority (PA)—have yet to advance. Questions also persist over the benchmarks for the transition and the process by which the PA will assume its governing responsibilities.

With the BoP’s next biannual report not due until November, Council members could request more regular briefings from the BoP, the ISF, or other actors involved in implementation. They could also respond to the requests that the BoP directed to the Council in its May report, including calling on member states to accelerate the disbursement of pledged funds to the transitional structures. Members could additionally consider a visiting mission to the OPT to conduct more assertive oversight of the implementation of resolution 2803 and its other decisions related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including resolution 2334.

A related issue is the persistent humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the constrained operating environment for relief efforts amid continued insecurity and access restrictions. With the UN’s OPT Flash Appeal only a quarter funded, members could press for unimpeded humanitarian access and the removal of obstacles to the work of UN agencies and INGOs, while encouraging contributions to recovery and reconstruction.

The deterioration in the occupied West Bank is another pressing issue. For many members, settlement expansion, settler violence, and

Israeli administrative measures reinforce the view that an approach focused narrowly on Gaza will be insufficient unless it is tied to a credible political horizon that preserves the unity of the OPT and the viability of the two-state solution. Council members could use the open debate to reiterate opposition to unilateral measures, call for compliance with international law, and stress that transitional arrangements for Gaza should not deepen the fragmentation of Palestinian governance or territory. They could also encourage closer alignment between the implementation of resolution 2803 and other multilateral frameworks, including the New York Declaration that the General Assembly endorsed in September 2025.

### Council Dynamics

The adoption of resolution 2803 marked a rare moment of convergence in the Council, driven by broad regional backing for the US-brokered Comprehensive Plan and the priority that many members placed on consolidating the Gaza ceasefire. Eight months on, that convergence has given way to more familiar divisions over the pace and direction of implementation. Members continue to support preserving the ceasefire, sustaining humanitarian access, and advancing the transitional framework, but the US diverges from the rest of the Council on where responsibility for the stalemate lies and on how assertively the Council should engage to preserve the territorial integrity of the OPT and the long-term prospects for a two-state solution.

The US, as penholder for resolution 2803 and chair of the BoP, has emphasised Hamas’ refusal to disarm as the principal obstacle to progress and has been protective of the framework that it brokered. As Israel’s closest ally on the Council, it has also continued to oppose products that it perceives as critical of the country, including by blocking the proposed draft press elements on the West Bank during the 4 June consultations.

Most other members stress that implementation of the Comprehensive Plan cannot rest on Palestinian obligations alone, pointing to Israel’s continued military expansion and humanitarian restrictions. They also continue to express grave concern about accelerating settlement expansion in the West Bank, emphasising Palestinian self-determination, the centrality of the PA, and the unity of the OPT. At July’s open debate, China and Russia in particular—the two members that abstained on resolution 2803—may maintain their criticism of what they regard as selective or imbalanced Council engagement through the transitional structures that the resolution endorsed.

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## Central African Republic

### Expected Council Action

In July, the Security Council is expected to vote to extend the 2745 sanctions regime, which expires at the end of the month, and renew the mandate of the Panel of Experts supporting the 2745 Sanctions Committee, which expires on 31 August.

### Key Recent Developments

On 23 June, Special Representative and Head of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) Valentine Rugwabiza briefed the Council, focusing on recent political developments in the CAR since the Council’s last meeting on this file in February. These include the

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**UN DOCUMENTS ON THE CAR** Security Council Resolution S/RES/2800 (13 November 2025) renewed the MINUSCA mandate. S/RES/2789 (29 July 2025) extended the sanctions measures imposed on armed groups operating in the CAR until 31 July, and the mandate of the Panel of Experts monitoring the implementation of these measures until 31 August. **Security Council Meeting Record S/PV.10181** (23 June 2026) was on the situation in the CAR. **Secretary General’s Report S/2026/494** (15 June 2026) was a report on the CAR.

# Central African Republic

completion of the country's combined local, legislative, and presidential elections; the inauguration of President Faustin-Archange Touadéra; the formation of a new government; and the installation of a new legislature. (For more information, see our 22 June *What's in Blue* story.)

Following the conclusion of the national electoral processes, MINUSCA is undergoing a reconfiguration “to evolve gradually towards a phase of supporting the Central African authorities in order to consolidate the gains made in terms of security, peace, access, and State authority”, according to a 6 May briefing by the mission's spokesperson. The mission has prioritised facilitating the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants from two armed groups—the *Retour, Réclamation et Réhabilitation* (3R) and *l'Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique* (UPC)—which last year decided to rejoin the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic (APPR-RCA). According to the Secretary-General's June report, 1,331 former combatants have been disarmed and demobilised since July 2025.

The country's security situation remains relatively stable, and the disarmament and demobilisation of former combatants have contributed to the improved security situation, according to the Secretary-General's latest report. However, parts of the country in the northwest and east continue to face some level of insecurity due to armed group activity, cross-border security dynamics, criminality, and transhumance-related tensions between herders and farmers.

The report also refers to the continued threats in the western and central parts of the country posed by armed groups, which remain outside the peace process. In this regard, it cites several incidents involving these groups, which targeted the national defence forces [*Les Forces armées centrafricaines* (FACA)], displaced people, and disrupted local electoral campaigns. Additionally, it mentions the obstruction of freedom of movement and transhumance-related activity caused by residual combatants who remain outside the disarmament process in the centre of the country. In the southeast, violence perpetrated by the *Azande Ani Kpi Gbe* (AAKG)—a predominantly ethnic Azande militia accused of committing serious human rights violations—remains a major concern.

The Secretary-General's report documents renewed activities by Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) combatants, a Ugandan armed group that continues to operate in the CAR. Additionally, the CAR continues to face security challenges in the northeast with persistent cross-border activities linked to the conflict in Sudan. The Secretary-General's report also describes clashes between self-defence groups and Sudanese armed elements associated with the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), one of the parties to the Sudanese conflict.

## Human Rights-Related Developments

In a 1 June press release, Aristide Nononsi, the Independent Expert on the human rights situation in the CAR, expressed grave concern over persistent violence, insecurity, and human rights violations in several parts of the country. He cited reports of violence against civilians, forced displacement, conflict-related sexual violence, and human rights violations committed both by armed groups and during certain security operations. In light of these findings, Nononsi urged national authorities and international partners to continue their efforts to protect civilians and strengthen the rule of law, justice, and reconciliation. Among other matters, he called for stronger independence

and support for national human rights institutions, including the National Human Rights Commission and the Truth, Justice, Reparations and Reconciliation Commission (CVJRR).

## Sanctions-Related Developments

Following the adoption of resolution 2789 of 29 July 2025, which last renewed the 2745 sanctions regime and the mandate of the Panel of Experts, Russia put a six-month hold on the appointment of panel members. After Russia lifted its hold, three members of the panel were appointed in February. Two members began their work on 2 March, while the third member commenced work on 6 April.

Although the panel was expected to submit a midterm report no later than 31 January, it was unable to do so because of delays in the appointment of its members. The panel submitted a brief midterm report on 8 June, explaining the circumstances that had prevented it from meeting the deadline.

The panel conducted a visit to the CAR in March and April and presented its final report and recommendations to the Committee in advance of the 15 June deadline. The 2745 Sanctions Committee considered the report on 5 June. At the time of writing, the final report had not been published.

## Key Issues and Options

The most immediate issue for Council members in July is the renewal of the 2745 sanctions regime. Last year, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2789, which renewed the sanctions regime and the mandate of the Panel of Experts. The negotiations in July are not expected to be contentious. A possible option for Council members would be to renew the sanctions regime and the mandate of the Panel of Experts for another twelve months.

A key issue for Council members is how to support the CAR in consolidating its political and security gains to ensure long-term peace and stability. One option would be for Council members to reiterate support for ongoing efforts to implement security sector reform, DDR, and justice and rule of law reforms, as well as the promotion of economic recovery and development. Another key issue for Council members in the coming months is the reconfiguration of MINUSCA, including the possible gradual, phased, and responsible transfer of tasks to the CAR government or the UN country team. Following the submission of the report by 15 September—requested in resolution 2800 of 13 November 2025 renewing the mission's mandate, a possible option for the penholder would be to organise an informal briefing by the Secretariat to discuss its recommendations ahead of the mission's mandate renewal in November. Despite improvements in the country's overall peace and security situation, another important issue is the ongoing insecurity linked to armed group activity that persists in parts of the CAR. Council members remain particularly concerned about the security situation along the country's borders, including the spillover effects of the conflict in Sudan.

The UN's liquidity crisis and its impact on the mission's operational capacity remain an ongoing concern. In June, Rugwabiza updated Council members on the contingency measures implemented by the mission to mitigate the impact of the liquidity crisis. Members are expected to closely monitor these contingency measures.

## Council Dynamics

Council members support MINUSCA's work and appreciate its contribution to stabilising the country. They also recognise that the CAR has entered a new phase of consolidation that requires building the country's capacity to gradually assume security responsibilities.

# Central African Republic

In this regard, they may continue to underscore the importance of ensuring that this process consolidates the gains made in recent years and avoids any possibility of reversal.

However, most members are concerned about the impact of the UN's liquidity crisis on the mission's work. During the February Council meeting, Pakistan, a major troop-contributing country (TCC) to MINUSCA, drew attention to the financial burden on TCCs due to the delayed reimbursement of personnel costs. Reimbursements for troop and police were made through 31 December 2025, while reimbursements for contingent-owned equipment were made through 30 June 2025, according to the Secretary-General's latest report on MINUSCA.

At the February meeting, the US—which abstained on resolution 2800—maintained that MINUSCA should discontinue activities it considered no longer necessary and transfer responsibilities to the CAR authorities or other stakeholders where possible. During the negotiations, it pushed for a larger reduction in troop levels than what was ultimately agreed, given progress on the ground. For its part, China stressed that the Council needed to make a realistic assessment of the situation in the country in close consultation with the CAR government and consider optimising MINUSCA's mandate and size at the appropriate time to steadily advance its transition.

France is the penholder on the CAR and CAR sanctions.

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