SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT

Independent. Impartial. Informative.

Annual Report 2018

Introduction

Security Council Report (SCR) operates in a niche field, and one that is critical to a rules-based international order—namely, reporting on the work, products, processes and dynamics of the UN Security Council. Our unique feature among UN-focused actors (including civil society and official entities) is forecasting Security Council events, and setting out options for action, through our *Monthly Forecast* and the *What's in Blue* online reports. This helps equip others, including civil society organisations and member states, to obtain the best possible outcomes from the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies through informed, targeted and effective diplomacy or advocacy.

SCR's mission is to advance the transparency, effectiveness and accountability of the UN Security Council. We do this by:

- disseminating timely, balanced, high-quality information about the activities of the Council and its subsidiary bodies;
- convening stakeholders to deepen the analysis of issues before the Council, its working methods and performance;
- encouraging engagement of the Council with all member states and civil society; and
- providing professional and interactive training programmes, including for incoming Council members, to develop skills in Council practice, themes (such as women, peace and security), and procedures.

SCR is independent and impartial. We advocate transparency but do not take positions on the issues before the Council.

Karin Landgren
Executive Director

Letter from the Executive Director

The UN will soon turn 75. In June 1945, when the Charter was signed, World War II was not yet over. Wartime dead would ultimately number between 70 and 85 million, or about 3 percent of the world's population, with about 50 million of these deaths caused by direct military action. US President Truman said, "That we now have this Charter at all is a great wonder."

Is the UN venerable, or outdated? Brian Urquhart, one of the UN's first staff members, described the Charter as a surprisingly practical document, and the Security Council has adapted its ways of working. Inevitably, what it is able to achieve reflects the state of world affairs, currently marked by volatility. Relationships among permanent members are unusually fluid. Members are increasingly unable to hold violators to account, even for situations that the UN has deemed tantamount to genocide, or for outrageous violations of international humanitarian law. Rifts also spill over into Security Council agenda items that could otherwise be straightforward.

Tensions are discernible in this year's adoption with abstentions of mission mandates for the Central African Republic, Haiti and Western Sahara, where Council members have traditionally prized the appearance of unity and consensus in respect of peace operations. On a positive note, only three vetoes were recorded in 2018. Several resolutions at a late stage of development failed to advance at year-end, however, on the financing of AU peace operations, on Myanmar, and on peacekeeping. The impasse reflected veto concerns as well as a desire for satisfactory language and stronger underlying agreement.

In 2018, the number of Council resolutions fell to 54 from 61 the year before. UN operations closed in Côte d'Ivoire in 2017 and Liberia in 2018, and a more stable situation on the Korean peninsula meant that the number of public meetings on the DPRK/non-proliferation fell from 12 to three. The Council undertook field missions to Myanmar and Bangladesh and to the DRC, which SCR joined and reported on, and to Afghanistan.

Syria has been one of several low points in the Security Council's task of maintaining international peace and security, reflecting profound division among its permanent members. The repeated failures to respond adequately to this crisis helped unite and galvanize the Council's elected members, or E10, who in 2018 became more organised and strategic, showing leadership on humanitarian action in Syria and Yemen, in particular.

The E10 also joined with the 'Incoming Five' to write to the Council Presidency in late 2018—in the first common letter by this grouping—seeking greater burden-sharing among all members in chairing the Council's subsidiary bodies. This reflects a trend of candidate countries preparing well in advance on Council process and practice (often with support from SCR) and identifying topics of shared interest among the current members. This approach can lead to greater continuity of issues of common interest from one Council cohort to the next, as elected members work on goals beyond their own two-year timeframes.

Security Council Report continues to track all issues on the Council's agenda, reporting promptly and objectively on developments to a readership that continues to grow. We bring to this work a unique mix of expertise in Council practice; knowledge of its day-to-day dynamics; and the readiness to forecast, while retaining our integrity and independence.

The Security Council is imperfect, but it has achieved many things: establishing two international criminal tribunals, expanding the use of sanctions, and deploying over 70 peace operations that have saved many lives. At its best, it reinforces the existence of a degree of effective world order. At worst, however, it undermines the case for multilateral institutions, already challenged by populism and perceptions of irrelevance.

2018 At a Glance

Output
- 12 Monthly Forecasts on the prospective monthly programme of work of the Security Council
- 225 What's-in-Blue stories providing day-to-day coverage of developments in the Security Council
- Three Research Reports on key issues confronting the Security Council

Situations and Issues Covered
- Africa: Burundi, Central Africa/LRA-affected areas, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gambia, Great Lakes Region, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Sahel, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, West Africa (incl. Boko Haram-affected areas, the Lake Chad Basin and the Sahel) and Western Sahara
- Asia: Afghanistan, Central Asia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Myanmar
- Europe: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Kosovo and Ukraine
- Middle East: Golan Heights (Israel-Syria), Iran, Iraq, Israel-Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen
- Latin America: Colombia, Haiti
- Thematic Issues: Children and Armed Conflict; Climate Change; Conflict Prevention; Cooperation with Regional Organisations; Food Security; Human Rights; Human Trafficking; International Ad-hoc Criminal Tribunals; Non-Proliferation; Peacebuilding; Peace Operations; Piracy; Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict; Rule of Law; Sanctions; Security Council Elections; Security Council Working Methods; Sexual Violence in Conflict; Terrorism; Water, Peace and Security; and Women, Peace and Security

Outreach Events
- 33 briefings on the work of the Security Council for interested UN member states, UN entities, and human rights and humanitarian NGOs

- Roundtable discussion launching the report on *Working Methods: Provisional Progress*
- Brainstorming meeting for report on mandating peace operations

Capacity-Building
- Bespoke capacity development training for seven current, incoming or prospective Council members.
- Half day of group training for the five incoming elected members of the Council in 2019
- One day of briefings on sanctions for the incoming elected members of the Council

Readership
- 15,800 e-mail subscribers
- 500 print subscribers
- 350,000 website users and more than 1.3 million page views on www.securitycouncilreport.org and www.whatsinblue.org

Tracking Security Council Activities

SCR's activities closely mirror developments in the Security Council. After five years of steady increase in Council decisions, the 2018 trend was downward. The Council adopted 75 decisions, down from 88 in 2017. It adopted 54 resolutions, seven fewer than the year before, while presidential statements dropped from 27 to 21. Formal meetings remained at comparable levels—288 in 2018, and 296 in 2017, while the hours spent in meetings rose slightly, from 673 in 2017 to 678 In 2018. The Council held 275 public meetings, the second-highest in its history after the 2017 count of 282. Consultations continued to fall, dropping to 120 from 137 in 2017.

Several factors explain the reduced number of meetings and outcomes. UN operations closed in Côte d'Ivoire in 2017 and Liberia in 2018, removing annual mandate renewals and regular discussions from the Council agenda. A more stable situation on the Korean peninsula is another factor: in 2017 there were 12 public meetings and seven consultations on the DPRK compared to three public meetings and no consultations in 2018. The Council held fewer meetings on the situations in Burundi, the DRC and Myanmar.

SCR covered all the key issues on the Council's agenda through its *Monthly Forecast* briefs and WiB stories. Syria remained a particularly active issue on the Council's agenda in 2018, and SCR provided comprehensive coverage of developments, with 21 WiB stories, 12 *Monthly Forecast* briefs (an expanded brief every month on the humanitarian, political and chemical weapons tracks, in other words), and one In Hindsight article. In addition to reporting on how the Council responded to the deteriorating humanitarian situation, we covered the attempts to establish a new investigative mechanism following the demise of the Joint Investigative Mechanism at the end of 2016.

The deadly violence at the border between Gaza and Israel in 2018 led to an uptick in activity on Israel/Palestine issues, including a failed attempt to adopt a resolution on the protection of civilians in Gaza. The increase in Council activity was reflected in SCR's output on this issue. SCR published a brief in the *Monthly Forecast* ahead of the quarterly debates, one In Hindsight story on the protection of civilians in Gaza, and 12 WiB stories.

Yemen, too, continued to occupy the Council's attention. There were 15 meetings, with two resolutions and one presidential statement adopted, and one draft resolution vetoed. Disagreement over language on Iran's non-compliance with the Yemen sanctions regime led to a Russian veto of a draft text to renew that regime. Instead, a Russian draft based on the previous year's resolution was adopted. Conversely, the Council was able to show unity by adopting a resolution in December that authorised an advance team to monitor and provide support to the recent Hodeidah Agreement. SCR provided analysis of these developments through 13 WiB stories and five *Monthly Forecast* briefs.

In the case of South Sudan, the Council continued to be actively engaged, particularly on sanctions, and SCR provided coverage through 11 *Monthly Forecast* briefs and 11 WiB stories. The Council continued to pay regular attention to the situation in Myanmar with a visiting mission in late March/early April; SCR accompanied the Council and produced two *Monthly Forecast* briefs and nine WiB stories, four of which were on the visiting mission. Unlike 2018, the Council did not devote as much time to tensions on the Korean Peninsula and the testing of missile and nuclear technology by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). Accordingly, SCR produced five *Monthly Forecast* briefs, and four WiB stories on the DPRK.

SCR continued to provide extensive coverage of other situations on the Council's agenda, including the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Libya, Mali, Somalia and Yemen.

Peace operations remained prominent on the Council's agenda, notwithstanding the closure of UNOCI and UNMIL, with the renewals of other mandates and as a thematic issue. With the reform of the peace and security pillar of the UN a priority for the Secretary-General and member states, the Council discussed ways of improving peacekeeping, including reform, performance and peacekeeping operations in Africa. In 2018, the Council undertook visiting missions to Afghanistan, Myanmar and Bangladesh, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with SCR accompanying all but the first. Our detailed and real time coverage of these trips—eight WiB stories, most of them dispatches from the field—is valued. Field perspectives on the work of the Council are rare, and SCR's reporting of Council activities while on a visiting mission has drawn wide appreciation from its readership, including Council members.

Beyond matters on the Council's programme of work, SCR tracks the Council's Arria-formula meetings, which are informal gatherings convened at the initiative of a member or members of the Council to hear from individuals or organisations with knowledge of developments on the ground. As informal meetings, they do not appear on the Council's programme of work, making them hard for non-Council members to follow. SCR published WiB stories on 18 of the 22 Arria-formula meetings in 2018, and we maintain on our website an updated list of all Arria-formula meetings held since 1992 (with their topics, the organisers, the briefers and the symbols of relevant documents).

Empowering Council Members with Knowledge

SCR's website and reports are a unique resource and educational tool for diplomats and others seeking to acquire knowledge about the Security Council and to deepen their understanding of its practices and procedures. SCR also offers a capacity development programme, including interactive workshops. At this point the principal audiences have been incoming and potential Council members. Supporting their preparation helps level the playing field in terms of Council expertise and enhances the performance of the Security Council as a whole.

The SCR capacity development programme is designed as an intensive training exercise comprised of lectures, case studies and interactive exchanges with course participants, ideally delivered before the elected member joins the Council. It offers an overview of the Council's mandate, practices and procedures, working methods, subsidiary bodies and internal and external dynamics. It normally includes sessions on country-specific situations and thematic issues of particular interest to the participating country.

Empowering Council Members with Knowledge

While this programme is primarily intended to serve interested candidate countries or elected members, SCR also provides programmes tailored to other interested member states and representatives of the media, as well as members of NGOs. SCR staff bring previous experience of serving with member state delegations, the UN and civil society organisations.

Candidates for the Security Council increasingly seek capacity building several years before their terms. In 2018, SCR provided capacity development training to seven countries: Belgium, Equatorial Guinea, Germany, Indonesia, Kuwait, Norway and St Vincent and the Grenadines. The training programmes were conducted in New York as well as in Berlin, Kuwait City and Oslo. Between 2012 and 2018, 31 countries have participated in the programme, including seven of the current ten elected members.[1] SCR also conducted a group training session for all five incoming members.

SCR continued its cooperation with the Security Council Affairs Division of the UN Secretariat on an annual seminar on Security Council sanctions for the newly-elected Council members. The 2018 seminar, held in November, provided an opportunity for the five incoming members to familiarise themselves with the various sanctions regimes as part of their preparations to join the Council. SCR is also involved in the organisation and participates in Finland's "Hitting the Ground Running" annual workshop, which brings together current members with the incoming five members at the end of the year.

A significant development in recent years has been the greater cohesiveness among the ten elected members. SCR has documented this development and highlighted in our reporting ways in which elected members have played a more active role on an increasing number of issues in the Council. In November, current member Sweden and incoming member South Africa organised a meeting in Pretoria with participation from both New York and capitals of the outgoing 2018 elected members and incoming five members for 2019. SCR took part as resource person and panelist.

Providing Stakeholders with Increased Access to Information

SCR conducts extensive outreach via briefings and discussions with stakeholders, including Council members, UN missions, the UN Secretariat, foreign policy and security institutes, NGOs, academic institutions and the media. This outreach includes three regular monthly briefings on the issues before the Security Council to NGOs, UN entities, and a select group of member states that have shown a special interest in our work and the Security Council, including recent former elected Council members. In 2018, we expanded this group to include candidate countries for a Security Council seat in 2019-2020. These briefings— 33 in 2018—offer participants a forum for open discussions off the record about issues on the agenda of the Security Council and encourage in-depth analysis of its performance.

For the first time, SCR participated in a formal meeting of the Security Council when SCR's Executive Director was invited to brief during the debate on Working Methods organised by Kuwait during its presidency in February. Earlier that month, SCR had published a report on Working Methods, which had been launched with a discussion at the German mission.

SCR organised a number of events aimed at fostering discussion around issues of interest for Council members. In April, SCR, together with Belgium, organised a roundtable discussion on climate and security. A meeting was held in November to discuss the mandating of Council peace operations as part of SCR's research for a report on that topic. In addition, together with various civil society organisations, SCR co-hosted several meetings with UN officials ahead of their briefings to the Security Council.

SCR continued to partner with IPI and the Stimson Center to organise a series of workshops bringing together member states, UN actors and independent experts ahead of mandate renewals. The objective of these meetings is to analyse how UN policies and the recommendations of the High Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) regarding the prioritisation and sequencing of mandates can be applied to particular peace operations. Since this initiative was launched in 2016, there have been 11 workshops that have consistently been perceived as highly valuable by Council members in order to kickstart discussions on mandate renewals. They take place around five weeks before the expiration of mandates, contributing to strategic discussion before the preparation of the zero draft resolution. In 2018 there were two workshops, on the peace operations in Mali (8 May) and the Central African Republic (14 September).

SCR frequently briefed delegations of officials and parliamentarians visiting New York. Its Executive Director, Deputy Directors and other staff spoke at roundtables, conferences and panel discussions. SCR staff also regularly serve as university guest lecturers on Security Council-related issues.

We have steadily enhanced the coverage in our regular publications: the *Monthly Forecast*, *What's in Blue* and research reports. In 2018, we expanded our coverage by including a specific section in our *Monthly Forecast* of issues related to women, peace and security in relevant country-specific briefs.

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1. Capacity-building support provided to Angola, Belgium, Bolivia, Chile, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Peru, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Spain, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Sweden, Thailand, UAE, Vietnam and Uruguay.

In-Depth Reporting

SCR produces research reports with more in-depth analysis of issues determined to be of particular interest to Council members or that SCR believes deserve greater Council attention. These reports, which typically provide a historical overview and assessment of previous Council involvement and suggest options for future work, are timed to be available as a resource ahead of major Council debates and decisions. They also track the performance of the Security Council in following through on thematic issues on its agenda and implementing previous commitments. In 2018, SCR published three such reports.

- Security Council Working Methods: Provisional Progress
- Security Council Elections 2018
- The Penholder System

Security Council Working Methods: Provisional Progress

This was Security Council Report's fourth research report on the working methods of the Security Council. It examines the most recent procedural developments in the Security Council and its Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions, and takes a longer-term look at the role of the elected Council members in shaping and codifying Security Council working methods. The report also provides analysis of the dynamics and processes that built the Council's body of working methods.

Security Council Elections 2018

SCR's annual elections report provides information on the candidate countries ahead of the Security Council's election of five new non-permanent Council members. The 2018 report presents the candidates, analyses possible issues with regard to the composition of the Council, and provides an overview of relevant UN Charter provisions and rules of procedure for these elections, as well as historical background and established practices.

The Penholder System

This report provides background information on a relatively new Security Council practice whereby three permanent members—France, the UK and the US, referred to as the P3—perform ongoing leadership roles on most country-specific and some thematic issues on the Council agenda. The practice has been nicknamed the "penholder system" but the role of a penholder goes beyond drafting, and generally includes taking the initiative on all Council activities concerning that situation, such as holding emergency meetings, organising open debates, and leading visiting missions. The penholder also chairs negotiations over a draft and speaks first whenever the Council discusses the issue. This report looks at attempts to modify this system and the impact of the penholder system on the Council's effectiveness.

SCR and Security Council Subsidiary Bodies

One of the more opaque and complex areas in the work of the Council has been its subsidiary bodies. SCR's regular reporting, including 19 WiB stories in 2018 on the work of the sanctions committees and working groups, has provided accessible data on these subsidiary bodies. In the *Monthly Forecast*, SCR systematically discusses the activities of sanctions committees and working groups in the relevant country-specific briefs: in 2018, there were 27 Forecast briefs on sanctions committees and 42 dedicated sanctions committee sections in country-specific briefs. As part of our contribution to the body of information on subsidiary organs of the Security Council, SCR has published three research reports on sanctions; our thematic reports on children and armed conflict, protection of civilians and women, peace and security include detailed sections on the respective working groups and informal expert groups connected to these issues. The *Monthly Forecast* has stepped up coverage of the activities of the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security.

SCR has produced fact sheets on all 14 current sanctions committees (on our website) with an overview of the sanctions regimes including the type of sanctions, exemptions, listing and delisting criteria, as well as details on decision-making and reporting.

Progress in Achieving Goals

Contributing to Increased Understanding and Transparency of Council Decisions

SCR publications are widely read by diplomats in New York, senior UN officials and UN Secretariat staff, NGOs, academic institutions and the media, as well as by officials in capitals and UN staff and others working in the field. In the 12-month period from 1 January through 31 December 2018, the number of subscribers increased by 17 percent, from 13,500 to 15,800.

Website traffic remained steady, with some 265,533 users and 986,350 page views for SCR's main website (www.securitycouncil-report.org). The WiB website (www.whatsinblue.org) had 85,022 users in 2018 and 325,950 page views, giving SCR's two websites combined over 350,000 users across almost all 193 UN member states, and a total of almost 1.3 million page views over the course of 2018.

SCR uses Twitter (@SCRtweets) to share the latest developments in the Security Council. Over the last year, SCR tweeted over 400 times, and has just shy of 10,000 followers, an increase of 20 percent. Council visiting missions and new issues in the Council, such as Nicaragua, have attracted the most retweets.

These positive trends in readership, participation in capacity development, and feedback throughout the year confirm SCR's value to our target audiences.

Financial Situation

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES (YEARS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018 AND 31 DECEMBER 2017)

	2018	2017
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	**$ 755,874**	$ 544,962
Grants receivable, net	**470,711**	1,020,395
Security deposit	**166,012**	132,460
Prepaid expenses and other assets	**28,767**	1,712
Total Assets	**$1,412,364**	$ 1,699,529
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	**$ 129,519**	$ 100,100
Deferred rent	**117,589**	14,731
Line-of-credit	**17,413**	1,534
Total Liabilities	**264,521**	116,365
NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions (including cumulative foreign currency losses of $103,348 and $100,448 in 2018 and 2017, respectively	**863,892**	549,232
With donor restrictions:		
Time restricted for future periods	**108,000**	951,024
Purpose restrictions	**184,951**	82,908
Total net assets with donor restrictions	**292,951**	1,033,932
Total net assets	**$ 1,156,843**	$ 1,583,164
	$ 1,421,364	$ 1,699,529

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES (YEARS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018 AND 31 DECEMBER 2017)

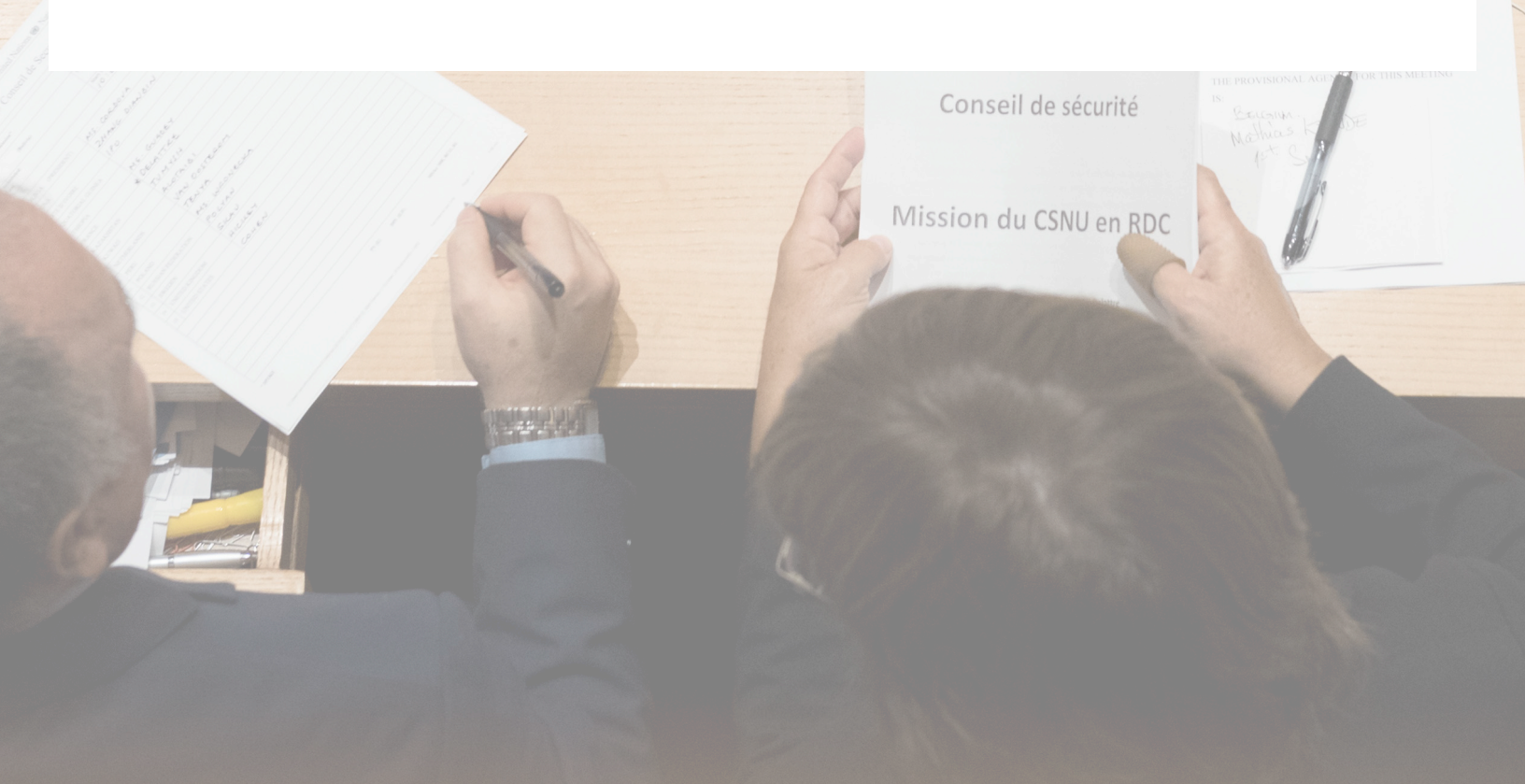|	2018	2017
REVENUE AND SUPPORT		
Grants and contributions	**$ 2,114,889**	$ 3,317,906
Other Income	**15,969**	1,851
Total revenue and support	**2,130,858**	3,319,757
EXPENSES		
Program services	**1,983,393**	1,992,018
Management and general	**433,540**	373,309
Fundraising	**137,346**	126,138
Total expenses	**2,554,279**	2,491,465
Change in net assets	**(426,321)**	825,435
Net assets, beginning of the year	**1,583,164**	757,729
Net assets, end of year	**$ 1,156,843**	$1,583,164

List of Donors in 2018

SCR is grateful to its generous donors. They provide the financial support which is necessary for the organisation to achieve programme objectives and continue to extend its products and services to UN member states and other stakeholders at no cost. In 2018, SCR received funding from the following governments and foundations:

Governments
Australia
Austria
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The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
(Chair until December 2018)

Lana Nusseibeh
Permanent Representative of
the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations

Mary Page
Former Director of Human Rights & International Justice, MacArthur Foundation

Allan Rock
Former Permanent Representative of
Canada to the United Nations

(Reflects Membership and Affiliation as of 31 December 2018)

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(Reflects Staff as of 31 December 2018)

SCR's Work: At a Glance

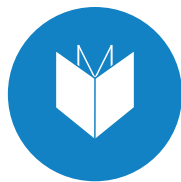Sign up for e-mail updates at: www.securitycouncilreport.org

What's In Blue?

Real-time coverage of Security Council adoption of resolutions. Some 225 reports a year.

Monthly Forecast

Preview of the Council's activities for the coming month. Online and in hard copy at the end of each month.
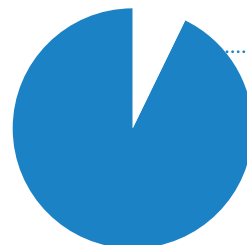
Research Reports

In-depth analysis of thematic and general Council issues. Up to five reports a year.

Document Archive

Relevant Security Council resolutions, reports, programmes of work and other documents, arranged by country and theme.

Capacity Building

90%

Percentage of current elected members who've been a part of SCR capacity development.