



Security Council

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Letter dated 11 September 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations; and Mr. Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, as well as the statements delivered by the representatives of Belgium, China, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Indonesia, the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam, in connection with the video-teleconference regarding the “Maintenance of international peace and security”, convened on Wednesday, 9 September 2020.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, the briefings and statements will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdou **Abarry**
President of the Security Council



Annex I**Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo**

I thank the President of the Security Council for this opportunity to update the Council on the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on peace and security.

It is sobering to realize that the risks the Secretary-General identified to the Council on 2 July are manifesting in a number of countries across the world (see S/2020/663, annex I). But we are also witnessing resilience, innovation and inclusive political action to mitigate the impact of some of them.

Conscious that my briefing will be complemented by those of my colleagues that follow, I would like to begin by highlighting three heightened risks.

The first is the erosion of trust in public institutions. This was obviously a problem before the pandemic, and it is not specific to conflict situations. However, such erosion increases fragility and has the potential to drive instability in settings where people perceive that authorities have not addressed the pandemic effectively or have not been transparent about its impact. Reports of corruption related to COVID-19 responses are accentuating this trend.

The second risk relates to the aggravation of certain human rights challenges during the pandemic, which in turn can fuel conflict. We are witnessing increased discrimination, including in access to health services. Gender-based violence, particularly in the home, surged around the world as COVID-19 lockdowns became necessary. Many of the economic costs of the pandemic are also disproportionately affecting women, who are overrepresented in some of the sectors hardest hit by shutdowns and ensuing layoffs and cuts.

There are also growing limitations being placed on the media, civic space and freedom of expression. Social media platforms are used to spread disinformation about the pandemic. And there has been a rise in stigma and hate speech, especially against migrants and foreigners. To help counter the spread of false and harmful information, the Secretary-General launched the Verified initiative to increase the volume and reach of trusted, accurate information surrounding the crisis.

The third risk is to political and peace processes. We continue to see tensions surrounding decisions to postpone elections or to proceed with a vote, even with mitigation measures. These decisions are best made following broad consultation across the political spectrum, including with health authorities. As the United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities, I have ensured that, together with the United Nations Development Programme, we have clear guidance on the operational aspects of holding elections in times of COVID-19.

More broadly, to date, and contrary to our expectations, we have not observed a significant change in the dynamics of a number of ongoing armed conflicts as a result of COVID-19. Some situations have deteriorated since the onset of the pandemic, but this is largely due to other drivers. Nevertheless, as we have seen in the Sahel, the risk remains that parties to conflict, including terrorist and violent extremist groups, use the uncertainty created by the pandemic to press their advantage. And as we consider the compound and overlapping health, socioeconomic and humanitarian aspects of the pandemic, we cannot but be concerned for the future. In the short term, the pandemic could also potentially derail fragile peace processes and conflict prevention initiatives due to restrictions on travel and in-person contacts.

Our own ability to support political processes has been limited by such restrictions. With many of our engagements moving online, we have had to develop our digital skills and work even harder to nurture the trust and willingness to compromise that are at the heart of preventive diplomacy and mediation.

Let me now turn to the status of the call for a global ceasefire. The Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire on 23 March aimed to help create better conditions for the delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid and open up space for diplomacy. The initial response was encouraging. A number of temporary truces were announced — from Colombia to Ukraine, and from Philippines to Cameroon. However, many expired without extensions, resulting in little improvement on the ground. In response to the call, our special representatives, envoys and mediators stepped up efforts to advance political and peace discussions in a number of regions.

In Yemen, we are actively discussing with the parties a draft joint declaration, which includes provisions on a nation-wide ceasefire, economic and humanitarian measures and the resumption of the political process. In Libya, we are working towards a ceasefire agreement and the resumption of intra-Libyan political talks.

In both contexts, we have combined shuttle diplomacy and the use of digital technologies. We convened meetings of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission in Libya online and have conducted large-scale virtual consultations with over 500 Yemenis regarding their views on the requisites for peace.

As far as is possible and safe, we are taking calculated risks to move processes forward. On 24 August, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria convened the Constitutional Committee for its third session in Geneva. Extensive precautions were taken to enable the meeting to take place. Even with such precautions, meetings were temporarily suspended due to the positive COVID-19 test results of four participants. The session resumed following further testing and advice from medical authorities.

Planning for the new United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan commenced virtually to avoid delays due to COVID-related restrictions. The planning team then visited the Sudan to continue consultations with the Government and other key stakeholders to ensure that the Mission can start delivering on its objectives by January 2021. We anticipate deploying an advance team of the Mission within weeks.

The Security Council's backing for the ceasefire call in resolution 2532 (2020) is significant. Leadership from the Council and the support of Member States with leverage are essential if we are to change the calculations of conflict parties, open the space for dialogue and end these wars.

I will now briefly turn to how we have adapted operations in the midst of the pandemic.

First, we have created a joined-up support structure for our missions. The Field Support Group on COVID-19, organized under the joint purview of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Operational Support, has been working to strengthen United Nations risk-management systems and protect our personnel and their capacity to continue critical operations. The well-being of our staff members is of the utmost importance.

Secondly, our missions are strongly committed to aid host countries in their COVID-19 response. In Cyprus, we facilitated the work of the bicomunal Technical Committee on Health, as part of our good offices support. In the aftermath of the 4 August explosion in Beirut, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon has been leading coordination of United Nations support

to Lebanon, including its response to a marked increase in COVID-19 cases after the explosion. In Somalia, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia provided prefabricated buildings to be used for isolation facilities, and with the World Health Organization, a testing laboratory in Mogadishu. In Colombia, the United Nations Verification Mission delivered food and biosafety kits to ex-combatants and other communities. The Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa and the Special Representative for Central Africa provided support to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Economic Community of Central African States in the development of regional COVID-19 response strategies. And the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund has also rapidly responded to adapt country-level programming to support the peacebuilding and prevention dimensions of the pandemic.

The focus of the Security Council — and of resolution 2532 (2020) — is rightly on situations of armed conflict. But let me conclude by underlining the risks the wide-reaching impacts of COVID-19 hold for other situations, as well and highlight the magnitude of the challenge of conflict prevention before us.

To mitigate COVID-related risks in situations of armed conflict and prevent the possible deterioration of other situations into instability and violence, the collective and individual engagement of members of the Security Council is indispensable.

As the Secretary-General has stated, addressing COVID-19 requires coordination, unity and solidarity. The better the global response to the pandemic, the better our prospects for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts around the world. The Security Council's decisive engagement in follow-up to the call for a ceasefire will be essential.

In conclusion, I wish to pay tribute to our staff in the field during these difficult times, especially those who have lost their lives to COVID-19. I would also like to recognize the exceptional service of health-care workers, which has allowed us to continue delivering on the promise of peace amidst this pandemic.

Annex II**Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations,
Jean-Pierre Lacroix**

I thank the President of the Security Council for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the measures being taken to address the enormous challenges posed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic to our peacekeeping operations and to the countries where they are deployed. I am pleased to join Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Under-Secretary-General Lowcock in briefing the Council today.

Through an integrated effort that brings together all of the relevant United Nations entities, we continue to support our peacekeeping operations as they pursue the four interlinked objectives first set out by the Secretary-General in April: supporting national authorities, protecting United Nations personnel, mitigating the spread of the virus and assisting in the protection of vulnerable communities, and ensuring operational continuity in the implementation of their mandates.

Countries where peacekeeping operations are deployed suffer from a combination of weak health and governance structures and a lack of the resources required to effectively combat the pandemic. In these environments, the spread of COVID-19 can lead not only to exacerbated socioeconomic tensions. Its effects can also undermine governance and local institutions, slow down or derail fragile political processes, worsen already volatile security situations and contribute to a recurrence of intercommunal conflict. The overall effect can be to further destabilize the countries where our missions are deployed and erode peace gains. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the pandemic has given rise to hate speech, incitement to violence and harmful misinformation targeting, both the local population and foreign nationals, including United Nations personnel.

While responses to COVID-19 have been consensus-driven in some countries, they have been met with criticism in others, resulting in heightened political tensions in the areas of operation of some peacekeeping missions. Addressing the impact of COVID-19 has further burdened Governments already under considerable pressure to deliver on complex political processes, such as transition and reconciliation. For example, in South Sudan, the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan slowed down considerably, due in part to an increased focus on COVID-19-related challenges. The South Sudanese parties have been deadlocked for over three months over the state allocation and appointment of state governors and administration and have yet to reconstitute the Parliament.

These combined effects of the pandemic can, in turn, negatively affect mandate implementation. Helping to prevent and contain the spread of the virus where peacekeeping operations are deployed is therefore not only a moral imperative, but also a political priority, as well as an operational requirement.

To this end, a number of measures have been put in place. These measures have contributed to preventing and containing the spread among field personnel within relatively low levels, with much of it concentrated within contained locations. As of today, 9 September, across all field missions, which number over 100,000 personnel, a total of 1,049 cumulative cases have been recorded, with 609 recovered, 440 active cases and 18 deaths.

The protection of the health, safety and security of peacekeeping personnel, and ensuring that they are not a vector for contagion, are of paramount importance. With uniformed personnel constituting the vast majority of deployments in

peacekeeping operations, and also forming important units deployed to certain special political missions, particular attention was paid early on to their movements in and out of host countries. Following a temporary suspension, the rotations and repatriations of uniformed personnel have resumed and are planned and conducted in close coordination with both the police- and troop-contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs) concerned, on the one hand, and the authorities of the host countries, on the other hand. TCCs and PCCs are required to comply with stringent conditions, including predeployment training on COVID-19 and a 14-day quarantine in their home countries, adherence to the mission's quarantine regulations upon deployment, physical distancing and the use of personal protective equipment to mitigate the spread of virus.

Ensuring that these preventive measures are rigorously and fully implemented is of crucial importance. Allow me to take this opportunity to credit all of the TCCs and PCCs for their understanding and cooperation in these challenging circumstances, and to express our appreciation for the support they continue to provide to United Nations peacekeeping.

We have also made progress in the provision of treatment and care, including in the area of medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), thanks to the partnerships fostered with generous Member States. Medical treatment and testing facilities and MEDEVAC options have been strengthened within the United Nations System-Wide Medical Evacuation Task Force, under the auspices of the Department of Operational Support (DOS). All missions have been provided with a risk-mitigation plan for COVID-19, and outbreak-response teams have been established in several operations. The Headquarters Field Coordination Group for COVID-19, which brings together the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, DOS and the Department of Peace Operations is working closely with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon as they respond to outbreak clusters in their missions. Remote working arrangements are in place, and psychosocial and other support are provided to staff, as needed.

Peacekeeping operations continue to find innovative and proactive ways to implement their mandates under these challenging conditions. In that regard, I will focus on certain aspects of the mandates of our operations, namely, supporting political processes and protecting civilians.

Our missions have maintained political engagement and community outreach through virtual platforms and undertaken public diplomacy initiatives to encourage political unity, respect for human rights and in response to inter-ethnic incidents. By adapting their work to the new reality, they have ensured the continuation of these efforts in line with their respective mandates. And we have in fact seen some positive results.

The Juba talks on the Sudan, where the peace negotiations moved to a virtual format at the beginning of April, further complicating discussions taking place on parallel tracks, have led to the recent agreement between the transitional authorities and participating armed groups. In the Central African Republic, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic has continued to carry out its mandate since the advent of the pandemic, while fully respecting the Government's COVID-19 directives and considering the wide-ranging implications of the public health emergency. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUSCO has supported the Congolese authorities in developing procedures and policies to manage the implementation of COVID-19 response measures.

As the COVID-19 crisis abates in certain parts of the world, missions see opportunities to achieve more. In Cyprus, for example, the closing of crossing points between the two communities in February and March as well as quarantine requirements introduced by both sides effectively restricted movement between the north and south of the island. With the gradual easing of restrictions and following a leaders' joint decision in May, both sides have been working on the reopening of crossing points for certain categories of individuals and within certain health restrictions.

Overall, peacekeeping operations continued to prevent and respond to threats to civilians, which have unfortunately not decreased in the past six months despite the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire. This is particularly the case in Mali, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, in operational terms, the pandemic has affected the footprint of our missions and, to a certain degree, their capacity to perform patrols or monitoring activities, including by limiting their contact with local communities. As a result of the pandemic, United Nations peacekeeping missions have been approaching their protection-of-civilian activities primarily through the lens of doing no harm and prioritizing the need to prevent the virus from spreading among the local populations. Reductions in mission capacities have also affected the effectiveness of situational awareness tools, such as the use of air assets for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

In the areas of security sector reform (SSR) and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, various missions continue preparatory work and offer assistance to relevant national stakeholders in developing policies, even if physical meetings and activities are not possible. Nonetheless, prioritized activities are often being brought forward, as is the case in the SSR field in MONUSCO, through remote engagement with national actors and bilateral partners.

The integrated effort by the Secretariat in support of our peacekeeping operations is complemented by strengthened synergies with the United Nations country teams and sister organizations, including the World Bank. This cooperation in support of national authorities deepens our common understanding of the impact of COVID-19 and informs the sequencing and prioritization of recovery initiatives, thereby ensuring that the response is adapted to the pandemic's impact on peace processes.

Our efforts are also closely coordinated with our partner organizations on the ground, including the African Union and the European Union. We have been able to hold our regular meetings virtually, including, *inter alia*, those related to peace negotiations in South Sudan and the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic.

The role of women peacekeepers is key to addressing the challenges to mandate implementation posed by COVID-19. As the Council has recognized in its recently adopted resolution 2538 (2020), on women in peacekeeping, women peacekeepers contribute to ensuring the greater credibility of United Nations efforts with local communities, including through more effective community engagement and protection responses. Women's contribution in these areas is particularly valuable when addressing the impact of COVID-19 in the communities where our peacekeepers serve.

As part of the response to the pandemic, we have utilized the comprehensive performance assessment system to aid several missions in planning, tracking and showing the impact of their efforts aimed at helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in their areas of operations. This has strengthened their capacity both to support host countries' efforts and to ensure continuing delivery of mandated activities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly had a significant impact on the conduct of our peacekeeping operations. It has created operational challenges, requiring us to adjust the deployment of uniformed personnel, put in place remote working arrangements and provide a range of additional services to staff in the field. It has complicated our efforts aimed at supporting national authorities and other actors, requiring us to adapt the modalities of our engagement for advancing political and peace processes. It has required us to recalibrate our protection-of-civilian and other activities in support of the populations we serve, while ensuring that these critical activities continue.

I wish to thank, in particular, Under-Secretary-General Khare and the entire staff of the Department of Operational Support, as well as colleagues in the Headquarters Field Support Group, alongside the leadership and peacekeeping personnel in all of our missions, for their collective effort in responding to the challenges posed by COVID-19. With the guidance and support of Headquarters, and with the unified and consistent backing of the Security Council, our peacekeeping operations have quickly and effectively put in place a range of measures that have ensured operational continuity and ongoing mandate implementation across all of our operations. The Security Council's ongoing support will be indispensable as we continue to address the challenges posed by the pandemic.

Annex III

Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock

There is growing reason to believe that in the medium and longer term the weakest, most fragile and conflict-affected countries will be those worst affected by coronavirus disease (COVID-19). As of this morning, there are over 26 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally. The virus is everywhere. More than 860,000 people have died. Roughly a third of these cases and fatalities are in countries affected by humanitarian or refugee crises or those facing high levels of vulnerability.

But those are just the confirmed cases. We do not know the full extent of COVID-19 in fragile countries. Testing levels there are very low, and in some places many people are reluctant to seek help if they fall sick, perhaps because they fear being forced into quarantine in potentially unpleasant conditions or because they do not believe they will get any useful medical help even if they go to a health-care facility.

The better news is that it seems possible that the fatality rate from COVID-19 may be lower in these fragile countries than initially feared. That news remains uncertain for the moment, but if true it would be a boon. Nevertheless, what is now sure beyond reasonable doubt is that the indirect consequences of the pandemic in the most fragile countries are dwarfing the impact of the virus itself.

What are the indirect effects? They are chiefly economic. The most fragile countries are exposed to the global economy, so the worldwide contraction hurts them too, including through weakening commodity prices, declining remittances and disruptions to trade. The anti-COVID-19 measures fragile countries have taken themselves are also having a significant impact on incomes — lockdown measures are making it harder for people to make enough money to survive. That applies especially to daily laborers in the informal sector and to many women.

Beyond the economy, the biggest indirect effect of the virus is on public services, especially health care and education. Of course, that is the case everywhere, but the impact in the most fragile countries is larger than in countries that are better off. That is because people in fragile countries are highly vulnerable to killer diseases like measles, malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS and because infant mortality and the numbers of women losing their lives in childbirth are much higher than in better-off countries.

Any reduction in the availability of very basic health services makes a big difference in such countries, and, unfortunately, there is evidence of a significant crunch on health services as a result of the pandemic. Health-care institutions are switching to try to tackle the virus. Health workers cannot, or do not want to, go to work. Budgets are not being funded. Immunization campaigns are being disrupted or delayed. And lockdowns have reduced the availability of vaccines, drugs and other health supplies. Let me illustrate all that with two examples, on immunization and food security.

Vaccination campaigns have been disrupted in 45 countries facing humanitarian or refugee crises or high levels of vulnerability from other causes. Disruptions to immunization could put more than 80 million children under the age of one at risk of vaccine-preventable diseases.

The World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations report that food insecurity is spiking as people lose their incomes and have to reduce consumption. Twenty-seven countries are now in danger of a

sharp deterioration in food security. Without timely action, child wasting could affect another 7 million children just in the first year of the pandemic.

As in richer countries, we also see effects on education and the position of women. More than half a billion children in humanitarian crises and fragile contexts have been affected by school closures. Many girls who are now unable to go to school will never go back. Gender-based violence, including domestic violence, is increasing. Calls to some hotlines have increased sevenfold, while services have been curtailed. The indirect effects of the crisis will be higher poverty, lower life expectancy, more starvation, less education and more child death.

A slew of research from universities and think tanks in recent months has warned that all that will reinforce existing grievances and give succour to those with an agenda of restricting rights and liberties, as well as extremist groups and other criminal groups seeking to take advantage of the pandemic. The risks of conflict, instability, insecurity, violence and population displacement are therefore rising. In other words, the agenda of the Security Council, which members may think is plenty big enough already, is set to grow. That may be one of the main lasting effects of the pandemic.

Let me turn now to the response of humanitarian agencies. In March, the Secretary-General launched the United Nations-coordinated Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19. It has been repeatedly updated as the crisis has deepened, and it now seeks \$10 billion over the next six months to support 250 million people in 63 countries.

We have raised around \$2.4 billion since March, and I want to express my thanks to those donors that have generously contributed. The money provided has meant that, among other things, humanitarian organizations have provided 730,000 health workers with personal protective equipment, including masks, gloves and gowns, provided information on the virus and how to protect oneself from it to more than 1 billion people in nearly 60 countries, reached nearly 100 million children with distance learning and provided tens of millions of people with soap, detergent and other improvements to water and sanitation systems.

The Global Humanitarian Response Plan has also funded a unique logistics facility, under which the World Food Programme has stepped in to fill the gap left by disappearing commercial air services in many countries. The operation has so far transported 21,000 health and humanitarian workers to and from the front lines, as well as more than 56,000 cubic metres of essential cargo — equivalent to 66 Boeing 747s. Without that lifeline, many humanitarian operations would have shut down.

My Office is publishing regular detailed reports on the implementation of the Global Humanitarian Response Plan, which contain more detail of how the money provided is being used.

The Secretary-General has repeatedly called on Member States and others to facilitate the movement of humanitarian personnel and cargo, including by issuing special movement permits, clearances and visas on arrival. Those calls have not been adequately heeded. In most of the countries where my Office is present, the restrictions imposed since March on visa issuance have delayed and curtailed the flow of aid workers to their duty stations. Currently, more than 1,000 international staff are affected. As a result, we are seeing a reduced operational presence in three quarters of the countries where we work, which is materially affecting programme delivery.

We have also seen a disturbing further increase in violence against health workers. During the first six months of the pandemic, the International Committee of the Red Cross recorded more than 600 incidents of violence, harassment or stigmatization against health-care workers, patients and medical infrastructure in relation to COVID-19.

Aid workers themselves are also vulnerable to the virus. The number of confirmed cases among United Nations staff alone runs into the thousands, and the death toll is mounting. Where possible, those who are most sick are evacuated to places where they can obtain good medical care, but too often that does not happen. I want to pay tribute to those taking extraordinary risks with their own welfare in the desire to help others.

Alongside assistance from humanitarian agencies, others, in particular the international financial institutions, have an important role to play in helping the most vulnerable countries cope through the crisis. I want to say a few words about that, because the more generous, prompt and effective the help that the most vulnerable countries receive from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and similar institutions, the more people in crisis can be cushioned from the worst effects of the economic crunch and the more the risks to instability and fragility can be avoided.

In the 2008-2009 financial crisis, the leading shareholders of the international financial institutions, most of which are countries members of the Security Council today, agreed that they should take exceptional measures to protect the global economy, including their poorer members.

The pandemic is a more damaging event than the financial crisis, but this time the response has been far from exceptional: it barely justifies the description of tepid. The countries of the Group of Twenty and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development have rightly adopted domestic economic stimulus measures, amounting to more than \$10 trillion, to protect their own populations from the worst effects of the pandemic and lockdown. That amounts to more than 10 per cent of global income.

Low-income and fragile countries do not have the resources, capacity or access to markets to do the same thing. They are reliant on support from elsewhere, especially the international financial institutions. However, of the \$143 billion in financing from the international financial institutions so far, only 7 per cent has been committed to low-income countries. That represents little more than 2 per cent of their combined gross domestic product — one fifth of what the better-off countries have done at home.

Such a low level of support is alarming because it increases the likelihood of the pandemic generating the kind of dangerous long-term consequences that I talked about earlier. It is also surprising: there is little dispute about what ought to be done, and recent experience has shown that it can work. The costs to taxpayers are minimal because the resources can largely be generated off the international financial institutions' own balance sheets.

To speak plainly, woefully inadequate economic and political action will lead to greater instability and conflicts in the coming years. More crises will be on the Council's agenda. The burden of my advice to the Council today is therefore that, while we may have been surprised by the virus, we cannot say the same of the security and humanitarian crises that most certainly lay ahead if we do not change course.

Annex IV**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, Karen Van Vlierberge**

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has only magnified the challenges and human costs of conflict. Over the past couple of months, we have witnessed unprecedented needs and repeated calls for an urgent and coordinated response.

On 1 July, we unanimously adopted resolution 2532 (2020), which calls for a 90-day ceasefire. Today, 70 days later, we must admit that the outlook does not look promising. The call for a global ceasefire did not have the effect we hoped for, while the COVID-pandemic is still spreading and weakening the health systems in conflict areas. Libya, Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan are just a few of the worrisome examples in that respect. We need to continue, in each relevant situation on our agenda, to pursue the implementation of resolution 2532 (2020).

The resolution also calls for all the relevant parts of the United Nations system to support and accelerate the response to the pandemic. We welcome the overview of such actions that we received today. Everywhere on the ground, the United Nations country teams and peacekeeping operations have followed up on that call. The duration and spread of this pandemic will probably allow us to draw lessons and implement adaptive measures, while still fighting it. We are therefore interested to learn which lessons can be drawn and how the United Nations builds on them. Let me add four remarks on the way forward.

First, it is our duty as Member States to provide the United Nations with the support that it needs to implement the actions we mandate. We are especially concerned by the fact that the United Nations is currently lacking the means to react to COVID-19 because Member States do not pay their mandatory contributions on time. We call those Member States to take action, and we call on all Member States to continue to uphold our shared respect for, and belief in, multilateralism.

Secondly, we commend the work done by the United Nations in matters such as hate speech, misinformation and disinformation. Misinformation exploits fears and can fuel more extreme reactions, violence and violations of human rights, which could exacerbate existing fault lines in society. The initiatives taken to counter the infodemic, such as the Verified campaign, were innovative, and we encourage the Secretariat to pursue such partnerships with the media, businesses and civil society.

Thirdly, today is the first International Day to Protect Education from Attack. While we mark this day, the education of refugee and internally displaced children continues to be under attack, literally and metaphorically, as COVID-19 continues to compound their vulnerability. Half of refugee children have no access to school. The negative effect is gendered. While girls still face gender-based violence in schools and universities, others lose their safe haven when schools are forced to close. As young Farhan Roshan shared this morning at the event to mark this International Day: “When education is under attack, women and children suffer the most.”

Lastly, lockdown measures increase women’s and children’s exposure to violent partners and have far-reaching social and economic impacts on families. That is anticipated to lead to a 33 per cent reduction in the progress made on ending gender-based violence, ending child marriages and ending female genital mutilation. Post-COVID education needs to rely on sustainable and holistic measures that go beyond accessing education. Such measures should also address the obstacles encountered by girls specifically in accessing quality education and completing the school cycle.

To fight these multiple crises, a coordinated global response is the only way forward, supported by multilateral efforts, based on shared respect for principles and values, fuelled by innovative approaches. In short, we need to be more strategic, focused and unified in tackling the pandemic and the challenges that it presents.

Annex V**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Geng Shuang**

I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Under-Secretary-General Lowcock for their briefings.

On 1 July the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2532 (2020), which echoes the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire, reiterates the shared commitment of the international community to fighting the pandemic and sends out a strong message of support for multilateralism, the United Nations and the World Health Organization (WHO).

China appreciates the tremendous efforts made by the Secretariat to implement that resolution. We are encouraged by the progress, such as the sustained ceasefires in Columbia, the Sudan and South Sudan, the peace agreement initialled by the Sudanese transitional Government and the Sudan Revolutionary Front, the agreement between Hamas and Israel on de-escalation and the willingness of the relevant parties in Libya to stop fighting. All those positive developments have created windows of opportunity for advancing the relevant political processes.

China also appreciates the measures taken by United Nations peacekeeping operations to support national authorities in containing the pandemic. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, among others, provided medical materials and organized awareness-raising campaigns for host countries. Meanwhile, the ongoing efforts to protect peacekeepers' health and safety, such as strengthening treatment facilities and raising the testing capacity, are also commendable.

The WHO plays an indispensable role in combating the pandemic in conflict-affected countries. It helped Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and South Sudan establish isolation and treatment facilities, provided medical supplies and conducted training for health workers. China highly appreciates and fully supports the WHO's efforts.

Nonetheless, we have to admit that challenges remain in implementing the resolution. Some ceasefire commitments are conditional. Some ceasefire deals have been seriously violated. Political progress remains slow following ceasefires in some places. Humanitarian assistance, which is badly needed in conflict-affected countries, still suffers from a huge funding gap. We are worried and concerned about such difficulties.

Today the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is still raging across the world, and some countries are seeing a rebound and even a looming second wave. Nothing is more important or urgent than combating the virus, containing the pandemic, saving lives and restoring peace. China calls on all parties to fully implement resolution 2532 (2020) in order to achieve a global ceasefire and step up efforts to fight against the pandemic.

First, hostilities should be ceased to achieve lasting peace. Parties to conflicts should put aside animosity, lay down their arms and stop fighting immediately and unconditionally. In countries or regions where ceasefires have been reached, the Security Council, the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General and the relevant peacekeeping operations should seize the opportunity to push forward the political process and create conditions for reconciliation and lasting peace.

Secondly, life should be put first and foremost, and humanitarian assistance increased. To mitigate the pandemic's impact on fragile countries and fragile

peoples, we should support the WHO in playing a leading role in the fight against COVID-19 and assist the WHO and the International Committee of the Red Cross and other agencies in conducting their work in conflict-affected countries. The Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 still has a funding gap of \$7.95 million. Substantive inputs from the international community are badly needed. To truly safeguard life and the health of peacekeepers, Member States and the Secretariat should fully implement resolution 2518 (2020).

Thirdly, unilateral sanctions should be lifted to lessen the sufferings of affected peoples. The pandemic is a natural disaster, while unilateral sanctions are a human-made one. Unilateral sanctions seriously undermine the capacity of the targeted countries to respond to the pandemic and exacerbate the suffering of innocent civilians, especially women and children. We urge the relevant countries to immediately lift unilateral coercive measures out of consideration for humanitarian issues, in responding to the appeal of the Secretary-General and the international community. We encourage the Secretariat to assess the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on targeted countries, and the Security Council to explore ways to tackle it based on the assessment.

Fourthly, equal emphasis should be placed on ceasefires and containing the pandemic, and peace should be promoted through development. Conflict-affected countries are the weakest link in this fight. The pandemic could reverse the peacebuilding and development gains made by conflict-affected countries and plunge them into deeper and larger-scale conflicts. The international community should help conflict-affected countries keep their economies and societies running while fighting the pandemic and help them advance the peacebuilding process while engaging in a humanitarian pause, so as to seek lasting peace by accelerating development and eradicating the root causes of conflict.

The pandemic reminds us once again that the well-being and future of all countries are interconnected. Solidarity and cooperation constitute the most powerful weapon in the global fight against COVID-19. The practices of politicization, labelling, stigmatization, selfishness, misrepresentation and blame-shifting will backfire. They cannot save lives or contain the pandemic. They can only bring more troubles. Countries should respect science, increase trust, take up responsibilities and join hands with each other to fight the pandemic and build a community of health for all.

In the spirit of putting people's lives first, nationwide solidarity, sacrifice, respecting science and a sense of mission for humankind, China prevents and contains the pandemic in a comprehensive, prompt and effective manner. China not only cares about the life and health of its own people, but also global public health. To promote international cooperation and support the global fight against the pandemic, China has sent 34 medical expert teams to 32 countries, provided 283 batches of anti-epidemic supplies to 150 countries and four international organizations and exported medical supplies to more than 200 countries.

Last week, at the Group of Twenty Foreign Ministers meeting, China launched an initiative to facilitate cross-border flow of people and goods and proposed an international mechanism on mutual recognition of COVID-related health certification. We look forward to forming and implementing these schemes and are ready to contribute to the revitalization of world economy.

President Xi Jinping announced at the World Health Assembly in May that a COVID-19 vaccine, when developed and deployed in China and available, will be made a global public good and shared with other countries through various channels.

During this pandemic, no one is safe until everyone is safe. To make the vaccines accessible to everyone is the only way to realize universal health. We should stick to win-win concepts rather than zero-sum mentalities. Vaccines should not be stockpiled or monopolized. They should not be used to benefit oneself at the expense of others and cannot be used as political tools. We hope to see countries cooperate with each other to advance vaccine development and production and make vaccines accessible and affordable to all.

China is ready to join hands with other countries to implement resolution 2532 (2020), form a united front against the pandemic and build a community of shared future for humankind.

Annex VI

Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations

I would like to thank Under-Secretaries-General DiCarlo, Lacroix and Lowcock for their briefings. We welcome routine updates to the Security Council on progress on the implementation of resolution 2532 (2020) in conflict-affected and fragile States.

As time goes by, it is becoming increasingly evident that coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a threat to international peace and security. It is multidimensional, with multifaceted, intertwined consequences and challenges to peacebuilding. It also threatens hard-won development and peacebuilding gains and risks exacerbating or creating conflicts, while weakening the social fabric.

Only a coordinated, global and people-centred response, with a renewed sense of solidarity and common humanity, and with particular emphasis on the most vulnerable, can yield the solutions we are seeking. In that respect, we commend the Secretary-General, the World Health Organization and many humanitarian organizations for their efforts in coordinating a global approach to the pandemic.

However, the unhindered, full implementation of resolution 2532 (2020), which is needed to advance these efforts, is far from being a reality. In Yemen, the Saudi-led coalition has resumed air raids, killing civilians. In Colombia, the National Liberation Army has intensified attacks against the Government. In Libya, violent clashes continued soon after combatants had supported the ceasefire appeal. Sadly, the list goes on.

It is the duty of the Council to build unity and back up resolution 2532 (2020) with concrete actions. Accountability channels through existing mechanisms are urgently needed to ensure compliance and monitor ceasefire implementation. Parties to conflict must take this seriously and should be aware of what contravening the Security Council on this issue entails. They also need to understand that the common enemy is the COVID-19 pandemic.

In that regard, the resolution could be an excellent deterrence tool for mediators to build synergies with regional and local initiatives. It should increase connections and coordination with local peacebuilders and strengthen their efforts to achieve and expand ceasefire agreements at the local level.

We would like to stress that all decision-making related to COVID-19 must include the participation of women, youth and civil society. Young people build trust and trigger community action. We must prioritize partnership with young people in order to shape our response.

As reaffirmed in resolutions 2532 (2020) and 2535 (2020), young people play a vital role in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In that respect, we would like to know — from the briefers — how the full, equal and meaningful participation of youth is being ensured in the development and implementation of an adequate and sustainable response to the pandemic, including on ceasefire efforts, as mandated by resolution 2532 (2020).

Moreover, has there been a real humanitarian pause? Resolution 2532 (2020) seeks to provide new openings for critically needed humanitarian assistance to address deteriorating conditions in conflict-affected countries. Hence, as COVID-19 cases rise in many of those countries, running into other humanitarian situations, such as malnutrition, creates an even greater nightmare for the most vulnerable, such as children.

In addition, conflict-induced hunger is growing at unprecedented levels. The spread of violence in places such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Yemen, Somalia and north-east Nigeria has led to an increased risk of famine for millions of civilians. That is a direct, undeniable result of non-compliance with much-needed ceasefires and peace arrangements, exacerbated by the pandemic. This requires our urgent attention.

Moreover, sustaining peace requires an integrated and coherent approach across humanitarian, development and peace actors and pillars, including the Security Council.

Going forward, we must not exclude intercommunal violence and other forms of insecurity from our attention. To do so is to deny core factors that necessitate a ceasefire. The situation in South Sudan is a clear example of that.

As we have said in the past, for the Dominican Republic, COVID-19 provides a window of opportunity for peacebuilding, sustaining peace and identifying pathways to reinforce and ways to contribute to strengthening peace and building trust and social cohesion at all levels. We call for all parties to conflict to put an end to all hostilities and facilitate the much-needed humanitarian operations that serve the needs of affected people.

Annex VII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations, Sven Jürgenson

I thank the briefers for their thorough update on the issue.

The pandemic continues to pose a significant threat to the maintenance of international peace and security. This means that a potential increase in social unrest and violence, which would greatly undermine our ability to fight the disease, is still in the cards. On 1 July, we unanimously adopted resolution 2532 (2020), demanding an immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on our agenda.

In some countries, like my own, we have had time to deal with the various outcomes of the pandemic, but this cannot be said about many others. There are countries that are ravaged by conflicts, violence, human rights violations and so forth, which makes dealing with the pandemic nearly impossible. It is for these reasons that we must continue following the Secretary-General's call for a humanitarian ceasefire. Only then can countries effectively deal with the pandemic to protect their citizens, when all their effort is directed towards the number one enemy — the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Enabling safe, unhindered and sustained delivery of humanitarian assistance is as relevant now as it was a few months ago, especially regarding Syria.

We have seen cases where COVID-19 has been used as a pretext for various ideas that are not serving the common good of the people in need or have little to no links to the pandemic, including the campaign for the lifting of restrictive measures, the rise in disinformation campaigns and attacks against the health-care sector, both physical and cyber. Some Governments have curbed United Nations peacekeepers' freedom of movement, which in turn curbs our ability to help the people in need.

We must focus our efforts on dealing with the pandemic, not fighting. As I have said in my previous speeches on the issue — and I will not get tired of stressing it — the risks posed by the pandemic for the rights of women, including through gender-based violence and violations of human rights, are undeniable. Women's role in the societies' response to COVID-19, including in conflict and post-conflict situations, is crucial, as they represent the majority of health workers.

To beat the pandemic, we need to show solidarity and trust. We need to be transparent with each other. Without a coordinated response, we cannot win.

Annex VIII**Statement by the Deputy Political Coordinator of France to the United Nations, Wadid Benaabou**

[Original: English and French]

First of all, I would like to thank the Niger for organizing this meeting at the request of France and Tunisia. I also thank Rosemary DiCarlo, Mark Lowcock and Jean-Pierre Lacroix for their presentations.

More than two months after the adoption of resolution 2532 (2020), the time has come to draw an initial assessment, but also, above all, to call for a collective awakening: as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continues to spread, the top priority must be the implementation of a cessation of hostilities and a humanitarian pause. The progress presented by our three briefers towards the implementation of the resolution is an important first step, and I would like to pay tribute to the work of all United Nations actors. But we are still a long way off, and it is time to put words into action.

First of all, I would like to recall that the cessation of hostilities is an indispensable condition for an effective fight against the pandemic. While the Secretary-General's appeal to that effect has been supported by more than 180 countries, more than 20 armed groups and numerous regional and civil society organizations, much remains to be done to achieve an effective cessation of hostilities. In Syria, Yemen, Libya, Afghanistan and the Sahel, the situation remains very unstable and civilian populations continue to pay the price.

As Mr. Lacroix indicated, peacekeepers are relentlessly pursuing their efforts, often in very difficult conditions. I would like to pay tribute to them here. We must continue to support peacekeeping operations by enabling them to fully implement their mandates despite the pandemic. France is determined to do so. We are, in this regard, ready to welcome in our military hospitals foreign peacekeepers who are sick from COVID-19 and require urgent care.

On the humanitarian front, we must collectively support the full and complete implementation of the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19. France will continue to work to that end, through both its bilateral and multilateral support. President Emmanuel Macron was one of the first, last April, to call for massive support for the most fragile countries, particularly in Africa, to face COVID-19. Since the beginning of May, the European Union has coordinated more than 65 flights as part of a humanitarian airlift, transporting more than 1,700 humanitarian and medical personnel and more than 1,200 tons of aid. Last June, Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian travelled to the Democratic Republic of Congo to host one of the flights planned as part of this airlift, together with his Belgian counterpart and the European Commissioner for Crisis Management.

Everything must also be done to ensure safe and unimpeded humanitarian access and to protect humanitarian workers and medical personnel, whose remarkable work I commend. The increase in attacks against humanitarian personnel is extremely worrisome. We will not compromise on this issue: the perpetrators of these crimes must be brought to justice. Respect for international humanitarian law is an obligation for all.

Stability and peace also depend on the resilience of health systems. In this regard, we must support the efforts of the United Nations and the World Health Organization (WHO), which are coordinating the international response to the crisis. The WHO must be strengthened in its normative, warning and coordinating

role. This will not, of course, exclude the possibility of undertaking the necessary reforms and learning all the lessons from the management of the current crisis.

Finally, resolution 2532 (2020) recognizes the essential role that women play in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the negative and disproportionate effects that the pandemic has on women, girls, refugees and displaced persons in particular. It is essential that we work together to minimize these effects and enable their full participation in the development and implementation of the response to the pandemic. France, which will organize the Generation Equality Forum in the first half of 2021, in partnership with Mexico and UN-Women, is more determined than ever.

There is no time to lose. We must collectively intensify our efforts to enable the full implementation of resolution 2532 (2020). There is no alternative to effectively combating the pandemic. The Security Council can count on France's continued and unwavering support.

Annex IX**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, Dian Triansyah Djani**

I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. I also thank the briefers — Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock — for their comprehensive briefings.

Upon hearing their briefings, a grim picture emerges, especially after hearing Under-Secretary-General Lowcock's report on the numbers, particularly of those who are vulnerable and on the indirect effects of the pandemic.

Resolution 2532 (2020) is an important resolution, and I would like to once again thank France and Tunisia as co-penholders. I also, like Jonathan Allen, wish to pay tribute to our colleague Ambassador Nicolas de Rivière and to Ambassador Kais Kabtani for his exemplary Tunisian diplomacy and contribution to the work of the Security Council. Resolution 2532 (2020) contains important provisions, including calls for the cessation of hostilities, 90 days of humanitarian pause and intensified international cooperation.

As the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) situation continues to evolve, this meeting is timely to take stock of the progress on the implementation of the resolution and to identify any need for further improvements. The briefers were already very clear on where we are currently. The next question, naturally, is where are we going to go? In this regard, allow me to highlight three points.

First, we must strengthen our call for a ceasefire. Despite the call to put conflicts on lockdown, unfortunately, as we learned in various reports, in many countries and situations various conflicts have continued, if not intensified. Some ceasefire commitments have not been held, while terrorist groups continue to maintain, and even enhance, their area of influence and capacity to conduct serious attacks. We have to continue supporting the peace efforts by the Secretary-General and his representatives, including through building synergy with regional and local actors in confidence-building and strengthening violence-reduction efforts at the local level. Indonesia is of the view that continued monitoring on the progress of ceasefire implementation is necessary. It will deter actors from engaging in violence and send the message that ceasefire commitments must be honoured.

Secondly, we must continue to support the work of United Nations missions on the ground. Despite the challenging situation and some restrictions caused by the pandemic, peacekeeping missions have managed to adapt and implement their core mandates professionally, including in facilitating peace processes, maintaining an environment conducive to security and protecting civilians through community engagement, as well as ensuring the effective implementation of the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire by parties to conflict.

Indonesia commends the steps taken by peacekeeping missions in assisting host countries in dealing with the impacts of the pandemic, within its mandate and available resources. At the same time, we also call upon the Secretariat to strengthen the medical capacities of missions to ensure the safety, security and health of peacekeepers.

As we recently adopted resolution 2538 (2020), on women peacekeepers — widely supported by Members of the United Nations and supported by all members of the Council — it is now more timely than ever to ensure its implementation in conjunction with resolution 2532 (2020), which we are discussing now. Women peacekeepers have an important role to play in this time of pandemic in utilizing

a community engagement approach, enhancing awareness, engaging with local communities, providing basic health care and protecting women and children.

As one of the largest troop- and police-contributing countries, rest assured that Indonesia will remain committed to continuing its contribution to peacekeeping operations during this difficult time. We also would like to pay tribute to the many peacekeepers and humanitarian workers on the ground who have been affected by COVID-19.

Thirdly, with regard to ensuring the delivery of critical humanitarian assistance, the 90 days of humanitarian pause envisioned in the resolution will expire by the end of this month. The humanitarian pause is vital for humanitarian actors to provide respite to affected people. Yet we continue to witness hindrance to humanitarian assistance in some areas. We must explore ways to further enable humanitarian actors to reach the populations in need in a timely manner and ensure a durable pause beyond the period called for by the resolution.

It is also crucial to mobilize partners in sustaining the funding of the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19. This should be supported by informed risk analysis to ensure that humanitarian assistance is equitably distributed where it is needed.

In conclusion, resolution 2532 (2020) is merely a first step in addressing the impacts of COVID-19 to international peace and security. We must continue to follow it up with concrete actions. In the longer term, we must ensure that disruptions created by COVID-19 will not reverse the gains achieved in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations. We must think beyond pandemic response and towards a long-term comprehensive strategy, including to alleviate the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure long-term recovery and the resilience of people.

We must also strengthen international cooperation, including in the development and distribution of vaccines, as well as capacity-building, so that countries obtain fair and equitable access to vaccines and medicines. To that end, on many previous occasions, we have advocated the importance of all actors working together in a coherent manner.

I also support the point mentioned by Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo on the call by the Secretary-General for unity and solidarity. All United Nations agencies, including on the ground, must work together, based on their comparative advantages and expertise.

Indonesia, with five other United Nations Members, took the initiative to launch the first General Assembly resolution 74/270, on global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019. We stand ready to contribute further to this concerted effort to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic.

Annex X**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations, Abdou Abarry**

[Original: English and French]

I followed with great attention the coordinated and complementary briefings by Mrs. Rosemary DiCarlo, Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Mr. Mark Lowcock.

I would like to take this moment to pay tribute to peacekeeping forces and the various United Nations agencies for their remarkable efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus, and to contribute to the protection of vulnerable communities, as our briefers mentioned. In these times of pandemic, violence has a female face, as Ms. DiCarlo so aptly put it.

As has been mentioned many times, the adoption of a resolution is never an end in itself. In fact, the adoption of a resolution on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which echoes the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, calls for a sustained follow-up in more ways than one, because the political, economic and, above all, security repercussions will continue to manifest themselves in the years to come.

In the Sahel, a region where climate change, armed conflicts and fragile health systems are having an impact on populations, the pandemic has added a new layer to an already disastrous situation and has made populations particularly vulnerable to disease outbreaks and hunger. The campaign of disinformation and stigmatization carried out by these same terrorist groups does not facilitate the efforts of our States to fight, as has been rightly pointed out.

While it is commendable that the mortality rate associated with COVID-19 may be lower in fragile countries than initially feared, the pandemic is seriously affecting the economies of African countries in general, and the Sahel in particular. The recession resulting from the pandemic's confinement measures, which is one of the worst in recent decades, will undoubtedly exacerbate inequalities, especially for already vulnerable populations, such as refugees. I thank Mr. Lowcock for his eloquent words and for making mention of that.

Above all, the electoral processes under way in our region must receive greater support in order to avoid pre- and post-electoral crises, which can result from the erosion of confidence due to the protective approach of Governments in dealing with the crisis. It is fortunate, as Mr. Lacroix noted, that this impact is limited to the extent possible.

We have also had to ensure that the pandemic does not overshadow a number of conflicts that were at the forefront of our agenda prior to the onset of the humanitarian crisis. To this end, updates from the Secretary-General to the Security Council on United Nations efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic in countries in armed conflict or affected by humanitarian crises, as well as on the impact of COVID-19 on the ability of peacekeeping operations and special political missions to carry out the priority tasks assigned to them, will be necessary. I thank Mr. Lacroix for the efforts made within peace missions to protect their contingents and populations.

Finally, I would like to take this moment to emphasize the unique opportunity that this resolution offers us to reaffirm not only the importance of international cooperation and multilateralism, but also the role of subregional, regional and global organizations, such as the World Health Organization, which we support, in the fight against this pandemic.

The cacophony and blame games that prevailed early in the pandemic must give way to an awareness that we are all potential victims unless we work collectively to find a vaccine against this dangerous virus. In this regard, I agree with the words of Ms. DiCarlo in her briefing this morning. We hope that once a cure is found, it will be accessible to the weakest and the less fortunate. I thank China for its renewed commitment to that goal.

Annex XI**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, Inga Rhonda King**

Let me begin by also thanking you, Sir, for convening this timely discussion, and expressing our appreciation to the briefers for leading this fruitful exchange. We commend the Secretariat for its remarkable efforts in supporting the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) response by spearheading ceasefire talks, providing field mission support to affected countries, ensuring effective risk mitigation and preventive measures for deployed personnel, and striving to maintain operational continuity in the implementation of mandates.

The unanimous adoption, two months ago, of resolution 2532 (2020), which reinforces the Secretary-General's calls for a global ceasefire, marked an important milestone for the Security Council and for the wider multilateral system. We successfully navigated divisions and divergent views to deliver a clear message of unity and hope to the international community. Yet, ever mindful of the efforts thus far, more must be done to ensure that hard-won gains across the peace-security-development nexus are preserved.

Today, as confirmed and underscored by all of our briefers this morning, the pandemic continues to accentuate vulnerabilities and exacerbate risks in many situations on the Council's agenda as delicate peace agreements have become increasingly fragile and many belligerent parties, including armed groups, have disregarded our calls for a global ceasefire. Furthermore, the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic have magnified inequalities, intensified humanitarian concerns, and aggravated social, political and communal divisions, increasing the probability of violent conflict.

Addressing the monumental and complex challenges precipitated by this pandemic will require the political will to fully implement resolution 2532 (2020). This means, in practical terms, that all countries, and the regional and subregional organizations within which they are situated, must spare no effort to promote an immediate cessation of hostilities and ensure that the rule of law, including international law, is upheld so that the international community can channel our collective efforts towards addressing the health, socioeconomic, political and security dimensions of the pandemic.

Our approach to managing the COVID-19 health crisis must be conflict-sensitive and sovereignty-supporting. In this light, we again reiterate the calls on all parties to abandon unilateral actions, including the use of economic sanctions, that exacerbate hardship and impede efforts to respond to the pandemic, especially in conflict-affected countries where State capacity is easily overwhelmed.

We also appeal for greater regional and international cooperation to better manage the trafficking of small arms and light weapons, the unlawful exploitation and trade of natural resources, the illicit supply of narcotics, and other activities that embolden armed groups and organized criminals as they profit from these illegal activities while endangering human security and disrupting peace processes.

In conclusion, we reiterate our full support for resolution 2532 (2020) and emphasize that only through a total cessation of hostilities will conflict-affected countries be able to manage this health crisis as they mend their social fabrics, advance peace processes and strengthen governance. At this crucial moment, we must continue to amplify the calls for a global ceasefire and strengthen capacities to assist those made most vulnerable.

Annex XII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of South African to the United Nations, Jerry Matthews Matjila**

I thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting to allow the Security Council to be informed on the implementation of resolution 2532 (2020). We once again pay tribute to diplomats from France and from our sister African country, Tunisia, for resolution 2532 (2020), whose implementation we are discussing today.

I would also like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo; the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix; and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Mark Lowcock, for their comprehensive briefings.

I would like to begin by paying tribute to all United Nations personnel, including the gallant peacekeepers who have paid the ultimate price while on duty contributing to a peaceful and tolerant world.

We also convey our condolences to thousands of families who have lost loved ones to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), pledge our solidarity to millions across all regions of the world who continue to suffer from this deadly pandemic, and, equally, wish a speedy recovery to those affected by COVID-19. We salute front-line workers everywhere in the world for their outstanding work to keep us safe.

South Africa notes with concern that the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, in order to focus due attention on the COVID-19 pandemic and attempts to mitigate its impacts, has not been broadly respected by parties to conflict.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented an added burden to countries affected by conflict due to the numerous restrictions resulting from it, which may derail progress in achieving the necessary milestones in political processes. Regrettably, in some countries where the call for a global ceasefire was initially respected, tensions have risen once again, and the gains made in achieving political settlements are being undermined.

In fact, we are also concerned that some armed groups, as well as terrorist groups, have taken advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic to intensify their activities and launch armed attacks, including on civilians.

South Africa therefore reiterates its support for a global ceasefire and cessation of hostilities and urges parties in areas of conflict to heed this call and prioritize efforts to consolidate durable peace and stability. We also welcome and support the continued efforts and work of the Special Representatives and Special Envoys of the Secretary-General in advocating a cessation of hostilities.

We commend the continued efforts of the United Nations peacekeeping missions to protect the safety and health of peacekeepers. We further welcome the swift action and mitigation measures taken by the United Nations peace missions to ensure that peacekeepers do not become a contagion factor on the ground. We also commend the efforts of peacekeeping missions to support host countries in tackling the pandemic while continuing to carry out their mandates.

The humanitarian situations in many countries in conflict have worsened due to the prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Resolution 2532 (2020) calls for a humanitarian ceasefire in order to allow for the safe delivery of and access to humanitarian assistance. In this regard, we call on the parties to conflict to ensure unhindered access to humanitarian assistance in accordance with international humanitarian law.

We note the provisions for exemptions in the various sanctions regimes to allow access to humanitarian aid and are cognizant of the improvements to fast track applications for humanitarian exemptions to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it is apparent that the impact of sanctions and the resultant socioeconomic effects are preventing countries from effectively combating the COVID-19 pandemic. This is exposing already vulnerable civilians, including refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons to additional difficult conditions. We therefore call on Council members to continue their efforts to improve the fast-tracking of exemptions in order to enable access to humanitarian assistance.

Furthermore, the broader impact of unilateral coercive measures, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, is exacerbating the suffering of ordinary civilians. It is for this reason that South Africa reiterates its support for the Secretary-General's call for the lifting of sanctions measures in order to allow these countries to adequately address the effects of the pandemic.

It is vital that the Security Council remain steadfast in its support for countries experiencing armed conflict, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also important that it continue to pursue inclusive dialogue, the implementation of political agreements and providing assistance for solutions aimed at conflict prevention, as part of its responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

In conclusion, the pandemic has illustrated, now more than ever, that it is imperative for countries to cooperate closely in the face of global public health and other emergencies in solidarity with one another. Continued efforts to enhance a coherent and coordinated response by the entire United Nations system to address the pandemic remain paramount.

In this context, South Africa reiterates its strong support for the leadership role of the World Health Organization and its Director-General, Mr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, in dealing with the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

South Africa thanks all countries that have contributed the much-needed personal protective equipment, and medical, technical and financial assistance to many African countries, including South Africa, to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Annex XIII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Tunisia to the United Nations

At the outset, I would like to thank Under-Secretaries-General Rosemary DiCarlo, Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Mark Lowcock for their briefings.

Resolution 2532 (2020) was a step in the right direction, as it marked unequivocally the Council's clear commitment to addressing the impact of the pandemic on items on its agenda. It also contained important provisions calling for a cessation of hostilities and a humanitarian pause, as well as a plea for intensified international cooperation to mitigate the impact of the pandemic.

Yet, two months after the adoption of that resolution, we believe that much more is needed to translate those provisions into concrete reality on the ground.

Today's debate is a timely opportunity to reiterate our resolve to implement this resolution in a way that makes a difference to people's lives, especially those most affected by the pandemic, in conflict zones and refugee camps. It is an opportunity to rebuild momentum around the need to stand as one in full solidarity against this invisible yet global common threat to the whole of humanity.

While commending all the measures taken by the Department of Peace Operations to protect the safety, security and health of all United Nations personnel in peace operations and special political missions, and to preserve their ability to deliver their mandated priority tasks, the appeal for a global ceasefire, even though prompted some positive responses from Governments and non-State actors, did not yet move the parties in many instances to suspend hostilities or take steps to de-escalate.

Even where there was apparent goodwill among conflict parties to pause violence in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), such intentions were not often translated into technical ceasefire agreements with clear terms and security guarantees that all sides could accept.

Obviously, the ceasefire appeal requires stronger diplomatic efforts to meet these challenges, and I take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General's Special Representatives and Special Envoys as well as the Resident Coordinators, who, despite the difficult circumstances, are engaging actively with conflict actors to help move towards ceasefires on the ground as a prerequisite for lasting peace.

On the humanitarian front, the situation has deteriorated in many conflict zones, particularly in Syria and Yemen, where the pandemic is exacerbating the already dire security and humanitarian conditions.

The impact of COVID-19 on conflict-affected settings has been much worse than initially expected, with a serious and growing risk of famine in many regions. Millions of additional people there will face a food crisis because of the combination of conflict and the pandemic, and millions of children may never return to school. Those tragedies would create opportunities for armed and terrorist groups to recruit and radicalize desperate young men.

If we fail to provide a coordinated international response to the pandemic, we would risk losing the gains made on health, poverty, education, women's empowerment, development and stability over the past decades around the world.

It is Tunisia's profound belief that we will not be able to defeat this pandemic in each of our countries without solidarity and unity at the international, regional and national levels; solidarity because none of us can face it alone, and unity because no one is immune until everyone is immune.

We commend in this regard the leading role of the United Nations system in coordinating our global response to COVID-19 and believe that the World Health Organization should make a central contribution to those efforts.

In conclusion, with the outbreak of COVID-19, the world has clearly entered a volatile and unstable new phase. The pandemic is changing our assumptions about threats to international peace and security. As we commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, it is important to recognize that today humankind is facing today new types of enemies. They are invisible, transboundary and global, and no country will be immune from their impact. We cannot face such dangers using the same instruments we have inherited from previous times. As the nature and scope of threats evolve, we need to rethink security and adapt our approaches and tools.

Tunisia strongly believes that the Security Council needs to discuss these issues in greater depth to be able to deliver on its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Annex XIV**Statement by the Chargé d'affaires of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, Jonathan Allen**

I thought it was a particularly thoughtful and thought-provoking set of briefings, which perhaps reflects the subject matter that we are discussing today. I think that there is a lot for us to take away from that.

Because this is our first Council meeting in follow-up to the original resolution (resolution 2532 (2020)), I just want to again pay tribute to the painstaking French diplomacy that got us here, particularly to Nicolas de Rivière. I want also to pay personal tribute to the Tunisian Permanent Representative, Mr. Kabtani. The United Kingdom strongly supports the implementation of resolution 2532 (2020) and calls on all Member States to uphold their international commitments. Breaches of the arms embargoes agreed by the Council are worsening in conflicts throughout the world.

Let me talk about the situation in three areas out of many which we could discuss today, Yemen, South Sudan and the Sudan, and see if we can draw any conclusions.

In Yemen, following the Secretary-General's call, we did see unilateral ceasefires by the Saudi-led coalition. These were, sadly, not reciprocated. But that is why the Council must continue to strongly support the United Nations Special Envoy's efforts to secure a lasting political solution to the conflict in Yemen and why it is vital that all Member States comply with the arms embargo. It is also vital, as the Council has called for regularly, that all parties engage constructively with the process. And we urge all to cease provocative military offenses, in particular the Houthis in Ma'rib, as well as their cross-border attacks into Saudi Arabia. The humanitarian crisis, already the world's worst, is significantly worsening, with the effects of restrictions related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on access and shortages of United Nations funding, as described regularly by Mark Lowcock in our debates on Yemen, which make the peace process even more necessary and even more urgent.

We must also not lose focus on South Sudan. Recent increases in violence, combined with food insecurity and flooding, put South Sudan again at risk of catastrophe. The peace deal of 2018 remains the best chance for long-term stability. But pressure is needed from all parties in order to deliver further progress if we are going to maintain that ceasefire, protect humanitarian workers and ensure that we can help South Sudan respond.

More encouragingly, we welcome the recent progress towards a comprehensive peace agreement with the Sudan, including the important steps taken in Juba on 31 August with the Sudan Revolutionary Front. Again, we urge all parties involved to work together with the international community to ensure the swift and effective implementation of that agreement and for all other groups to engage without preconditions to achieve the comprehensive peace that the Sudanese people have called for.

My colleague the representative of China mentioned sanctions. I think it is a shame that there has been some intentional blurring of issues on sanctions and attempts to take advantage of a potential COVID-19-related tragedy. Sanctions are a vital tool in our armoury.

Let us take the example of Syria and work that through. There are United Kingdom and European Union sanctions on Syria. They specifically target those responsible for human rights abuses against ordinary Syrians and those who support or benefit from the Al-Assad regime's corruption and murderous activity. Sanctions do not apply to food, medicine, medical equipment or medical assistance. Put simply,

the problem facing Syria's health sector is not sanctions but rather that the regime is more intent on bombing hospitals than building them, and the restrictions imposed on cross-border aid.

Humanitarian exemptions apply to sanctions regimes, mitigating the impact of sanctions on humanitarian programmes. We have always worked, and we continue to work, with organizations and individuals to ensure that sanctions do not affect humanitarian operations and that organizations and individuals are able to import non-conflict-related goods. The issue in Syria, of course, is the chronic mismanagement of Syria's economy by a corrupt regime and its friends.

I would turn, if I might, to the question of famine. Resolution 2532 (2020) underpins some vital humanitarian principles and interests. Conflict and COVID-19 have seen the outlook for food security in 2020 become increasingly bleak. Mark Lowcock warned about that not only today but also in his white note. An end to conflict and the realization of the ceasefire call contained in resolution 2532 (2020) are essential. Millions of people are in crisis or emergency stages of food insecurity, and the risk of famine looms in several countries. The United Kingdom continues to support the United Nations and other international organizations, which we believe may provide effective and efficient support in those places that need it most. The United Kingdom's current contribution is more than \$1 billion.

More also needs to be done though on the ground by Governments and non-State armed groups to improve humanitarian access in areas where it is hard to reach the most vulnerable populations. Access has been further challenged by COVID-19 lockdown measures and international travel restrictions. I would urge, as did Mark Lowcock, all Governments to ease visa restrictions on key humanitarian workers. But the Council needs a better understanding overall of who is blocking access, what its impact is on the humanitarian situation and how to address it.

Let me just quickly say that I am grateful to Under-Secretary-General Lacroix for his comprehensive briefing on the peacekeeping side, and I wish to express thanks and appreciation for peacekeepers and their actions to support their host countries and of course, to avoid inadvertently spreading the virus themselves.

Ultimately, conflict prevention and resolution are our only lasting solution. Women have a crucial role to play here, and the gendered impact of COVID-19 risks undermining peace and worsening conflict. However, this remains largely unacknowledged and undervalued by Governments and international organizations. The United Kingdom strongly urges parties to armed conflict to invest in peace processes that include the meaningful participation of women, youth, religious groups and civil society.

Let me conclude by saying that I think that we need more regular horizon-scanning of situations that may threaten international peace and security, using effective early-warning mechanisms and United Nations analysis coming from those in the field and the relevant United Nations agencies and departments. It is vital that we take a unified and combined approach. And that is not a message just to the United Nations but also to us, its Member States. We need to be ready to be agile to support the United Nations as they collectively shine a light and tell us where more activity is needed, whether that is in our humanitarian funding or whether it is in our political messaging.

As the impact of COVID-19 affects vulnerable countries in different ways, we need to look further ahead at evolving risks to instability and take action to prevent conflict. Problems with access to humanitarian aid and health care should be highlighted in particular, and that could lead us to undertake more timely interventions, which must be our common goal.

Annex XV**Statement by the Political Coordinator of the United States of America to the United Nations, Rodney Hunter**

I wish to thank all three of our briefers today for their fantastic briefings. I thought that it was particularly telling, and indeed very important, for three of the highest-level people within the United Nations system to be speaking with one voice on such an important issue, and I thank them once again.

The United States appreciates the opportunity today to continue this dialogue in the Council on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. I would like to begin today by expressing our condolences in connection with the illnesses, deaths and other adverse consequences — including those affecting health-care and humanitarian personnel — resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our never-ending gratitude goes out to all health-care workers, to all United Nations staff and to all essential personnel who continue to put themselves in harm's way every day to make us all safer. I express my gratitude to them.

Since the pandemic began, the Trump Administration has been very clear that transparency and the timely sharing of public-health data and information are essential to fighting it effectively. Unfortunately, however, failures at the outset of the pandemic by the People's Republic of China, where COVID-19 originated and was first diagnosed, have imperilled all of us and caused needless additional suffering and death. In the early days of the virus, the Chinese Communist Party hid the truth about the outbreak from the world and prevented researchers from accessing vital information — innumerable deaths that could have been prevented were the result. We must hold those responsible accountable for their actions, and inaction, early in this pandemic and ensure that future pandemics are reported in a transparent manner early, instead of being hidden from the world.

Now, over and over, we have heard our Chinese colleagues attempt to place the blame on something else and cast themselves as the heroes. They claim, as they did today, that unilateral sanctions are to blame for human suffering and inadequate Government responses to the virus. They will claim that we all need to “look within” instead of criticizing their actions. We have heard these claims far too often in the Council as China attempts to deflect attention from its own actions, whether related to this pandemic, the terrible human rights abuses against minorities in Xinjiang or the repression of democracy in Hong Kong. We can all see right through this, no matter how many times those lies are repeated.

The Chinese Communist Party must answer to the mothers and fathers around the world trying to home-school their children while working full-time jobs from home. It must answer to those mourning loved ones without the ability to honour them with a funeral. It must answer to those who have postponed weddings, vacations, family reunions, conferences, sports seasons, retirements or the purchase of a house. It must answer to those who have lost their jobs or their business.

Unfortunately, we may never know for certain how much of the pain and suffering caused by COVID-19 could have been avoided if the Chinese Communist Party had behaved like a responsible Government and immediately warned the rest of the world of the virus that it uncovered in Wuhan. Not only did it fail the world, but the World Health Organization's (WHO) failures in the early days of the pandemic also contributed to needless suffering and the worsening of the pandemic. The WHO needs to reform, including by demonstrating its independence from the Chinese Communist Party. That lack of independence, transparency and accountability is why President Trump made the decision for the United States to withdraw from the WHO. We will continue to call for its reform and we will seek alternative, transparent

partners in our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. It is incumbent on each of us to collectively commit to the timely sharing of public-health data and information with the international community. Doing so is paramount to our ability to overcome this crisis together and to building our resilience to future pandemics.

Since we last met nearly one month ago to discuss COVID-19, the United States' support for global efforts to counter the pandemic has increased even further. Over just the past few weeks, we have increased our funding for the development of vaccines and therapeutics, global preparedness efforts and overseas economic, health and humanitarian aid from \$12 billion to more than \$20.5 billion. Our steadfast and heartfelt support for such efforts encompasses all facets of the pandemic response, including second- and third-order effects. And we are working directly with those on the ground to combat this virus, including Governments, multilateral organizations, faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, research institutions and many other organizations.

Additionally, we have supported the Secretary-General's call to resource the United Nations response. As of 14 August, the United States had contributed a total of \$908 million in 44 countries to eight United Nations agencies; that is 44 per cent of the total humanitarian response raised to date. We welcome the increased contributions that many have already made, and we join Under-Secretary-General Lowcock in encouraging other countries and stakeholders to do the same immediately. We all need to step up.

The United States has also been a strong supporter of the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, while acknowledging the importance of continuing legitimate counter-terrorism operations. Parties to conflict must continue to respect existing ceasefire agreements or finalize new agreements so that the conflict-affected communities can access crucial aid and take steps to protect themselves from the virus.

At the same time, we have to recognize how terrorists are trying to leverage this pandemic to recruit and radicalize others, as noted by our briefers today. Their goal is to inspire followers to their cause, while accelerating potential acts of violence. The Council cannot allow that to happen. We must stand together to prevent it.

This period, undoubtedly, has been trying for virtually every person in the world. From disrupted livelihoods, upended rhythms of daily life and, of course, the immense sadness of watching loved ones suffer and even die, we have all been profoundly impacted by this pandemic. But make no mistake — the Trump Administration will continue to lead on this issue and will work hard to make the world safer and more secure from infectious disease threats for us, our children and future generations.

Annex XVI**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Dang Dinh Quy**

At the outset, I would like to thank Under-Secretaries-General DiCarlo, Lacroix and Lowcock for their contributions and insights.

Five months ago, the Security Council discussed for the first time the impacts of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on the issues on its agenda. More than two months ago, the Council unanimously adopted landmark resolution 2532 (2020) and explicitly recognized that the unprecedented extent of the COVID-19 pandemic was likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. Since its emergence, the pandemic and its impact have been alluded to in most, if not all, contexts on the Council's agenda. It has multiplied and exacerbated the already difficult challenges of conflict-affected countries and populations. It hampers peace processes, hinders peace operations, encumbers humanitarian efforts and undermines post-conflict reconstruction, development and the sustainability of peace. In that context, we express our gratitude to the Nigerien presidency for convening this important briefing and would like to stress the following points.

First, a ceasefire is a must. We take note of the encouraging number of endorsements of the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire in order to facilitate the humanitarian response to the pandemic by Governments, international organizations and parties to conflicts. Yet there has been an upsurge in conflicts and violence in several parts of the world, compounding already dire humanitarian situations. Warring parties must match their words and deeds by adhering to the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire and that of resolution 2532 (2020) for a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on the Council's agenda. The United Nations and regional organizations can, and should, continue to support the effective implementation of the ceasefire, including through mediation efforts.

Secondly, people must be protected. The peoples in countries in situations of armed conflict or affected by humanitarian crises look to the Council for its continued unity and solidarity in effectively addressing the challenges I mentioned. We have learned that COVID-19 attacks the weakest people in competing emergencies, such as floods and the locust outbreak in Somalia, or in pre-existing fragile conditions, such as refugee and internally displaced persons camps. COVID-19 does not wear down, it comes in waves. The Council must continue to galvanize collective efforts from all quarters and at all levels — local, regional and international — to assist conflict-affected countries in reinforcing preparedness and response to, and recovery from, COVID-19, and to fight for sustainable peace. Special attention should be paid to protecting essential health and humanitarian workers and vulnerable groups.

Thirdly, peacekeeping must work. Peace operations have been greatly affected by the risk of spreading and contracting the virus and the freeze in rotations. Yet they remain an integral tool for multilateral strategies to establish stable environments for sustaining peace and triggering development, which must be part of a long-term response to pandemics. It is essential that peacekeeping and political missions continue to make peace work in the new normal, while protecting their personnel and assisting host countries in their pandemic responses. In order to do so, the mission and the country must work together as an integral part of a solution to the conflict and the pandemic, including through innovative approaches and adaptation measures.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm Viet Nam's continued support for resolution 2532 (2020). We look forward to the Secretary-General's updates on the

impacts of COVID-19 on issues on the Council's agenda. We reiterate our call for international cooperation and coordination in fighting the pandemic, as no country is safe from COVID-19 and none can fight it alone.
