



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8692nd meeting

Thursday, 19 December 2019, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

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

Members:

Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
China	Mr. Wu Haitao
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
Dominican Republic	Mr. Trullols Yabra
Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Elé Ela
France	Mrs. Gueguen
Germany	Mr. Heusgen
Indonesia	Mr. Djani
Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
Peru	Mr. Popolizio Bardales
Poland	Ms. Wronecka
Russian Federation	Mr. Repkin
South Africa	Mr. Mabhongo
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Palmer

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Letter dated 24 October 2019 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2019/842)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2019/905)

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Letter dated 24 October 2019 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2019/842)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2019/905)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to participate in this meeting.

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

Members of the Council have before them document S/2019/957, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2019/842, which contains a letter dated 24 October 2019 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, and document S/2019/905, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, France, Germany, Indonesia, Kuwait, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2502 (2019).

I now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): France welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2502 (2019), renewing the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). By this resolution, the Security Council seeks to endorse the emergence of the Democratic Republic of the Congo into a new phase of its history and to mark the importance of the partnership between the United Nations and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in order to contribute jointly to the protection of civilians and to stabilize the country.

That is why the Council calls in particular on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations to jointly develop a transition strategy that will make it possible to clearly determine the priorities to be implemented in order to meet the prerequisites for the eventual withdrawal of MONUSCO, in what the independent strategic review called a transitional compact for lasting peace. This initiative will make it possible to concentrate efforts on the east of the country, which is still in the grip of violent clashes, while pursuing efforts to consolidate the State and its institutions. Through the resolution, the Security Council also recalls its expectations regarding the protection of civilians, which is at the heart of MONUSCO's Chapter VII mandate and which is the responsibility of the entire Mission.

But beyond MONUSCO, the Democratic Republic of the Congo will need the help of all its partners in order to fully implement the reforms necessary for the lasting stabilization of the country. I am thinking of justice and security sector reform, and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in particular, both of which are essential to ending the violence that continues to affect parts of the country. I am also thinking of the development programmes carried out by President Tshilombo Tshisekedi and his Government, which are aimed at promoting more equitable access to available resources and basic services and at thereby reducing tensions, particularly between communities. The United Nations, international financial institutions and bilateral and multilateral partners must all mobilize in support of the Democratic Republic of the Congo so as to enable it to achieve these objectives. MONUSCO will not be able to do so alone. The Democratic Republic of the Congo can count on the support of France. We

have already planned support of €300 million over the next five years.

Finally, in addition to these partners, it is first and foremost the region that is called upon to mobilize. The Great Lakes region has enormous development potential and the States of the region have a collective destiny to develop it. This objective has been rooted in the Addis Ababa Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework since 2013. The eradication of hostile groups, the normalization of the extractive sector, legal and fiscal harmonization and the establishment of regional cooperation in customs and police matters require the commitment of all States and subregional organizations.

France hopes that all the political leaders of the region will fully seize the available opportunities to definitively turn the page of the past and build together a future in partnership.

Mr. Mabongo (South Africa): The three African members of the Security Council — Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea and South Africa — welcome the adoption of resolution 2502 (2019), extending the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) for a 12-month period. The MONUSCO mandate renewal for a 12-month period will accompany President Félix Tshilombo Tshisekedi and his Government in their journey towards peace and stability for the development of the country and for the good of their people.

We commend the penholder for its stewardship of the negotiating process and for conducting the negotiations in a transparent manner, in pursuit of consensus. We would also like to extend our appreciation to other members of the Security Council for their constructive engagement.

We support the overall strengthening of the MONUSCO mandate to protect civilians from the threat of armed groups and welcome the indispensable role played by the Force Intervention Brigade in this regard. We commend MONUSCO for the valuable and important role it has played in the security of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in support of the positive political developments in that country. The security situation in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, however, underscores the need for the Government to strengthen the capacity of State institutions, with the support of MONUSCO.

The three African members therefore view the maintenance of the dual priority tasks set out in the resolution as vital to addressing the situation. Furthermore, the resolution epitomizes the pronouncements made by President Tshisekedi on his vision for MONUSCO in addressing the challenges facing his country, in particular the security situation pertaining to the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The three African members welcome the request for the Secretary-General to work with the Democratic Republic of the Congo Government to develop benchmarks that are to be met for the successful and responsible hand-over of MONUSCO tasks to the Government. It is vital that, in this regard, the withdrawal of MONUSCO be based on the positive evolution of the situation on the ground and the successful meeting of these benchmarks.

In closing, we look forward to further engagement with all members of the Security Council and the Democratic Republic of the Congo Government on the future of MONUSCO, taking into account that the Democratic Republic of the Congo needs to advance its national security programme towards the development of the country.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): Indonesia welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2502 (2019). We thank the penholder for its efforts in finding compromise among diverging positions.

Indonesia voted in favour of the resolution for several reasons, one of which is a response to the call from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to strengthen the capacities of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and extend its mandate. We also recognize MONUSCO's invaluable role in protecting civilians and maintaining peace and stability in the country.

At the high-level event on improving peacekeeping performance earlier this month, Ambassador Kelly Craft stated that peacekeeping performance is about accountability. While we subscribe to that statement, we also emphasize that such accountability must be balanced. MONUSCO is first and foremost a peacekeeping mission that must adhere to a certain standard of professionalism. At the same time, it is important to recognize that performance standards must apply to all components of the Mission, uniformed

and civilian. To attain that standard, peacekeeping mandates must also be matched with the necessary resources. Peacekeepers and the people they serve will always be at risk and in harm's way if peacekeepers have to do more with less. It is therefore vital to have meaningful and regular consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries throughout all mission stages.

We welcome the improved balance in the section of the resolution on performance. Indonesia reiterates its commitment to working with Member States to improve peacekeeping performance and create an accountable peacekeeping mission. I salute the peacekeepers for risking their lives and leaving their families behind to pursue peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the world. Their safety and security will be at the top of Indonesia's priority.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At present, the overall situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains stable. In the year since he took office, President Tshilombo Tshisekedi has made great efforts to strengthen his Government's capacity in governance and security and to promote economic and social development, with positive results. This fully demonstrates the will and ability of the Government and the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to independently solve the problems facing the country. At the same time, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is still facing many challenges in achieving lasting peace, particularly in view of the severe problem of armed groups in the eastern part of the country. As such, it is necessary for the international community to maintain its support.

Since its establishment nearly 20 years ago, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) has played an important role in maintaining peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the current complex situation, the Mission must continue to fulfil its mandate.

China welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2502 (2019), renewing the MONUSCO mandate, and appreciates the flexibility of Council members during the negotiating process, which contributed to reaching consensus on the text and demonstrated the unity of the Security Council. China hopes that MONUSCO, in delivering its mandate, will continue to enhance communication, coordination and

cooperation with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We also hope that the Secretariat conducts the strategic review of the MONUSCO mandate on the basis of respect for the views of the Democratic Republic of the Congo Government so as to ensure the gradual and orderly transfer of security responsibilities from the Mission to the security forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. China stands ready to work with the international community to continue to contribute to the early realization of peace, stability and development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): Allow me to take this opportunity to thank France for its excellent work during the negotiation of resolution 2502 (2019).

Over the past year, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has achieved an important political transformation, and that effort is appreciated. Poland welcomes the fact that the Security Council was able to maintain a constructive position on the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and adhere to its main priorities. We believe that this will help the Government to increase the State's ability to provide minimum conditions for the gradual transfer of responsibilities from MONUSCO to the national authorities in the future. The neutralization of armed groups and the reduction of intercommunal violence remain necessary conditions for improving the security situation and ensuring respect for human rights in the country. In that regard, we believe that the implementation of the crucial disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme should be complemented by the community violence reduction approach. It is essential that more emphasis be put on the civilian and police components of the Mission, which would not only support dialogue and mediation at the central and local levels but also promote the inclusiveness of the political process.

Looking ahead, it is of the utmost importance that the Security Council remain in a constructive, honest and open dialogue with the authorities about the prospects of the United Nations presence in the country. Poland hopes that future Security Council decisions in that regard will be based on reality on the ground so that two decades of United Nations peacekeeping efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are not lost.

Let me end by expressing our gratitude for the tireless efforts of the entire MONUSCO team to support peace, security and stability in the country.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States.

Please allow me to express my thanks to France as the penholder of resolution 2502 (2019), adopted today. The United States fully supports the revised mandate, which should improve the performance of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, consistent with the request of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo that the Mission become leaner, better equipped and better trained, with a stronger mandate for the protection of civilians.

The United States has historically been and will continue to be a strong supporter of meaningful accountability and justice for victims of atrocities through appropriate mechanisms. However, the United States does not and cannot support any references to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Rome Statute that do not distinguish sufficiently between parties and non-parties to the Rome Statute or are otherwise inconsistent with the United States position on the ICC, as announced by the White House on 10 September 2018. In particular, the United States reiterates our continuing and long-standing objection to any assertion of ICC jurisdiction over nationals of States that are not parties to the Rome Statute, including the United States and Israel, absent a referral from the Security Council or the consent of such a State.

Our position on the ICC in no way diminishes our commitment to supporting accountability for atrocity crimes. The United States remains a leader in the fight to end impunity and in supporting justice and accountability for international crimes, including war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. The United States respects the decision of those nations that have chosen to join the ICC and, in turn, we expect that our decision not to join the Court and not to place our citizens under its jurisdiction will also be respected.

I now resume my functions as the President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Empole (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank

the Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations for organizing this meeting on the situation in my country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), and for giving me the opportunity to address the Council. Allow me to take this opportunity to again congratulate the presidency on the very important work it is carrying out throughout this month.

Allow me also to convey to the Security Council the recognition and gratitude of my Government and the Congolese people for the efforts made over the past several years by the United Nations, which continues to work to restore peace and stability in my country. In particular, I thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his determination and personal involvement in the search for peace and a lasting solution to the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo takes note of today's adoption of resolution 2502 (2019) and welcomes the renewal of MONUSCO's mandate for one year. That time will be used to strengthen the strategic dialogue with the United Nations until MONUSCO's orderly and smooth withdrawal. The important gesture that the Council has just made is by no means a mere formality but the renewal of a common commitment of the Government, the United Nations, the Great Lakes region and other partners to work together for peace, security and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region with a view to achieving the dream of sustainable development and economic integration in the region.

Peace and security remain essential factors of stability in the Great Lakes region, which is contingent on full compliance with agreements and on the political will of the leaders to work towards harmony in the region. The loosening of tension and dynamic cooperation observed throughout the year since the accession to power of His Excellency Mr. Félix Antoine Tshilombo Tshisekedi, President of the Republic and Head of State, augur well for a better future for the region.

The security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is generally calm, although it is still dominated by the activities of national and foreign

armed groups, as well as by intercommunal conflicts, mainly in the eastern part of the country. Some national armed groups, chiefly the Mai Mai, are associating with foreign armed groups and forming dangerous coalitions.

It is in that context that the President launched large-scale military operations on 30 October in Beni. The operations are being conducted by the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC), with the support of MONUSCO, with the aim of eradicating all those threats, in particular the Allied Democratic Forces-Madina Al-Tawheed wa Mujahedeen (ADF-MTM), a terrorist group with allegiance to the Islamic State. The military pressure of the FARDC has begun to bear fruit, including the neutralization of seven Mai Mai militias and the recovery of several military effects in Mwera, in Fizi territory, on 2 November; the surrender of 20 Mai Mai Nyatura fighters in Ngungu, Masisi, in North Kivu on 25 November; the surrender of 120 fighters from the Mai Mai Kalume group in South Kivu on 2 December; the destruction of more than 95 per cent of the bases of the destructive elements in the Conseil national pour le renouveau et la démocratie and the capture of more than 1,712 individuals, including 245 combatants and 10 political leaders of that harmful movement in Kalehe, South Kivu, on 4 December; the recovery and control of a number of ADF-MTM strongholds, including in Mayangose, Mapobu-Carrières; and the neutralization of leaders of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda-Forces combattantes Abacunguzi, such as Sylvestre Mudacumura, Musabimana Juvenal, also known as Jean-Michel Africa, and Charles Kakule.

Despite those advances, we must deplore the change in strategy of the defeated enemy, particularly the ADF-MTM terrorists, who are now attacking innocent populations in large urban areas, causing death and desolation. Following the recent massacres committed by elements of that terrorist group, the President of the Republic decided to establish the forward headquarters of the FARDC in Beni and called for a more sustained involvement of MONUSCO.

The Head of State also proceeded to change the entire command of the operational zone by rotating the 11,000 military personnel who were present in order to relieve them and replace them with an increased 21,000 personnel. In addition, the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo formed a rapid intervention brigade and special forces, which are currently deployed in that part of the territory to ensure

the victory of our armed forces. The Government has also deployed additional units of the Congolese National Police in the extensive surrounding areas of Beni that have been conquered by the FARDC in order to ensure the security of the population.

As stated by the President of the Republic, the Government and its armed forces are fully and unstintingly determined to eradicate the armed groups that are roaming the eastern part of the country, and all possible means have been deployed to achieve that objective. In that struggle, the Congolese Government is counting on the support of MONUSCO and its partners to restore peace, optimism and hope for a decent life to the people of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that context, my Government appreciates the decision of the Security Council, in choosing its strategic priorities for MONUSCO's new mandate, to opt for protecting civilians and providing support to the stabilization and strengthening of State institutions, as well as to major governance and security reforms. My country does indeed count on assistance and support to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, both for national armed groups that lay down their arms to return to normal civilian life and for foreign armed groups. That is because — and the Council will agree — the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme is of great importance for reintegrating ex-combatants in order to ensure that they do not fall into the hands of armed groups.

During the parliamentarians' meeting convened in Congress on 13 December, the Head of State reaffirmed his unwavering commitment to reforming the security sector, first and foremost to transform the FARDC into a powerful, trained and equipped army; review the Congolese National Police reform plan in order to adapt it and establish a new reference plan on the theme "one nation, one police"; and reform the intelligence services.

The idea of concentrating MONUSCO troops in the six provinces where the presence of the Mission is deemed necessary is in line with the Government's request to concentrate troops in provinces where the threat level is very high and reduce troops in areas where the threat is no longer present. In that context, the President of the Republic has called for a reconfiguration of MONUSCO, with a focus on a qualitative resizing of the troops, which should be fewer in number but better equipped and experienced in dealing with asymmetrical warfare. My Government

intends to deepen its discussions on that topic within the framework of our strategic dialogue.

The Government is tirelessly focused on ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as its function is to ensure that democratic freedoms are respected, in particular by providing professional supervision for public demonstrations. In the context of combating human rights violations and violations of humanitarian law committed against children in conflict-affected territories, the Government continues to implement the road map that was drawn up with a view to ending the recruitment and use of children in armed groups and to protecting them from sexual violence. At the same time, the Congolese legal system continues to pursue, independently and professionally, hearings in the case of the assassinations of two United Nations experts, taking into account the data obtained from the international investigation and additional elements from the team of the Special Prosecutor. The most recent hearing, the thirty-second, was held on

3 December at the military court of the former province of Kasai Occidental.

In conclusion, allow me to recall that resolution 2502 (2019), which Council has just adopted, is aimed at strengthening the performance of MONUSCO in order to put an end to the suffering of the people in the east of my country. As everyone knows, that situation has caused millions of deaths, and the entire Congolese population is eager for it to end. It is now up to us to effectively set that process in motion.

I cannot end my statement without thanking all the troop-contributing countries and the Blue Helmets who have made this great sacrifice in order to restore peace and security to my country. On another note, I would like to extend to you, Madam President, and to all members of the Security Council, on behalf of the delegation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, our best wishes for Christmas and the new year in 2020.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.