



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8617th meeting

Thursday, 12 September 2019, 10.10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation)

Members:

Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
China	Mr. Wu Haitao
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Adom
Dominican Republic	Mr. Trullols Yabra
Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
France	Mr. De Rivière
Germany	Mr. Schulz
Indonesia	Mr. Djani
Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
Poland	Mr. Lewicki
South Africa	Mr. Matjila
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
United States of America	Mrs. Craft

Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

19-27728 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Central African Republic

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Central African Republic 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/2019/729, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

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 (*spoke in Russian*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2488 (2019).

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

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to welcome the Ambassador of the United States and assure her of our full support in her work.

France welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2488 (2019), which authorizes the easing of the arms embargo on the Central African Republic. I would like to thank all members of the Security Council for their constructive engagement during the negotiations. I would like to mention two points concerning the resolution.

The Security Council is honouring the commitments it made with resolution 2454 (2019), adopted in January (see S/PV.8455), and responding to the call of the Central African authorities regarding the arms embargo. It is on the basis of the progress made by the Central African authorities that the Security Council has decided to embark upon a path towards easing the arms embargo. This decision is a reflection of the balance in the positions taken by Council members.

By significantly reducing the exemption procedure concerning weapons, the Council is responding robustly to the call made by the Central African authorities once again only a few days ago. The resolution that we have just adopted will enable facilitating re-equipping the Central African defence and security forces so that they can contribute to the security of their country and that of all Central African citizens.

Secondly, I stress that the adoption of resolution 2448 (2019) is also an encouragement for the Central African authorities to pursue the momentum achieved over the past several months and to continue progress in the implementation of the five benchmarks identified by the Council. The resolution includes a number of elements enabling the Security Council to continue to monitor the implementation of the easing of the arms embargo.

Before concluding, I would like to emphasize that the return of lasting peace in the Central African Republic is also predicated on combating cross-border trafficking in weapons and ammunition, which continues to fuel armed groups. In that regard, we call on the countries of the region to work together with the Central African Republic to combat such trafficking.

Lastly, I recall that, in the case of the Central African Republic, sanctions were never intended as an end in themselves, but always as a means to contribute to our common goal, namely, stabilizing and restoring lasting peace in the Central African Republic.

Mr. Adom (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): I join others in welcoming Mrs. Kelly Craft, our colleague from the United States, and assure her of my delegation's full support in ensuring the success of her mandate.

I speak on behalf of the three African countries that are non-permanent members of the Security Council, namely, Equatorial Guinea, South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire.

The three African members welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2488 (2019), which eases the arms embargo imposed on the Government of the Central African Republic. We commend the penholder on ensuring that the commitment of the members of the Security Council vis-à-vis the Central African Government is respected with regard to the easing of the arms embargo in the light of the progress achieved.

Undoubtedly, the easing of the arms embargo against the Central African Government will be a powerful driver for multidimensional efforts to speed up the re-establishment of State authority throughout the entire country. Such a positive development will enable the Government of the Central African Republic to effectively fulfil its responsibility of protecting its people and defending its territorial integrity, which for too long have been negatively affected by the spate of attacks by armed groups.

(spoke in English)

The fact that the Security Council adopted this resolution is indicative of the Central African Government's continued commitment to the implementation of the sanctions regime despite the challenges that it is facing in implementing the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. It should be noted that, if they are strictly respected, the sanctions will constitute an effective instrument that can support the work of the Central African authorities, especially in the implementation of the Political Agreement, signed on 6 February, between the Government and the armed groups.

Our three delegations joined the consensus on the sanctions mandate renewal because of the realization that sanctions continue to have a role to play in supporting the political process in the Central African Republic. The Central African peace deal is facing a difficult time, as the Government prepares for the 2020-2021 electoral process.

(spoke in French)

The three African members of the Council therefore encourage the Government of the Central African Republic, as well as all regional partners, to persevere in their efforts to overcome the current crisis. We assure them of our full support for achieving a definitive return to peace and stability in that brotherly country, in line with the aspirations of the continent

and the African Union's Silencing the Guns by 2020 initiative. We call on the Council to continue to support the Government and all initiatives aimed at convincing all parties that the Political Agreement is the best way forward towards the return to normal life in the country.

Lastly, South Africa, Equatorial Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire call for taking synergistic action by the Central African authorities, the States of the region and the United Nations, with the support of the Panel of Experts, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, so as to ensure the effective implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions on fostering a lasting peace in the Central African Republic.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) *(spoke in Chinese)*: First of all, may I begin by welcoming our colleague Mrs. Kelly Craft to the Chamber.

Currently, the overall situation in the Central African Republic is trending in a positive direction. The Government of the Central African Republic is committed to implementing the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. Positive progress in the implementation of assessment criteria for the arms embargo has been achieved.

Resolution 2488 (2019), which was just adopted, will help strengthen the Central African Republic in terms of peace, security and capacity-building and help promote peace and stability in the country, which is why China voted in its favour.

The resolution provides that the Security Council will review the suitability of the current sanctions measures in January 2020. In that regard, the Council should listen more to the views of the Central African Republic and respect the aspirations expressed by its Government.

China's position on the issue of sanctions remains consistent. Based on the actual situation on the ground, China supports the wishes of the Government of the Central African Republic for the early lifting of sanctions and the arms embargo against that country.

Mrs. Craft (United States of America): I first want to note how pleased I am to be here today with all of the Security Council members in the Chamber today, assuming my duties at the United States Mission to the

United Nations. I thank my Council colleagues for all their warm welcomes.

The United States welcome to unanimous adoption of resolution 2488 (2019) today, which relaxes the arms embargo on the Government of the Central African Republic and commits to revisiting the sanctions regime in four months. My country recognizes that armed groups continue to violate the arms embargo with impunity, and we urge the region to end the arms trafficking that undermines the national security of the Central African Republic. We recognize that progress has been made by the Government and will continue our bilateral support to help the authorities achieve the United Nations benchmarks.

We look forward to working with other members of the Council, the Central African Republic, its Government and the United Nations to support the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic of 6 February and the further extension of State control over the entire territory of the country. The irresponsible flooding of arms into a desperately poor and divided country would only increase the likelihood of a return to widespread bloodshed and violence. This is not what anyone wants.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): Let me also add our voice to everyone else's in welcoming Ambassador Craft.

We also welcome today's unanimous adoption of resolution 2488 (2019), which streamlines the process through which the Government of the Central African Republic can acquire arms and equipment. This is a clear message of support for the that country's Government and the progress made in the areas of weapons management, security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

It is vital that work continue to ensure that weapons intended for the security forces do not fall into the hands of armed groups. Further progress is needed, including work towards the five benchmarks agreed by the Council in January. That progress will take time, and during that time the forces of the Central African Republic will need to continue to perform their duties. I therefore urge the Government of the Central African Republic to make use, where necessary, of the exemptions process provided for in the arms embargo so as to ensure that its forces are equipped with the weapons and material they need.

The United Kingdom supports the arms embargo as a means to help limit the supply of weapons to armed groups. However, it is clear that arms groups have continued to acquire weapons from across the borders of the Central African Republic, with which they threaten the lives of civilians and break the terms of the peace agreement. Therefore, we call on the States of the region, including through their respective mixed commissions, to fully enforce the terms of the arms embargo and curb the flow of weapons and ammunition to armed groups.

More broadly, the United Nations sanctions regime is designed to promote security in the Central African Republic and help implement the peace agreement. We support the use of sanctions, where appropriate, to respond to breaches of the peace agreement and welcome the efforts of the Panel of Experts to draw up new statements of case. We encourage all States to fully enforce all aspects of the sanctions regime. In addition, breaches of the peace agreement, which threaten the lives of civilians, such as the May attacks, must be dealt with under the core mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) to protect civilians. MINUSCA needs to be permitted to respond as appropriate, including, if necessary, with force.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the United Kingdom's full support for the Government of the Central African Republic in their continued efforts under difficult circumstances.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I, too, would like to welcome our colleague from the United States.

Belgium welcomes today's adoption of resolution 2488 (2019), through which the Security Council notes the progress made by the Central African Republic in reforming its security sector. Its authorities now benefit from the easing of the arms embargo imposed on the country. It demonstrates the trust we have in the Central African Republic and our support for efforts to restore State authority.

The signing of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, on 6 February, marked a new beginning. We support the Government in its efforts. We also call on other signatories to respect their commitments. The recent outbreaks of violence, in Birao, for example, are

unacceptable. In that context, the sanctions regime remains relevant.

I will conclude by reiterating Belgium's support for President Touadera's Government, Special Representative Mankeur Ndiaye and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I, too, would like to begin by warmly welcoming Ambassador Kelly Craft, Permanent Representative of the United States.

Peru voted in favour of resolution 2488 (2019) because it reflects the Security Council's firm commitment to the efforts of the authorities of the Central African Republic to restore State authority and bring about peace and national reconciliation. At the same time, with resolution 2488 (2019), the Central African authorities can also continue benefiting from the arms embargo exemptions and receiving support from its partners to strengthen the capacity of its national defence and security forces.

The situation in the Central African Republic remains fragile. The Council must remain united in order to work with the Central African authorities and the international community to ensure peacebuilding and lasting stability in the country. Peru, which has a large troop contingent in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, will continue actively supporting that objective.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): Like others, I, too, would like to welcome our new colleague, Ambassador Kelly Craft, to the Security Council. I would also like to thank Ambassador Jonathan Cohen for the friendship and excellent collaboration with our delegation.

Indonesia also welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2488 (2019). We thank the penholder and members of the Council for their constructive engagement.

We have heard the call from the Secretary-General with regard to progress in the Central African Republic and the need to ease the current arms embargo on the country. We have been following the country's progress since the signing, in Bangui on 6 February, of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. We welcome the efforts

made by the Government to fulfil the benchmarks set by the Council in such a short time.

The adoption of resolution 2488 (2019) is the culmination of that progress. It further emphasizes that sanctions are not the end but the means to achieving our collective goals. It also shows that sanctions are not forever and should be used in line with the real situation on the ground. Indonesia supports the efforts made by the Government of the Central African Republic and calls on the wider membership of the United Nations to continue supporting the Central African Republic. The Council's unity in adopting resolution 2488 (2019) should serve as encouragement for the international community to extend all its support to the Central African Republic.

Mr. Lewicki (Poland): First of all, let me join others in warmly welcoming Ambassador Craft and wishing her every success in her new capacity. She can count on our support. I also take this opportunity to echo my colleague from Indonesia and thank Ambassador Cohen and his team for the excellent cooperation we have had in recent months.

Poland welcomes the adoption of resolution 2488 (2019). We voted in favour of the resolution to express our appreciation for the achievements made by the authorities of the Central African Republic thus far in meeting the necessary security standards and, above all, in ensuring the safety of the people of the Central African Republic.

We hope that the easing of the sanctions regime will be a significant incentive for further efforts to ensure the implementation of the benchmarks established by the Security Council in April this year. That road map is necessary for the Central African authorities to take over full responsibility for the country's security in future.

Let me reiterate that the sanctions are not a punishment, but a policy tool aimed at limiting the illicit flow of arms into the country and ensuring the safety of the people in the long term. It is worth emphasizing that the current regime already allows a controlled delivery of weapons to the national security forces. However, ensuring real diligence and transparency in the area of arms management is key, in particular with regard to compliance with international humanitarian and human rights standards. The Central African society expects a clear message from the Central African Government on the delivery of its security strategy. The restoration of

national security forces, supported by the international community, gives a promising perspective. The agreed modifications place even greater responsibility on the Central African authorities.

It is of the utmost importance whether or not the Security Council remains in a constructive, honest and open dialogue with the Government of the Central African Republic on the evolution of a sanctions regime in future. The people of the Central African Republic can count on the support of Poland in that process.

Mr. Schulz (Germany): First of all, let me also extend a very warm welcome to Ambassador Kelly Craft, the new Permanent Representative of the United States of America. Let me also thank Ambassador Jonathan Cohen for the excellent cooperation, over the past month in particular.

We welcome today's unanimous adoption of resolution 2488 (2019). It sends a crucial and clear message of unity, support and commitment to the Central African Republic, its Government and its people. We commend the Government of the Central African Republic for the hard work, commitment and results achieved over recent months. The Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic and the ongoing efforts to implement it, as well as the overall political process, are positive signs. We also acknowledge the Central African Republic's work and progress on the benchmarks, especially given the relatively short time since April, and we would like to underline that we see this work as part of an ongoing process. Therefore, we strongly encourage the Central African Republic authorities to continue their efforts in making further progress on the peace process, as well as with regard to security sector reform, the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and the management of weapons and ammunition.

We believe that the Security Council has an obligation to maintain its support and commitment to the Central African Republic. Therefore, it is crucial to continue to closely follow developments in the Central African Republic and to be ready to review the measures of resolution 2488 (2019) at any time, especially in the light of the security situation in the country.

Finally, we believe that the sanctions regime and, in particular, sanctions against spoilers and those responsible for sexual violence in conflict will remain an important instrument in helping the Central African Republic to achieve lasting peace and stability.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the Russian Federation.

The Russian delegation voted in favour of resolution 2488 (2019), proposed by France, adopting the changes to the Security Council sanctions regime in effect against the Central African Republic. We have consistently worked towards and continue to insist on the need to relax international arms embargo against Bangui given the evolution of the military and political situation on the ground. We are satisfied that our arguments were heard and duly taken into account in the drafting of the French text.

At the same time, we urge all to remember that the authorities of the Central African Republic expect the Security Council to go even further and to introduce even deeper modifications to the arms embargo. In our view, there is every reason to do so. We therefore intend to return to the issue of further easing the arms embargo during the discussion to take place in January on the next draft resolution on sanctions relating to the Central African Republic. We hope that by that time the views of other Council members will have evolved towards more substantive, practical decisions in this regard. That would fully reflect the interests of strengthening Government security structures, expanding State institutions and safeguarding security, law and order throughout the whole country. Furthermore, it would also contribute furthering successful implementation of the Khartoum Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic of 6 February, which we see as being in the interests of all members of the Security Council.

We will continue to support the Central African authorities in reforming the national security sector, including in the area of strengthening the combat effectiveness and capabilities of the armed forces. At the request of the Government, we are providing military and technical assistance to Bangui at no cost. Two shipments of light arms and small weapons have already been delivered. Russian instructors have been sent to assist in training Central African soldiers. A number of measures have been taken with the aim of improving the humanitarian and social situation and creating positive conditions to improve interconfessional and inter-ethnic dialogue.

We intend to continue providing comprehensive support to the Central African Republic and to take

energetic steps to achieve lasting peace in the country. We are ready to engage in mutually respectful dialogue with all stakeholders seeking to normalize the situation. We believe that, given the conditions prevailing in the situation in the Central African Republic, constructive cooperation of all international players is extremely important and needed.

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

I call on the representative of the Central African Republic.

Ms. Kpongo (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): My delegation welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2488 (2019), renewing the sanctions regime relating to the Central African Republic, in particular the arms embargo. The resolution is aligned with the road map contained in resolution 2454 (2019) and is yet another sign of the great attention the Security Council accords to the situation in my country.

I reiterate my sincere thanks and profound gratitude to all members of the Security Council for the support they provided with a view to achieving consensus during the consultations. The provisions governing the arms embargo have been modified positively, easing the measures in the light of the situation on the ground. Indeed, armed groups are still present on a large part of the territory and continue to receive supplies through

licit flows of weapons and ammunition, largely from neighbouring countries. In this regard, it is absolutely crucial that all Member States, in particular those of the subregion, join efforts to fully respect the sanctions regime so as to ensure its effective implementation in support of peace in the Central African Republic.

We are aware that exemption and notification procedures remain effective tools to allow the security and defence forces to be trained, equipped and armed. They also provide for support to the Central African authorities in the process of security sector reform and in implementing their strategy to extend State authority. We are also aware that sanctions are not an end in themselves, but a tool for consolidating stability and restoring lasting peace in the Central African Republic.

The resolution just adopted is a step in the right direction towards a partial — and, why not, even total? — lifting of the arms embargo. My country expresses this hope because the power balance on the ground puts the Central African State at a disadvantage in terms of the supply of weapons, ammunition and logistical resources reaching armed groups on a significant scale.

I join the members of the Security Council in welcoming the new Ambassador of the United States to the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.