



Security Council

Distr.: General
11 February 2020

Original: English

Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 8720th meeting of the Security Council, held on 11 February 2020, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Peace consolidation in West Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and the briefing on 08 January 2020 by the Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel, Mohamed Ibn Chambas.

"The Security Council welcomes the letters of the Secretary-General dated 15 November 2019 on the conclusions of the strategic review of UNOWAS as well as his letter of 19 December 2019 and recalls the answers to these letters by the President of the Security Council dated 31 December 2019 and 31 January 2020 on the mandate of UNOWAS.

"The Security Council recalls its resolutions [2480 \(2019\)](#), [2423 \(2018\)](#), [2391 \(2017\)](#), [2359 \(2017\)](#), [2349 \(2017\)](#) and [2320 \(2016\)](#), as well as its presidential statements [S/PRST/2017/2](#), [S/PRST/2017/10](#), [S/PRST/2018/3](#), [S/PRST/2018/16](#) and [S/PRST/2019/7](#).

"The Security Council expresses full support to the Special Representative, in carrying out his mandate, and ongoing activities undertaken by UNOWAS.

"The Security Council reiterates its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of all countries in West Africa and the Sahel.

"The Security Council emphasises that security and stability in Mali are inextricably linked to that of the Sahel and West Africa, as well as to that of Libya and North Africa.

"The Security Council recognises that responsible and credible mediation by UNOWAS requires, inter alia, national ownership, the consent of the parties to a particular dispute or conflict, respect for national sovereignty, as set out in [A/RES/70/304](#).

"The Security Council expresses its deep concern about the continued deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin as well as over the challenging security situation in West-Africa, fuelled, among others, by terrorism, transnational organised crime committed at



sea, conflicts between pastoralists and farmers, and transnational organised crime, including trafficking in persons, arms and drugs and illegal exploitation of natural resources, and calls for a continued national, regional and international engagement to help these countries to address the peace and security challenges they face and it further welcomes in this regard the efforts of the Secretary General to adapt UN support on the ground in Burkina Faso and Niger, and requests to receive updates on these integrated cross-pillar processes through the regular reporting on UNOWAS.

“The Security Council further expresses its deep concern about the intensification of intercommunal violence in Central Mali and Burkina Faso, and reiterates that stabilisation of the situation and protection of civilians in this region requires a fully integrated response, led by the governments of those countries, with the support of UNOWAS and the international community, and encompassing simultaneous pursuit of progress on security, governance, humanitarian assistance and development, reconciliation, as well as protection and promotion of human rights.

“The Security Council expresses concern over the overall humanitarian situation in the region, notably characterised by the impact of forced displacement, extreme poverty, social inequalities and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, and calls for safe, timely and unhindered access for the delivery of humanitarian aid to persons in need, including access to holistic care for survivors of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, and perpetrators to be held to account, and further calls for significant humanitarian and development action as well as the disbursement of previously pledged funds.

“The Security Council welcomes the leadership demonstrated by countries in West Africa and the Sahel in spearheading initiatives to address security challenges in the region and commends their efforts as well as of the African Union and ECOWAS, including through the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (FC-G5S) and encourages Member States to support these efforts by providing the necessary assistance and resources. The Security Council underlines the need for security efforts to be aligned with political objectives, to enable the restoration of civilian security, the establishment of effective governance to deliver essential services, and the revival of local economics to provide livelihood opportunities for surging youth populations.

“The Security Council underlines the need for a holistic approach to address root causes of terrorism and intercommunal violence, prevent further tensions and violence, maintain security efforts, effectively hold accountable and bring to justice individuals responsible for human rights violations and abuses, tackle exclusion and poverty, promote sustainable development, strengthen resilience of institutions and communities, promote good governance and build peaceful, just and inclusive societies and emphasises in this regard the important role of women in prevention and resolution of conflicts, in peacebuilding as well as in post-conflict situations.

“The Security Council recalls the provisions of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance that State Parties shall ensure that the process of amendment or revision of their constitution reposes on national consensus, obtained, if need be, through referendum and, while expressing concern about the increasingly polarised environment and violence, calls upon UNOWAS to encourage all political stakeholders to use dialogue to resolve their differences in that regard.

“The Security Council emphasises the need for national stakeholders in Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Niger, Mali and Togo to work together to facilitate the timely preparation for, and holding of genuinely free and fair, credible, timely and peaceful elections, and to take all appropriate steps to prevent violence, and urges them to ensure a level playing field for all candidates and to work towards full, effective, and meaningful participation of women.

“The Security Council calls on all political stakeholders in Guinea, regardless of their political affiliation, to resume dialogue without delay with the view to ensuring that electoral processes as well as political reforms are conducted with broad consensus and encourages the Special Representative to continue carrying out good offices in this country.

“The Security Council welcomes the generally peaceful conduct of the presidential election in 2019 in Guinea-Bissau and recalls in that regard resolution [2458 \(2019\)](#), and looks forward to the confirmation of the results by the relevant organs in Guinea-Bissau and urges all national stakeholders to ensure a peaceful implementation of the election results.

“The Security Council commends the efforts of the countries of the region to advance the participation of women in political processes including with a view to increasing the number of women appointed to senior government positions, in accordance with their respective constitutions and national, regional and global commitments and resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and its subsequent resolutions on women, peace and security.

“The Security Council recognises the adverse effects of climate change, energy poverty, ecological changes and natural disasters, including through drought, desertification, land degradation and food insecurity among other factors on the stability of West Africa and the Sahel region and continues to stress the need for long-term strategies, based on risk assessments, by governments and the United Nations, to support stabilisation and build resilience and encourages UNOWAS to continue to integrate this information in its activities.

“The Security Council encourages cross-pillar efforts to foster greater coherence and coordination within the UN System as well as with partners in the region through the efficient implementation of UNISS and the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel, and, in this regard, calls on UNOWAS, working with all elements of the UN system in headquarters, in West Africa and the Sahel, in particular the Regional UN Sustainable Development Group, to strengthen integrated responses to the challenges facing the region in order to ensure better coordination and efficiency of the international response to the needs of the people and communities of the Sahel region, and encourages joint annual reporting to the UN Peacebuilding Commission on work to strengthen UN integrated efforts in this regard, particularly as relates to implementation of the UNISS.

“The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide information on UN efforts with respect to aspects highlighted in this statement, the UNOWAS mandate and the situation in West Africa and the Sahel and reiterates its call for an assessment of the implementation of its resolution 2349 to be integrated into regular reporting by UNOWAS.”