



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8688th meeting

Tuesday, 17 December 2019, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Ms. Norman-Chalet (United States of America)

Members:

Belgium	Mrs. Van Vlierberge
China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Adom
Dominican Republic	Mr. Trullols Yabra
Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
France	Mr. Benaabou
Germany	Mr. Licharz
Indonesia	Mr. Syihab
Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
Peru	Mr. Ugarelli
Poland	Ms. Wronecka
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
South Africa	Ms. Mogashoa
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce

Agenda

Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by the outgoing Chairs of the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council according to the year of adoption of the related Council decisions: His Excellency Ambassador Kacou Houadja Léon Adom, Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire, Chair of the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations and Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), concerning the Central African Republic; His Excellency Ambassador Luis Ugarelli, Deputy Permanent Representative of Peru, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001), concerning counter-terrorism, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) and Chair of the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals; Her Excellency Ambassador Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of Poland, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1518 (2003), Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005), concerning the Sudan and Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015), concerning South Sudan; His Excellency Ambassador Mansour Alotaibi, Permanent Representative of Kuwait, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004), concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions; and His Excellency Ambassador Anatolio Ndong Mba, Permanent Representative of Equatorial Guinea, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012), concerning Guinea-Bissau.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Adom.

Mr. Adom (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Over the past two years, I have had the honour to chair the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), concerning the Central African Republic, and the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations. I would like to take this opportunity to take stock of my

tenure as Chair of the 2127 Committee and the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations.

With regard to the work of the Committee, I would like to share my views on the implementation of sanctions imposed by the United Nations and to share some of my experiences and reflections that I hope will contribute to further advancing our shared aspirations towards peace and security.

Since the beginning of my mandate, I have sought to firmly root my role as Chair of the 2127 Committee in a context of active diplomacy with a number of States Members of the United Nations, both in New York and during my visits to the Central African Republic in 2018 and 2019. In that regard, the main observation that has emerged is that there is a lack of understanding of the nature, objectives and context of the overall United Nations sanctions. In fact, during exchanges with various interlocutors, specifically representatives of Member States on which such sanctions have been imposed, I soon observed that there was an overriding need to begin by reassuring them before dispelling misunderstandings, such as the idea that sanctions have a negative impact on the population. In reality, targeted sanctions, such as arms embargoes, assets freezes and travel bans, are geared not towards punishing the countries and their people but rather towards contributing to bringing peace and development to countries and regions afflicted by crisis.

As a citizen of a country that was subjected to United Nations sanctions, it was perhaps easier for me to communicate that message to the Bangui authorities. Many Council members know that Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone were subjected to targeted sanctions imposed by the Security Council. I am convinced that the imposition of such measures by the Security Council played a positive role in maintaining the peace processes in those three West African countries and helped to prevent a recurrence of conflict. Those countries ultimately found their own path to peace and security, which the Council acknowledged by lifting the sanctions imposed on each of them.

Today, as my delegation leaves the Security Council and having visited the Central African Republic twice, I am convinced now more than ever of the importance that the Council and its subsidiary bodies attach to using targeted sanctions to isolate individuals and entities that jeopardize peace processes, target women and children, commit sexual violence, obstruct

humanitarian operations and attack schools, places of worship and even peacekeepers.

We must continue to ensure that these individuals and entities be isolated and prevented from acting, to the extent possible. We must put an end to their impunity and, above all, show civilians, who are the targets of their acts, that the international community is vigilant.

At the same time, armed actors must be aware that they will be held accountable. The more they are concerned about whether their name will appear in a report of a United Nations group of experts, or what will happen once it is included, the less time they will spend attacking civilians. They should ask themselves whether the fact that their name appears in a report will result in the imposition of sanctions against them by the Security Council or by one of its committees. They should also be concerned about the freezing of their bank accounts and the possibility of being sent back to their country when they want to travel. Lastly, they should consider whether the fact that the international community is paying them such attention will not lead to them appearing in The Hague.

Allow me to share some considerations regarding the main issues I have been working on during my term as Chair of the 2127 Committee and the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations.

With regard to sanctions, they have focused on, among other things, strengthening regional cooperation, collaboration with the national authorities in Bangui, the Committee's mobilization against impunity and the protection of civilians in the Central African Republic, in particular women and children.

As Chair of the 2127 Committee, one of my priorities has been to deepen and strengthen dialogue between the Committee and States of the region. I am convinced that the problems currently faced by the Central African Republic can be better addressed by strengthening cooperation in the region. Building the political will and the capacities of those States can help towards eradicating illicit activities in the Central African Republic, such as trafficking in arms, ammunition and natural resources and the movement of armed combatants in States of the region.

To that end and in cooperation with the Panel of Experts, we continued the dialogue with those States by, for example, inviting them to meetings of the sanctions committee so that their views were heard.

On 26 January and 7 September 2018, the Chair of the Committee therefore invited States of the region to inform the Panel of Experts of their comments on its 2017 final report and its 2018 mid-term review. In 2019, I also held similar meetings with States of the region on 29 January and 6 September.

During those meetings, which were open to all Member States, States provided comments on the conclusions and recommendations of the Panel of Experts and also took note of the progress made and the challenges faced in implementing United Nations sanctions, as well as cooperation with the Panel of Experts. I am pleased to note that States of the region attached great importance to those meetings, and I hope that more meetings of the same kind will be organized in the future.

The members of the Panel of Experts also reminded me several times that the meetings were very useful for strengthening their cooperation with States of the region and for clarifying misunderstandings about information contained in the Panel's reports. It is also important to note that the Permanent Mission of the Central African Republic was always represented at the meetings and that it provided valuable information on various aspects of its cooperation with States of the region by noting the progress made and the problems encountered.

During my term of office, I also made sure that I visited the Central African Republic twice, as I have just said, from 2 to 5 October 2018 and from 1 to 4 October 2019. Those visits were both organized at an opportune time and enabled me and the members of the Committee from New York who accompanied me to have an idea of the problems facing the country and to discuss with the national authorities means and solutions with a view to strengthening cooperation, particularly on areas as complex as the arms embargo, in order to restore peace in the country.

Following the visits, I informed the members of the Committee by means of a report and convened meetings between the Committee and States of the region in order to make them aware of the results and conclusions of my visits.

In addition, on 12 September, I encouraged the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Office for Central Africa, the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission

in the Central African Republic to give briefings on arms trafficking in the Central African Republic and in the region and on strategies for strengthening regional cooperation.

During the meetings mentioned above, particularly during my visits to the Central African Republic, I was able to take stock of the degree to which the country is weakened by the impunity enjoyed by armed groups, which freely violate the peace agreement and commit various atrocities against civilians, particularly women and children.

In that context and in order to continue to shed light on the repercussions of impunity, I called on the Committee to remain seized of the issue. On 29 July, for example, I held joint briefings with the Working Group on Children in Armed Conflict, during which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict briefed the members of the Committee and the Working Group. In their briefings, the two Special Representatives emphasized that armed groups continued to commit violence against women and children in the Central African Republic.

I note with regret that currently, despite the progress made in reducing violence during the period following the signing of the peace agreement in February, the violence has not ceased and impunity still prevails. It is therefore the responsibility of the Security Council to continue its work in support of the peace agreement and to punish those who continue to wilfully violate the provisions of an agreement to which they freely committed.

In that regard, I recall that article 35 of the agreement states the possibility of sanctions against persons who do not comply with it. The Committee must therefore assume its responsibilities and consider sanctions against new individuals and entities. Otherwise, potential violators will see that no new entries have been added to the list since May 2017, a sign of the international community's decreasing interest in the Central African Republic.

From January 2018 to December 2019, Côte d'Ivoire chaired the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations which, it should be recalled, seeks to promote triangular cooperation between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop- and police-contributing countries.

The efforts of the Working Group during 2018 focused on the following themes: the protection of civilians under peacekeeping operations in difficult conditions; the strategic generation of forces in peacekeeping operations; women and peace and security in peacekeeping operations; the safety, security and performance of Blue Helmets in an asymmetric environment with an integrated approach; and lessons learned from the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire in order to understand the prerequisites for successful peacekeeping.

The efforts of the Working Group during 2019 focused on relations between peacekeeping missions and host States; reviewing the implementation of the Secretary-General's peacekeeping reform initiative, known as Action for Peacekeeping; the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur; and peacekeeping cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, in particular with regard to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the Group of Five for the Sahel Joint Force.

Concerning the activity report for the year 2019, Côte d'Ivoire has offered an exhaustive account of the meetings held, while endeavouring to faithfully relay the comments made by experts from Member States. Unfortunately, the report has still not yet been adopted due to divergent views among certain members of the Council, linked in particular to problems concerning the issue of intelligence in peacekeeping operations. My country will seize the opportunity presented by the 2019 report to urge the parties concerned to make concessions so that the report, which will be of even higher quality, can be published as a Council document. Côte d'Ivoire reserves the right to publish the document in its national capacity, if necessary.

Overall, it is worth noting the particular interest of Member States in the Working Group and commending the quality of the exchanges therein. Allow me, at this juncture, to express our deep gratitude to the Secretariat, the Security Council Affairs Division and the interpreters, who have worked tirelessly to organize our various meetings.

As we conclude our term on the Security Council, Côte d'Ivoire wishes to stress that we will remain steadfast in our support for United Nations peacekeeping. From our own experience, we are aware

of the decisive role it plays in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to once again extend my sincere thanks to all those who, through their efficient work, helped us to fulfil our mandate, especially our colleagues in the Secretariat.

The President: I thank Ambassador Adom for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Ugarelli.

Mr. Ugarelli (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to express my gratitude for this opportunity to share some remarks on the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council that Peru had the honour of steering over the past two years.

I would like to begin with the Peruvian chairmanship of the Council's Informal Working Group on International Tribunals, which supports and monitors the work of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, which is currently led by Judge Carmel Agius. The work of the Informal Working Group clearly constitutes an integral component of multilateralism and international law, thereby contributing to effectively addressing the most demanding contemporary global challenges, in particular the fight against impunity for atrocity crimes. We exercise those functions being convinced of the need for the Security Council to remain united in support of the Residual Mechanism, as well as in the preservation of its work and its legacy. Not only has the Mechanism strengthened the fight against impunity and served to deter the perpetrators of such crimes, but it has also promoted reconciliation while making a fundamental impact on the jurisprudential development of international criminal law.

The Informal Working Group held a series of informal meetings over the past two years, primarily to discuss the biannual reports of the Residual Mechanism, as well as to consider and ultimately adopt both presidential statement S/PRST/2018/6, which established the time frame for the review of the Residual Mechanism's progress, and resolution 2422 (2018), which, in addition to appointing the Prosecutor and renewing the mandate of the Mechanism, approved that review, taking into account the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. The resolution also calls for the cooperation of all States, as it befalls States to execute the sentences and orders handed

down, as well as respond to requests for assistance and prosecution.

In that regard, I would like to acknowledge the significant role played by each of the member States of the Council in ensuring that the Residual Mechanism continues strengthening its work, including its judicial agenda, meeting requests for assistance, the preservation of historical archives and the monitoring of cases referred to national courts. We wish the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam, Ambassador Dang Dinh Quy, and his team every success in their efforts to continue developing this firm and constructive approach to upholding international criminal justice and the fight against impunity. Moreover, I thank the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs and the Security Council Affairs Division for their tireless support over the past two years.

Peru assumed the chairmanship of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) convinced, based on our own experiences, of the need to unrelentingly combat this scourge in all its manifestations and arenas. I would like to take this opportunity to share three specific points in relation to our work in a position of such high responsibility.

First of all, we wish to underscore the relevance of assessment visits to Member States, which enable the Committee to verify, on the ground, weaknesses and challenges that might require renewed technical assistance; to take stock of new trends and terrorist methods; and to identify good practices so that those can be rendered more systematic. Therefore, over the past two years, the CTC conducted 31 visits to various countries, with the participation of the five permanent members of the Council and Peru. In that connection, we note the importance of members of the Security Council being the first to consent to such visits and to participate actively in the successful development thereof.

Secondly, we consider it essential to foster synergies among the various stakeholders concerned in the fight against the scourge of terrorism. That is why, upon assuming the chairmanship of the Committee, we made it a priority to establish a close and fluid relationship with the recently created United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, as well as with the Executive Directorate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which helps to strengthen the United Nations counter-terrorism chain. We would therefore highlight the importance of that cooperation not being limited to United Nations

entities, but rather extended to relevant international, regional and subregional organizations, in areas such as technical assistance facilitation, the exchange of experiences and the coordination of collective efforts.

Thirdly, I wish to underscore the opportunities offered by the CTC as the preferred forum for discussion on this matter. In that regard, we are delighted to have convened, with the support of the Executive Directorate, 22 briefings and events on specific areas of interest to Member States in the fight against terrorism. The issues we addressed included maritime and civil aviation security, including the use of drones; emerging trends and new threats; and methods of countering terrorist narratives, *inter alia*. The Committee also continued to promote the mainstreaming of human rights and the gender approach in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, while reminding Member States that any fight against terrorism must adhere to obligations arising from international law, particularly international human rights law, refugee law and humanitarian law. We would like to highlight the valuable participation and contributions made during those meetings by representatives of the public sector and civil society, particularly the world of academia, and to express our thanks for them.

I would also like to highlight the policy documents that have been formulated, particularly the Addendum adopted to the Madrid Guiding Principles on foreign terrorist fighters (S/2018/1177, annex), which is a useful tool for States dealing with the challenges of the return and relocation of fighters and their families. I will conclude the section on the CTC by expressing our best wishes for success to the incoming chairmanship of Tunisia under the leadership of Ambassador Moncef Baati, as well as our sincere thanks to all the members of the Committee for their commitment and cooperation, to the Executive Directorate and especially its Executive Director, Assistant Secretary-General Michèle Coninsx, for their valuable guidance and continuous support, and to the Secretariat for its essential assistance.

Lastly, I would like to touch on Peru's chairmanship of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), on Yemen, which Peru has considered a top priority in view of the impact and scale of the humanitarian tragedy affecting the country's population. That is why, in tackling that very delicate responsibility, we sought to send a strong message to the various actors concerned that there was no room

for a military solution and that new violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in Yemen would not be tolerated. It was in that context, under Peru's presidency of the Security Council, that the Committee paid its first visit to the region, in what was a valuable exercise in raising awareness of the purposes of the sanctions and measures imposed by the 2140 Committee and obtaining first-hand information on their implementation. It also helped to foster greater interaction, dialogue and cooperation between the Committee, its Panel of Experts and the States in the region, and to familiarize us with the latest political, security and humanitarian developments in Yemen related to the Committee's mandate.

We believe that the rapprochement that we have been promoting with our various Government interlocutors in the region should not be a one-time exercise but that we should organize similar efforts in the next few months aimed at continuing constructive dialogue and making tangible progress on the process of a political solution promoted by the United Nations. To that end, I would like to underscore the importance of continuing firm support to the Panel of Experts that so efficiently and professionally supports the 2140 Committee. We consider it essential to ensure that the Panel continues to carry out its work independently and impartially, protecting it from pressures motivated by political and strategic considerations that might seek to control the aims and outcome of its investigations.

In conclusion, I would like to express my delegation's sincere gratitude to all who supported us in executing our mandate, especially the members of the Sanctions Committee that we chaired and the very efficient and dedicated staff of the Secretariat, and to express our wish to Ambassador Rhonda King, the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and her team for a productive term as they steer the Committee's work.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): For the past two years I have had the honour to chair the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1518 (2003), concerning Iraq, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan, and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan. I would like to thank the Council for the opportunity to reflect both on my role since 2018 as Chair of these Committees and on the work accomplished during that time. I would like to

begin with a few words about our leadership of the 1518 Committee on Iraq.

During my term as Chair of that Committee, I have been committed to exploring creative ways to support Iraq in its efforts to recover its assets and achieve progress with regard to the delisting of entities and individuals. I conducted consultations with the relevant members of the Council on new initiatives aimed at increasing the prospects for asset recovery and enabling the 1518 sanctions regime to be wound down in the foreseeable future. In early 2019 I convened two informal meetings of the Committee, the first time such meetings had been held since December 2005. During the first meeting, on 9 January, a delegation of the Government of Iraq visiting from Baghdad discussed several issues with the Committee, specifically the recovery of Iraqi financial assets abroad, the task of dealing with delisting requests and the delisting of Iraqi entities from the 1518 sanctions list. The Iraqi delegation circulated a paper during the meeting on action mechanisms for recovering assets, subsequently transmitted as a document of the Committee. At the second meeting of the Committee, on 12 February, INTERPOL's Special Representative to the United Nations briefed the Committee on a possible cooperation agreement with INTERPOL along the lines of similar accords with other Sanctions Committees.

This creative approach contributed to reinvigorating and advancing the Committee's work. In the course of the past two years we have witnessed incremental progress in the delisting of the entities on the Committee's sanctions list. As noted in this year's annual report, as of December 2019 there are 76 entities on the sanctions list, compared to 169 in the report for 2017 (S/2017/1078). That reduction of the number of entities by more than half in two years was due to the efforts of the Committee and the Permanent Mission of Iraq, which submitted a number of delisting requests, all of which the Committee members were agreed on. I encourage Iraq to continue to submit requests so that the remaining 76 entities can be delisted as soon as possible. Besides this, the momentum generated by the Committee's meetings contributed to furthering the Government of Iraq's informal engagement with Committee members. The Iraqi delegation visited New York for the second time in June this year and participated in its turn in a series of meetings with the members of the 1518 Sanctions Committee. It is my firm hope that the 1518 Committee will remain active

in 2020 under the able stewardship of the Permanent Representative of Estonia.

I will now turn to the 1591 and 2206 Sanctions Committees, on Sudan and South Sudan, respectively, without going into too much detail. As Chair, I made every effort to keep the Committees' work transparent for the entire United Nations membership and provided regular open briefings on their work in this Chamber, held every 90 days for the Sudan and at least once a year for the South Sudan sanctions. I will now focus on the implementation of the sanctions regimes, their effectiveness and my thoughts on their possible future.

Sanctions should not be an end in and of themselves. They are a tool that should serve a specific purpose set by the international community. Sanctions can neither exist nor be successful in isolation. For regimes to be truly effective, they should be subject to the Council's regular reflection and revision. They must be part of a broader Security Council strategy and be embedded in a broader political context. The same applies to the activities of sanctions committees. It is my firm belief that if the work of committees are to be effective, transparency and outreach are of crucial importance.

In that context, I consider it one of the Chair's main tasks to deepen the dialogue between the committee and the Government of the country under the sanctions regime and to enhance contacts with relevant neighbouring States. With that aim in mind, I undertook visits to the Sudan, South Sudan and other countries of the region in both 2018 and 2019. To strengthen the engagement of the Committees with the Sudan, South Sudan and their neighbouring States and to allow for their interaction with the respective Panels of Experts, each year I organize Committee meetings open to the participation of representatives of the countries under the sanctions regimes and their neighbours. I also work to enhance the Committees' contacts with other Security Council subsidiary bodies, in particular the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

I am convinced that the full implementation of the sanctions regime established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) can serve to protect the peace process in South Sudan and target potential spoilers who are threatening the implementation of the Revitalized

Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and the formation of the transitional Government. I truly believe that the arms embargo introduced by the Security Council in 2018 has played an important role in reducing the suffering of the civilian population in South Sudan. In that context, I would like to remind all Member States, particularly those neighbouring South Sudan, of their obligations to observe the implementation of sanctions measures. I would also like to stress that one option for complying with and implementing the sanctions regimes is to ask the Committee for the necessary exemptions to the asset freeze, the travel ban and the arms embargo.

When it comes to the sanctions regime concerning the Sudan, I would like to emphasize what I have stated on numerous occasions in this Chamber, which is that the situation in Darfur has greatly improved since the imposition of that regime. There can also be no doubt that the situation in Darfur today is closely linked to the political process currently under way in the country. I am truly convinced that the political changes in the Sudan present a real opportunity for a comprehensive and inclusive peace agreement in Darfur. I therefore encourage the Council to explore the different options for supporting and acknowledging the achievements made so far by the Sudanese authorities and people. In that context, I hope that the Security Council will follow through on its intention, as expressed in resolution 2455 (2019), to establish clear, well-identified and measurable key benchmarks that could serve to guide the Council in reviewing the measures imposed on the Government of the Sudan.

Regardless of the future of the sanctions regime, I call on the international community not to lose sight of the situation of the civilian population of Darfur. Sanctions, particularly arms embargoes, are supposed to ensure the security of civilians, but they cannot replace sustainable development and genuine political participation. The sources of instability in Darfur are complex and reflections on the international community's future approach should first and foremost address the question of tackling the root causes of the conflict in Darfur.

Allow me now to turn briefly to my observations from chairing the 1518, 1591 and 2206 Committees and general remarks on the functioning of subsidiary organs and the role of the Chairs.

Over the past two years, I have fulfilled my mandate from the Security Council with a sense of great responsibility. These two years have made me realize that, despite his or her expertise, enthusiasm, commitment and dedication, the Chair has limited autonomy and freedom of action. It is no secret that certain members of the Council openly reject the tool of sanctions. Given that the Committees reach all their decisions by consensus, in many instances political divisions inside the Security Council have made it difficult to agree on even quite minor actions. It has not been exceptional for me to find the consensus rule being abused. At times it has also been my impression that, despite the adoption of Security Council resolutions calling for the full implementation of the sanctions measures, some delegations were not reinforcing those messages in the respective Committee and were not fully supportive of the work of the Panel of Experts. Let me also point out that the lack of a clearly established practice for co-penholdership of the Security Council's resolutions on sanctions regimes curtails the Chair's capacity to have a creative impact on the sanctions regime even further.

However, all in all, my experience serving as Chair of three sanctions Committees has been a unique and rich opportunity and a very important part of my work as head of the Polish delegation to the Security Council. I wish the best of luck to my successors — the Permanent Representative of Estonia, who will take over as Chair of the Iraq and Sudan Committees, and the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam, who will chair the South Sudan Sanctions Committee.

Allow me to conclude by thanking the Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch and the Secretariat for their invaluable assistance with the everyday work of the Chair. I appreciate the professionalism of the interpreters and the technical assistance provided by the Secretariat. My special words of appreciation also go to the Panels of Experts on the Sudan and South Sudan. One cannot overestimate the value of the information that they provide to the Committees — information that is very often obtained under the most challenging circumstances.

I would also like to thank my fellow members of the Security Council — in particular the penholders, the United States and the United Kingdom — as well as the Permanent Representatives of Iraq, the Sudan and South Sudan to the United Nations and their respective Governments for their fruitful cooperation. Last but

not least, I would like to thank my own team, which has worked incredibly hard over the past two years and whose professionalism and dedication have allowed me to advance the work of the sanctions committees.

The President: I thank Ambassador Wronecka for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Alotaibi.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait): Over the past two years, I have had the privilege to chair the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I would like to use this occasion to reflect on both my role as Chair of the Committee over the course of the past two years and the work accomplished during that time.

At the outset of my term as Committee Chair and with the support of the Secretariat, a work plan was prepared, featuring our objectives for each meeting and the key points of focus that we believed were of importance.

During my chairmanship of the Committee, we held meetings with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations Mine Action Service on the neutralization of armed groups, the monitoring of the arms embargo and the situation with regard to ammunition and weapons management in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, discussed the illegal exploitation of natural resources and met with the Presidential Adviser on Sexual Violence and Child Recruitment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and on Sexual Violence in Conflict to discuss human rights issues, focusing on women and children, which provided a platform for discussing progress and challenges. We also held open briefings for all Member States, in addition to meetings for States of the region, to allow all of them to be heard and relay relevant information to the Committee and to address their concerns pertaining to the reports of the Group of Experts.

In May of this year, I had the opportunity to visit the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Uganda and the United Arab Emirates to obtain first-hand knowledge of the implementation of sanctions measures. The visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region was my first since assuming the chairpersonship of the Committee. It provided me and

participating delegations with an opportunity to hold consultations with high-level officials, civil society representatives and businesspersons from the Member States concerned on a number of issues relevant to the work of the Committee. Following the visit, I sent a report to the Committee and discussed the report's findings and recommendations in a Committee meeting with a view to further strengthening cooperation with relevant States on the implementation of sanctions measures.

The past two years have been very constructive. They have shed light on the challenges the Committee faces in carrying out its work, while simultaneously highlighting good practices that should be continued in the long run. I feel that using all types of meetings available to the Committee, such as informal informals, open briefings and informal consultations, can enhance its effectiveness.

The positive developments remind us that the Security Council should continue to combat the rampant impunity enjoyed by armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and send a clear message to those who intend to undermine peace and security in the country and the region. Some individuals subject to sanctions continue to abuse and prey on civilians and benefit from the cash generated by their illegal taxation of the population and exploitation of natural resources. These individuals succeed in circumventing the sanctions as they do not travel or make banking transactions.

Member States should be reminded that the obligation to notify the Committee before providing military support to the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo would enable effective traceability and better monitoring by the Committee and the Group of Experts, which is necessary for the efforts of the Council to resolve the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region. This is the case because, with less visibility, weapons and military equipment can end up in the hands of armed groups that use them to attack civilians, humanitarian workers and United Nations peacekeepers in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I would like to conclude my remarks and reflections in this context with two important points. The first is that continuing to work towards the implementation of United Nations sanctions should be a priority. Indeed, I believe sanctions cannot be successful if they are not properly implemented by Member States.

Proper implementation entails cooperation with the Committee, the Secretariat and the Group of Experts by States, which is why we strived to enhance cooperation during my tenure as Chair. Secondly, I would like to emphasize the importance of supporting the work of the Group of Experts, which has provided the Committee with a considerable amount of information on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the most recent period. The experts went to great lengths to obtain credible information with a view to identifying spoilers. On behalf of the Committee, let me emphasize the great value that we place on the work of the experts, their independence and their security.

I would like to take this opportunity today to convey my sincere thanks and appreciation to all who have worked with and supported my chairpersonship over the course of these two years, most notably the members of the committees that I have chaired, without whom we would not have been successful in accomplishing our objectives. I must express my most sincere gratitude to our friends and colleagues in the sanctions secretariat, who have provided us with the utmost support over the last two years.

Please allow me to say a few words in my capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. As members know, I assumed the Chair of the Informal Working Group at the start of 2018, shortly after the adoption of revised presidential note S/2016/619, otherwise known as note 507, which was facilitated by Japan in its capacity as former Chair of the Informal Working Group in the preceding two years. The Informal Working Group held 11 formal meetings, 5 in 2018 and 6 in 2019. We also held many informal informals for the purpose of discussions and negotiations.

During its first presidency of the Security Council, in the month of February 2018, Kuwait convened an open debate on the issue of working methods, at which many Member States stressed the need for continued discussion and engagement on the enhancement of the Council's working methods and decision-making process (see S/PV.8175). The discussions in the open debate set the tone for the Informal Working Group's programme of work. During the first year of its chairpersonship of the Group, Kuwait convened several meetings and informal briefings on various issues related to the Council's working methods, many of which were proposed by Member States during the open debate. A non-paper containing proposals based

on those put forward by the wider membership during the open debate was also prepared and circulated to members by the Chair. During the second year of our chairpersonship, in 2019, we drafted and circulated eight presidential notes, which included proposals on co-penholdership, subsidiary bodies, visiting missions, wrap-up sessions and several other issues. Over the course of the last year, we discussed these proposals within the group and received feedback from Council members by convening several rounds of negotiations and bilateral meetings. We hope to see these notes adopted before the end of this month.

Kuwait also held an open debate during its second presidency of the Council, in June, on the implementation of note 507 (see S/PV.8539), which served as an opportunity to update Member States on the progress made in the deliberations of the Informal Working Group thus far and also to hear feedback from the wider membership on the Council's performance in the context of its working methods. The meeting also saw two procedural precedents, namely, the first-ever joint statement by the 10 elected members, delivered by the representative of South Africa, and the statement delivered by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of more than 20 former elected numbers.

With the assistance of the Secretariat, the Informal Working Group also came up with a set of indicators designed to measure the implementation of several aspects of note 507, including the number of references to note 507 in Council meetings, the number and format of meetings held, the number and type of papers presented in Council meetings, the gender of briefers and the number of wrap-up sessions held. These indicators were updated and circulated to members on a quarterly basis and remained a standing agenda item at all the meetings of the Informal Working Group. The selection of subsidiary body chairs was also facilitated by the Chair, in his capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group, in both 2018 and 2019, in accordance with the provisions of note 507, with a permanent member also serving as a facilitator both years.

We are currently carrying out the hand-over to the incoming Chairs and hope to ensure that the momentum achieved in the last two years will continue when Saint Vincent and the Grenadines takes over the chairpersonship next year. To help with a smooth handover, we are co-organizing a workshop with Saint Vincent and the Grenadines involving all 15 members, to take place in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in

January. The workshop will focus specifically on the issue of working methods and the Informal Working Group. We hope that this workshop will set the tone for the Group's work beginning in 2020 and serve as a forum for Council members to engage with one another and continue exploring ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's work through its working methods.

As we have mentioned before, it is vital to stress that improving the working methods of the Council does not end with the adoption of the revised version of note 507. The whole process, including note 507, which we consider as a living document, is dynamic and evolving. We therefore believe that it requires an open mind and flexibility and that the issue of enhancing the working methods is an ongoing process.

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all members of the Security Council, including the former members that we worked with during our first year on the Council, in addition to the wider membership and, of course, the Secretariat for their cooperation over the past two years. I am confident that the incoming Chair, Ambassador Inga Rhonda King of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, will bring her enthusiasm and ideas to further the work of the Group. I convey my best wishes to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and assure that country of our full support and cooperation from outside of the Council.

The President: I thank Ambassador Alotaibi for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Ndong Mba.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to thank the delegation of the United States for having convened this briefing and for giving me the opportunity to address the Security Council as outgoing Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012), concerning Guinea-Bissau. It has been a privilege indeed, over the course of Equatorial Guinea's two-year term on the Security Council, to serve in this important organ. I wish to share with the members of the Council some purely personal observations I have made in my capacity in the Committee and on behalf of my country, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

As Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012), concerning Guinea-Bissau, our main objective was to

ensure the full implementation of the basic mandates of that subsidiary body. In conducting the work of the Committees, Equatorial Guinea endeavoured to be transparent, as we strictly followed the rules of procedure and refrained from politicizing the issues. Guinea-Bissau has been facing a chronic political crisis for years, and the root causes of instability in the country have yet to be resolved. International and regional efforts to find a lasting solution to the political crisis already appear to have had an effect on the ground, as some of the key provisions of the Conakry Agreement have been implemented, mainly as a result of the appeals made and the significant pressure exerted by the Security Council, as well as by regional and international actors such as the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the European Union.

The international community has the capacity to promote the use of different tools such as dialogue, good offices, the maintenance of special political missions in the field and sanctions, among others. But the best solution for ultimately achieving institutional stability and peace in Guinea-Bissau lies in the hands of its leaders. As the Council is aware, 2019 is an election year in Guinea-Bissau, and ensuring the stability, transparency and legitimacy of its institutions must be the cornerstone of its democratic process, a key element for consolidating peace in the country. We hope that the second round of presidential elections, scheduled to be held 28 December, as well as the peaceful transfer of power in the coming weeks to the newly elected President, will put a definitive end to the uncertain political situation in the country and give way to clear signs of substantive progress towards the achievement of a solution in the near future.

I made my second field visit to Guinea-Bissau at the end of October, and there I was able to meet with the political class at the highest level, as well as various military and civil-society stakeholders and members of the diplomatic community. It should be noted that in the seven years since the adoption of the sanctions, that was the third time that a Chair of the Committee had visited the country. The first visit of such visits was made in 2017 by my predecessor from Uruguay. Some of the remarks that I have made at previous meetings on the issue are still valid in the current context; however, I would like to highlight some of the observations from my report that are still valid.

First, the lack of political will to reach a solution can be attributed to personal interests and ambitions, and not diverging religious, ideological, ethnic or philosophical views.

Secondly, since 2012 the sanctioned military has maintained a republic-oriented conduct that respects the constitutional order and the laws of the country and refrained from interfering in the political life of Guinea-Bissau. I personally consider the meetings I had with civil-society and religious community representatives — both during my first visit, in June 2018, when we also visited Guinea-Conakry to meet with its leader, His Excellency President Alpha Condé, who is working to mediate the crisis in Guinea-Bissau, and during my second visit this year — to have been the most memorable and moving moments during my time as Chair of the Committee. Civil society and religious communities have indeed faithfully expressed the legitimate aspirations of the people of Guinea-Bissau to put an end to the political instability that has persisted since the end of the 1990s, to encourage them to truly come together and to promote economic development so that young people and future generations can enjoy better living standards and conditions.

On the other hand, all the components of society in Guinea-Bissau have been calling for the lifting of the sanctions against the military, given that that political leaders, and not the military, are those responsible for the political and institutional instability. During the current electoral process, the military has committed itself to remaining completely on the sidelines of the elections. I also observed the neutrality of the military during my recent visit to the country, when I witnessed the appointment of a parallel Government by the outgoing President Vaz, which led to heightened tensions in all the social sectors of the country. Those facts are undoubtedly very positive signs of the neutral and constitutional conduct of the military. To summarize, there is no doubt that the sanctions have played an important role in maintaining the constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau. The imposition of sanctions is not an end in itself, but rather a means or tool at the disposal of the Security Council to achieve a given objective. Sanctions must be maintained or updated with a view to achieving that objective.

As I have said on previous occasions, after seven years of exemplary conduct on the part of the military of Guinea-Bissau, I believe that it is now appropriate for the Security Council to consider and take the decision

to lift the sanctions on the military, or end the sanctions regime itself, following the end of the electoral cycle and the peaceful transfer of power to the newly elected President of the Republic. I strongly recommend that the Council consider my recommendation and sincerely thank its members for the support they have provided to my delegation over its two years as Chair of the Sanctions Committee, especially in the form of the Council's visit to Guinea-Bissau in February and for the strong encouragement it provided to all the country's political actors. It is with great emotion that I end my term as Chair of the Committee.

Personally, I know the country of Guinea-Bissau well, as I served there for four years as an official of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. I know the lands and villages, as well as the people and their leaders. As I conclude my term as Chair of the Committee, I hope, above all other things, that there will be a successful transfer of power in Guinea-Bissau and that the situation there can in the coming years be phased out of the agenda of the Security Council, as in the cases of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. My delegation would have been delighted to witness those achievements, but owing to events that will not be possible. We therefore wish the incoming Chair of the Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Moncef Baati of Tunisia, every success. I assure him that I will always be available to cooperate on this issue. I wish to express the importance of the international community continuing to support Guinea-Bissau through multiple channels, as it has done to date. However, it will be essential that such support be accompanied by positive signals and tangible progress on the part of Guinea-Bissau's political leaders, especially during this electoral process and even more so during the post-electoral phase, in which the country plans to embark on a number of institutional reforms.

To conclude, I wish to convey the sincere thanks of my delegation to all the members of the highly professional team of the Security Council Affairs Division, which has supported us throughout this delicate undertaking. Its ongoing cooperation has been vital to the successful discharge of our mandate. Special thanks must be extended to Manuel Bressan, Assiata Abdouroihamane and Ma Da, as well as to all the interpreters and all Committee experts, including those from the delegation of Equatorial Guinea; without them we would not have been able to successfully complete our work.

Finally, we convey our most sincere thanks to the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, whose staff and logistical support have always been available to us. I thank also the diplomatic Missions in Guinea-Bissau for their support and the contributions they made during our visits.

The President: On behalf of the Security Council, I take this opportunity to express appreciation to the outgoing Chairs for the manner in which they have discharged their important responsibilities on behalf of the Council.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.