



Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 8836th meeting of the Security Council, held on 17 August 2021, 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 held on 8 July 2021 by the Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel, Mr Annadif Khatir Mahamat Saleh and expresses full support to the Special Representative in carrying out his mandate, including in his capacity as Chair of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission. The Security Council recognizes that responsible and credible mediation by UNOWAS requires, inter alia, national ownership, the consent of the parties to a particular dispute or conflict, and respect for national sovereignty, as set out in [A/RES/70/304](#).

"The Security Council recalls its resolutions [2584 \(2021\)](#), [2512 \(2020\)](#), [2480 \(2019\)](#), [2423 \(2018\)](#), [2391 \(2017\)](#), [2359 \(2017\)](#), [2349 \(2017\)](#) and [2320 \(2016\)](#), as well as its previous presidential statements on this agenda item.

Security

"The Security Council expresses concern at the deterioration of the security situation in some countries of the West Africa and Sahel region, growth of terrorism in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin, as well as in the wider West African region, and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and encourages further national and regional efforts to counter these threats. It expresses great concern at the violent actions of non-State actors hampering the return of State authority, basic social services and rule of law in some areas of the region.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the continued attacks in the region against civilians, representatives from local, regional and State institutions, as well as national, international and UN security forces. It also expresses the need for accountability for human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. It also reiterates its strong condemnation of attacks as well as threats of attacks against schools, children, and educational personnel, including the recent abductions in Nigeria. It also emphasises the importance of protection of civilians, including children in armed conflict.

"The Security Council reiterates that the stabilisation of the situation and protection of civilians in this region is a primary responsibility of the respective



governments and requires a fully integrated response, led by their respective governments, with the support of UNOWAS, regional organizations and the international community, and encompassing simultaneous pursuit of progress on security, democratic governance, humanitarian assistance, sustainable development, reconciliation, and human rights in order to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies. The Security Council reaffirms the importance of addressing the underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism in Africa, including by ensuring national recovery and reconstruction, enhancing good governance, and facilitating socioeconomic development in Africa including through job creation and promotion of entrepreneurship, and providing education and health care service for the promotion of the well-being of their people. The Security Council emphasises the importance of the full, equal and meaningful participation and involvement of women in the maintenance of peace and security, in accordance with Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and all subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.

“The Security Council welcomes the feasibility assessment for a Joint Civilian Project to address intercommunal violence in the region as well as the recommendations by the Secretary General. In this regard, the Security Council encourages the Secretary General to leverage existing UN initiatives and mechanisms for integrated and cross-pillar actions with a view to initiate projects specifically dedicated to stemming intercommunal violence more tangibly, within existing resources, in close coordination with the African Union, including its Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL), ECOWAS and the G5 Sahel and calls for support from bilateral and development partners, such as the World Bank, the African Development Bank or other International Financial Institutions. The Security Council further encourages the Secretary-General to start implementing the recommendations in the Liptako-Gourma area, which is severely affected by intercommunal violence and to report on progress made in this regard in his next report on UNOWAS.

“The Security Council recognises the adverse effects of climate change, ecological changes and natural disasters, including through drought, desertification, and land degradation, as well as their impacts on food security, among other factors, on the security and stability of West Africa and the Sahel region and continues to stress the need for long-term strategies, based on comprehensive 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 expresses its grave concern over the impact of the Libyan conflict on neighbouring countries, particularly in the Sahel, including with regard to threats arising from the illicit transfer, destabilising accumulation and misuse of weapons and the flow of armed groups and mercenaries. The Security Council encourages further international support and regional cooperation as well as coordination between Libya, neighbouring countries in the Sahel and relevant United Nations bodies, including in an effort to prevent further destabilising impact on the region.

Regional organizations and mechanisms

“The Security Council welcomes the efforts by countries in West Africa and the Sahel as well as by the African Union and ECOWAS to prevent and address security challenges, which are exacerbated by terrorism, and transnational organized crime, including illicit arms flows, in the region. The Security Council welcomes the crucial role played by the Multinational Joint

Task Force (MNJTF) and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (FC-G5S) against terrorist groups in the region. It recalls that the G5 Sahel States have the responsibility to provide the FC-G5S with adequate resources and commends their national contributions in that regard, while stressing the importance of continued bilateral and international support for it to achieve full and lasting operationalisation and autonomy. It also welcomes the enhanced ECOWAS – ECCAS cooperation on the Gulf of Guinea and the commitment to reactivate regional coordination mechanisms for maritime safety. The Security Council welcomes ongoing efforts by ECOWAS to evaluate its Conflict Prevention Framework Plans of Action and calls for enhanced political support and engagement of the Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel in accompanying this process to ensure its effective and meaningful operationalization in the countries of the region.

Political

“The Security Council recalls the importance of political dialogue and consensus building on key national priorities among all stakeholders as a means to achieve sustainable reconciliation. While reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of all States in the region and emphasising the need to respect fully the principle of non-interference, the Security Council stresses that good governance is critical for long-term peace and stability in West Africa and the Sahel. It commends the recent democratic transition in Niger and the reconciliation efforts in Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, and Togo and encourages the continued pursuit of these dialogues. It further commends the good offices role provided by UNOWAS in supporting democratic practices and the leadership of ECOWAS in mediation in the region.

“The Security Council further commends the efforts of the countries of the region to advance the full, equal and meaningful 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 as well as to elected office more broadly and welcomes the Secretary General’s reporting on this issue and encourages UNOWAS to continue its gender-sensitive reporting.

Humanitarian

“The Security Council expresses concern at the deterioration in the overall humanitarian situation in the region, exacerbated by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and notably characterised by the impact of forced displacement, extreme poverty, food insecurity that is particularly severe in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin, social inequalities and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence and reaffirms the need to ensure access to education and healthcare. The Security Council calls for safe, sustained and unhindered access for the delivery of humanitarian and medical aid to all persons in need, including access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, and mental health and psychosocial services for survivors of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations without any discrimination. It further calls for significant humanitarian and development actions, including through the mobilization of resources for funding the Humanitarian Response Plans, as well as the disbursement of previously pledged funds. The Security Council condemns all forms of violence and intimidation against humanitarian and medical personnel and encourages efforts by States in the region to ensure that perpetrators of such

acts are brought to justice, as provided for by national laws and consistent with their obligations under international law.

“The Security Council, while recalling resolution 2532, and acknowledging the effort of West African countries in effectively responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, notes that the pandemic has further exacerbated existing conflict drivers and caused severe socioeconomic, political and security repercussions, worsened the humanitarian situation in the region and disproportionately impacted on women and girls, children, refugees, internally displaced persons, older persons and persons with disabilities. The Security Council underlines the importance of international cooperation and solidarity, welcomes the efforts and contributions of UNOWAS, the African Union, ECOWAS and other member states, and calls for continued support and enhanced cooperation to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including equitable, and affordable access to safe and effective vaccines as well as essential health services.

“The Security Council reiterates the importance to expedite the implementation of the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) and the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel (UNSPS). In this respect, it welcomes the mutually reinforcing collaboration between the Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel, responsible for political advocacy, convening and reporting to the Security Council on the Sahel/UNISS Implementation and UN Special Coordinator for development in the Sahel, leading on collective efforts, including resource mobilization, to implement the UNISS and its Support Plan for a scaled-up United Nations development response for the Sahel.

“The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide information on UN efforts with respect to aspects highlighted in this statement and the UNOWAS mandate, including on the negative impact of the activities of non-state actors on the overall security, political and humanitarian situation in the region.”
