



# General Assembly

Seventy-eighth session

Official Records

Distr.: General  
5 February 2024

Original: English

## Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

### Summary record of the 21st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 2 November 2023, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Joyini ..... (South Africa)

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

**Agenda item 52: Comprehensive review of special political missions** (A/78/307 and A/C.4/78/L.9)

1. **Mr. Jenča** (Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Department of Peace Operations), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions (A/78/307) on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, said that the world was experiencing heightened uncertainty, volatility and rapid transformation. Conflicts had grown exponentially, creating massive humanitarian disasters that tested the international community's collective capacity to respond. Military expenditure was soaring, while funding for humanitarian aid, peacemaking and peacebuilding had shrunk. The world was also facing a series of transnational threats, including the impact of the climate crisis and the potential for the weaponization of new technologies and domains. Just as collective action was needed most, the international community was growing more divided and the mechanisms that once maintained global stability were under severe strain. Against that backdrop, the Secretary-General had issued a policy brief entitled "A New Agenda for Peace" (A/77/CRP.1/Add.8), in which he offered his vision for the way in which Member States could work together to rebuild trust, enhance solidarity and revitalize multilateral action for peace. The Secretariat was grateful for the active engagement of Member States in consultations to inform the policy brief.

2. Special political missions were working to support political processes and pave the way for peace and reconciliation. The United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority was working with all sides to de-escalate the situation in Gaza, and all United Nations entities in the region were seeking to prevent the further regionalization of the conflict. The United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia had made a critical contribution to the implementation of the 2016 Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace and had facilitated the resumption of peace talks between the Government and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army), which had resulted in a six-month ceasefire agreement. At the request of the parties, the Security Council had expanded the Mission's mandate to include monitoring and verifying the implementation of the ceasefire. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great

Lakes Region had undertaken a series of good offices missions to prevent the escalation of tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. Special political missions were also working in a variety of settings to explore and pilot new technologies, tools and practices in conflict prevention and mediation and peacebuilding.

3. With regard to women and peace and security, although much progress had been made in increasing their participation in peace and political processes over the past two decades, women were still too often excluded from peace negotiations and transition efforts. The international community must address the structural inequalities that denied women their rightful place, not only as a matter of equity but as a powerful means to expand the ownership of such processes. In Iraq, Libya, the Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic, special political missions had facilitated the participation of women in negotiating delegations. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan was doing its utmost to stop and reverse the attack on the basic rights of women in society. Alongside the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), it regularly consulted with Afghan women's groups and activists across the country and presented their concerns to the de facto authorities, including individual cases of arbitrary arrest and detention.

4. Meaningful youth engagement was crucial for sustainable development, human rights, gender equality and peace and security. Special political missions were actively reviewing and adapting their approaches to better harness the potential of young people. The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia was working to enhance youth participation in initiatives related to human rights, the climate crisis and the Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) regularly engaged with youth representatives to build consensus on the legal framework for national elections. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) had conducted discussions with young people in the federal member states to reinforce their role in democratization at the subnational level.

5. In collaboration with United Nations country teams, special political missions continued to support the implementation of inclusive and nationally led peacebuilding priorities. During the reporting period, the Peacebuilding Fund had approved \$37.4 million for projects in host countries to support reconciliation initiatives and the participation of women and youth in public life and political transitions. Special political

missions also implemented the peacebuilding agenda at the regional level. The United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) worked closely with the Economic Community of Central African States to address the growing risk of violence fuelled by disinformation and hate speech. In July 2023, it had helped to organize a regional forum on the draft regional strategy and action plan to prevent and combat hate speech in Central Africa. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa had established a climate, peace and security hub to support the efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to address the impacts of climate change on peace and security in the subregion. The hub would coordinate United Nations efforts at the regional level and incorporate climate considerations into mediation and preventive diplomacy.

6. The good offices role of the Secretary-General, carried out by his envoys and representatives, had taken on greater urgency in the face of the deteriorating peace and security landscape. With the support of Member States, special political missions would play a crucial role in carrying forward multilateral diplomacy for peace and operationalizing Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. The missions also stood ready to implement the measures agreed on by Member States at the Summit of the Future, to be held in September 2024.

7. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support) said that the Department of Operational Support had sought to streamline its strategic planning by incorporating foresight methodologies, which allowed it to identify key priorities, anticipate trends that affected operational support and outline responses over a five-year time horizon. Its current priorities were to deliver holistic support solutions in increasingly complex environments; ensure that the needs of all clients, including special political missions, were met; and improve service delivery with the help of technology.

8. The Department managed the senior women talent pipeline, a project aimed at increasing gender parity among senior-level civilian staff in field missions. Since its inception in 2014, 66 candidates from the pipeline had been appointed to senior-level positions at the P-5 level and above. The Department also managed the standing surge capacity, which facilitated the rapid deployment of staff and the establishment, reconfiguration or closure of United Nations Secretariat entities during crises or critical incidents. It had recently been called on to assist the special political missions in Haiti, Libya and the Sudan.

9. With regard to technology, the Department was working to strengthen data-related assessment and advisory services across missions. It supported digital transformation, information and data management, efforts to counter misinformation and disinformation, and the strengthening of local capacities and expertise. The Department provided support to the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in its ongoing management and protection of sensitive information and data. It had also recently completed a comprehensive assessment of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia to assist in addressing emerging information and data management challenges.

10. Concerning medical care, all missions had an updated standard operating procedure for casualty evacuations. The Department had implemented a systematic credentialing system that associated the qualifications and capabilities of medical professionals with field support services. It had also implemented health-care quality and patient safety standards and a hospital performance assessment tool to guarantee quality care in all field mission medical facilities. A mandatory online training course on women's health had also been launched for both civilian and uniformed field medical personnel.

11. With regard to aviation support, the Department provided eight dedicated aircraft currently operating in six special political missions, and an additional 22 aircraft were assigned to the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, which supported UNSOM, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia and the Somali security forces. Arrangements had been made to allow special political missions to use a range of standby air charter and air ambulance agreements managed by the Department.

12. In strategic coordination with United Nations country teams, the Department worked with its clients to identify the most suitable support options to meet mandate requirements amid complex operating environments and supply chain challenges. Since the outset of the conflict in the Sudan in April 2023, the Department had played a critical role in coordinating the evacuation and relocation of United Nations staff and their dependents, as well as members of international non-governmental organizations working in the country. He applauded the courage and resilience of the staff of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan and thanked Member States, in particular France, Kenya, Saudi Arabia and Uganda, for their assistance. In Somalia, the Department provided comprehensive operational support to UNSOM, a

logistical support package to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia and vital non-lethal support to the Somali security forces. Those efforts allowed UNSOM to provide crucial political support to the Federal Government of Somalia and bolster overarching peace and security efforts within the country, in particular during the critical transition of security responsibilities to the Somali security forces.

13. The Department continued to support UNSMIL, in particular in establishing the Libyan-led and Libyan-owned ceasefire monitoring mechanism. In the catastrophic aftermath of flooding in Derna, Libya, it had supported 17 mission deployments and 79 humanitarian assistance missions in transporting medical equipment and consumables and carrying out other humanitarian tasks by providing aircraft, vehicles, communication services, security officers and drivers. The Department provided a range of operational support to the 22 United Nations entities operating in Iraq. Alongside the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department of Operational Support was supporting an independent strategic review of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), mandated by the Security Council, and would help to implement the recommendations contained in the report on the review, to be presented in March 2024.

14. Notwithstanding current constraints, the Department continued to work with all parties to support the work of the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen and the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA), for which its aviation support had been indispensable. It had also been able to source level III medical care locally in Yemen, thus improving access and cost savings. The Department continued to track and report on the environmental performance of the four special political missions that managed their own facilities and was pleased to note a steady improvement over the last five years. Annual scorecards could be made available upon request. A consultation process had been carried out with the missions and Member States to develop a new environmental strategy through 2030, for which he hoped an agreement would be reached by the end of 2023.

15. The Department remained committed to supporting the efforts of special political missions and collaborating closely with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs to monitor and advise on developing situations and facilitate timely responses.

16. *The meeting was suspended at 10.35 a.m. and resumed at 11.15 a.m.*

17. **The Chair** invited the Committee to engage in a general discussion on the item.

18. **Ms. Ouazzani Chahdi** (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the majority of countries hosting special political missions were members of the Movement, which remained committed to supporting all efforts aimed at improving the efficiency of missions and reinforcing their capacity to carry out mandated tasks. The Movement reaffirmed that the Security Council had the primary role in the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and that the principles of impartiality, consent of the parties, national ownership and national responsibility were critical to successful transitions. Special political missions were a central tool for international action and assistance to host countries in overcoming conflict and supporting national efforts to achieve sustainable peace. Nonetheless, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States must be respected. Special political missions should also be included in the Member State-led discussions on A New Agenda for Peace.

19. The Security Council and the General Assembly should ensure that the mandates of special political missions were achievable, based on an objective assessment with sufficient political basis and matched by appropriate resources. Greater coherence between mandates and resources was paramount, especially as the financial requirements of missions continued to increase. Special political missions did not follow the regular budget cycle of the United Nations, despite being funded from the budget of the United Nations. They should be financed using the same criteria, methodology and mechanisms used to fund peacekeeping operations, including the establishment of a new separate account for special political missions.

20. The Movement welcomed the commitment of the Secretary-General to improve transparency, balanced geographical representation and representation of women throughout the Organization, including in field-based special political missions. Due consideration should be given to such issues when making appointments to senior leadership positions, including those of special representatives and envoys and members of groups of experts on sanctions. As the most representative body of the United Nations, the General Assembly had the primary role to discuss matters related to special political missions. The Movement had constructively engaged in negotiations on the annual resolution on the comprehensive review of special political missions and looked forward to its adoption by consensus.

21. **Mr. Nasir** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that ASEAN continued to support the effective and efficient operation of special political missions. Their flexibility and versatility allowed for their optimal use in achieving desired outcomes to maintain international peace and security, prevent conflict and address its root causes. National ownership was important to sustaining peace. International support could play a catalytic role in peacebuilding but must be provided in line with the affected country's peacebuilding strategies and needs and with full respect for its sovereignty. Special political missions should support the host country in advancing its nationally identified priorities and peacebuilding initiatives. They should also cultivate a culture of peace and intercultural understanding at the national and local levels in the countries in which they operated.

22. There must be strong coordination between special political missions and regional and subregional organizations. Close dialogue and engagement with affected countries and regions was crucial to achieve a lasting peace. Special political missions could benefit from the ample experience of regional organizations, such as ASEAN, in promoting peace. ASEAN strongly supported the full, effective and meaningful participation of women in all stages of the peace process, as their participation was essential for growth and prosperity. It contributed to advancing the participation of women through its regional plan of action on women, peace and security and the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation.

23. **Ms. Oliveira** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, said that a collective response was needed to address the challenges faced by special political missions. Adequate human and financial resources, timely deployment and unwavering political support were essential for the missions' success. Member States and the United Nations also had a shared responsibility to provide personnel with adequate mental health and psychosocial support. Australia, Canada and New Zealand therefore called on Member States to fulfil their financial commitments and provide the resources necessary to enable missions to carry out their mandates effectively.

24. The international community must also continue to integrate and mainstream gender and the women and peace and security agenda into the work of special political missions at all stages. Australia, Canada and New Zealand called for the appointment of more diverse women to positions at all levels, in particular in leadership roles. More women must also participate in mediation and dialogue initiatives. In addition, special political missions should promote the full, equal and

meaningful participation and leadership of diverse women in all aspects of decision-making concerning peace and security. The inclusion of women in such processes supported the advancement of gender equality, which was fundamental to sustainable peace, justice and human rights.

25. Special political missions promoted the protection of civilians by contributing to efforts to monitor and raise awareness of human rights. They were indispensable to advancing political solutions to conflict and upholding the core values and principles upon which the United Nations had been founded. As such, they deserved the full support of all Member States.

26. **Mr. Shatil** (Bangladesh) said that Bangladesh contributed to the work of special political missions by supporting capacity-building and information-sharing, preparing control lists and providing the services of judicial and correction officials and experts. The effective implementation of the mandate of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar was crucial for the sustainable return of the Rohingya to their homeland. His delegation was therefore disappointed that the position remained vacant and called for an appointment to be made as soon as possible.

27. Special political missions must operate under clear, credible, sequenced and achievable mandates, which should reflect local contexts and the situation on the ground when addressing the main drivers of conflicts and related grievances. They must also coordinate and cooperate effectively with regional and subregional organizations. In that connection, the role of ASEAN in facilitating a peaceful solution for the people of Myanmar had been highlighted in Security Council resolution [2669 \(2022\)](#), and his delegation called for close coordination between the relevant special envoys of ASEAN and the Secretary-General. Affected countries should be consulted before appointing mandate holders, and their opinions and suggestions must be taken into consideration to guarantee the effectiveness of special political missions.

28. His delegation recognized the contribution of the Peacebuilding Fund in supporting special political missions, which, in turn, supported Member States in implementing their peacebuilding priorities and activities. The increased engagement of special political missions with the Peacebuilding Commission was also welcome. His delegation also appreciated the Secretary-General's continued commitment to promote a more diverse workforce. Innovative measures were needed to ensure the equitable geographical representation of Member States, for which the forthcoming revised Geographical Diversity Strategy would be helpful.

Special political missions should continue to implement the women and peace and security agenda and enhance the meaningful engagement of young people in political and peace processes.

29. Bangladesh fully supported the Secretary-General's enhanced resource allocation proposal for special political missions for 2024. There was an urgent need to guarantee adequate funding in order to overcome emerging and prevalent security challenges through the judicious use of preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. The recommendations and proposals contained in A New Agenda for Peace provided a good basis for further discussion in 2024 during the Summit of the Future.

30. **Ms. Al-mashehari** (Yemen) said that special political missions were the primary tool for achieving international peace and security and supporting preventive diplomacy while respecting national sovereignty. The Secretary-General's proposal, A New Agenda for Peace, would allow Member States to strengthen the role of special political missions and their coordination with United Nations entities.

31. Her Government remained committed to all regional and international efforts to achieve a comprehensive ceasefire in Yemen and launch a political process led by Yemenis, under the guidance of the United Nations. It appreciated the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen and his team and urged him to continue to participate in ongoing efforts to find a political settlement to end the conflict and the suffering of the Yemeni people. A just and comprehensive peace should be based on the terms of reference, namely, the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its implementation mechanism; the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference; and the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution [2216 \(2015\)](#).

32. The international community must support UNMHA in fulfilling its mandate and strengthen coordination with the Government of Yemen. Measures must be taken to exert pressure on the Houthi militias to stop the indiscriminate use of mines and other unexploded ordnance, which killed defenceless civilians, including women and children, daily. The Houthi militias must facilitate full and safe access for mine action personnel and stop using Hudaydah as a base from which to launch ballistic missiles and drones, which threatened navigation in the Red Sea. They must also allow humanitarian organizations to carry out their work and allow aid to reach all areas of Yemen, including the Hudaydah governorate. In addition, it was necessary to increase the number of national technical

experts, as well as the representation of women and young people in that role. The Government of Yemen stood ready to assist in facilitating the work of UNMHA so that it could fully implement its mandate in the spirit of the Stockholm Agreement and relevant Security Council resolutions.

33. **Mr. Eldahshan** (Egypt) said that special political missions played an important role in eliminating the root causes of conflict and contributing to regional and international peace and security efforts. In that regard, United Nations entities should work alongside special political missions to achieve peace. Given the need to factor in the regional dimensions of crises, it was important to deepen the partnership between special political missions and regional and subregional organizations. Special political missions should also be given particular attention in discussions on A New Agenda for Peace, with a view to highlighting the challenges they faced and strengthening their role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, in line with the principle of national ownership.

34. It was important to ensure that missions had sufficient financial and human resources. General Assembly resolution [76/305](#) on financing for peacebuilding contained a request to the Secretary-General to continue to elaborate options for adequate resourcing of peacebuilding activities in the context of special political missions, including during mission transitions. There was a need to reform existing funding mechanisms, in view of their increased number and expanded roles. While the majority of those missions had been established pursuant to Security Council resolutions, they were funded from the regular budget of the Organization. Egypt therefore called for a review of the funding arrangements for special political missions and for the establishment of an independent account for those missions.

35. **Mr. Ugarelli** (Peru) said that special political missions must play a stronger and more strategic role in promoting peace and guaranteeing its sustainability against the backdrop of critical global challenges. Their work should be built on the priorities of the peacekeeping actors involved and should be carried out rigorously, with a view to implementing comprehensive post-conflict recovery strategies. Special political missions must accompany political processes intended to alleviate the root causes of conflict and to build strong and resilient institutions. To that end, sufficient, predictable and sustainable financing must be provided to support their work.

36. Efforts to reshape responses to all forms of violence were needed in order to support a renewed

social contract that would strengthen governance and restore the social fabric, thereby ensuring that peace was sustained. It was essential to invest in prevention and respond effectively and immediately at the onset of violence, while also building response capacities to maintain and restore peace and security. Each special political mission must objectively identify the root causes of conflict, which were primarily poverty; inequality; the exclusion of groups based on ethnicity, religion or geography; discrimination; and attacks on dignity. Such an assessment, carried out in coordination with the host country, could help to prevent the outbreak, intensification or recurrence of violence.

37. The work of special political missions in preventive diplomacy and mediation was fundamental to responding to peace and security challenges. In that regard, priority should be given to projects designed to protect civilian populations; support disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; and build capacity in the areas of justice and security. Any assessment of such projects should be flexible and subject to independent standards applied on a case-by-case basis.

38. **Mr. Hauri** (Switzerland) said that special political missions fulfilled their mandate in increasingly difficult contexts and played an indispensable role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. For example, the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, which monitored and supported the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, had been extended to include the monitoring of the ceasefire agreed upon with the armed group Ejército de Liberación Nacional. In working closely with the Government of Colombia, the Mission could foster dialogue and ensure that key aspects, such as the gender dimension, were taken into account on the path to peace.

39. In *A New Agenda for Peace*, the Secretary-General encouraged Member States to reflect on the role and future of peacekeeping in light of the evolving nature of conflict. While special political missions could not replace the security functions of peacekeeping missions, they could support countries in prevention, mediation, good governance and human rights monitoring. As the co-penholder for issues concerning West Africa and the Sahel in the Security Council, Switzerland stood ready to contribute to such discussions, including the possibility of transferring political tasks to the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).

40. Each special political mission must be designed according to its specific context, with a clear and realistic mandate that was based on the principle of the

primacy of politics. Although a strong partnership with Governments and regional and subregional organizations was crucial, the design and implementation of missions must also include civil society, in particular women, young people and minorities. Close exchange between special political missions, resident coordinators and country teams, particularly concerning the use of data, was fundamental to the implementation of mandates. Realities on the ground must also be taken into account. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the inclusion of the security implications of climate change in the renewed mandates of UNSOM and UNSMIL.

41. **Mr. Mohamed** (Sudan) said that it was imperative to respect national sovereignty and adhere to the principles of impartiality and non-interference in internal affairs. Special political missions facilitated conflict prevention, provided electoral assistance and supported transitions and peacebuilding efforts. Given the lack of adequate funding and the changing nature of situations requiring special political missions, other solutions were needed to address the situation on the ground. For example, special political missions could be downsized or become peacekeeping operations, or their responsibilities could be handed over to United Nations entities, such as country teams.

42. Drawing on its experience with the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, his Government wished to emphasize the need to consult with affected countries prior to the appointment of heads of missions. Special political missions should take into consideration and support the strategic objectives set by the Government of the host country, in particular with regard to development. They should also carry out peacebuilding efforts in partnership with national authorities. In addition, they should respect the host country's laws, traditions, customs and cultures. Lastly, they must avoid politicization and bias and refrain from supporting any one political body or implementing political solutions proposed by donor countries.

43. **Mr. Al-Dahlaki** (Iraq) said that his Government welcomed the important role played by UNAMI, the country team and other United Nations entities. The Organization had been instrumental in calling on the international community to rebuild liberated areas and strengthen infrastructure, including schools and hospitals, which had facilitated the return of displaced persons. UNAMI had also contributed to efforts to strengthen public institutions, hold dialogues and pursue reconciliation. It had participated in capacity-building programmes and the constitutional review process in preparation for the elections.

44. Special political missions should respect the Charter of the United Nations, international law, national sovereignty and the principle of national ownership. There must be dialogue and consultation with the host Government, particularly with regard to the quarterly reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council in order to ensure that they reflected the actual situation on the ground. Iraq could serve as an example for special political missions, given the change in its situation since the mission had been created in 2003. The security landscape had improved significantly owing to the commitments of the United Nations and various stakeholders. Progress had also been made in the political, economic and social fields. In addition, Iraq had a presence in the international arena, and women participated in politics and in various civilian and military fields. Furthermore, the number of people requiring assistance had been reduced by one quarter, and the Government was able to focus on sustainable development, health care and infrastructure.

45. Special political missions played an important role in preventive diplomacy and could lead to a just and overarching peace in the Middle East and around the world. However, they faced a number of challenges, including a lack of resources, political obstacles and changing dynamics of conflicts. It was therefore necessary to reinforce their neutrality and strengthen trust among stakeholders.

46. **Mr. Birdi** (India) said that his delegation took note of the Secretary-General's focus on the meaningful engagement of youth groups in political and peace processes and the strategic priority to implement the women and peace and security agenda across special political missions. A range of new and evolving threats increasingly intersected with and shaped conflict dynamics. Such threats included the impact of climate change, increasing inequalities, stalled or limited progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the weaponization of new technologies, including through the widespread use of hate speech and disinformation. Many special political missions operated in complex security situations involving national and regional dimensions and cross-border threats such as transnational organized crime and terrorism.

47. At every stage of the mission, it was vital to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of host States and the principles of impartiality, consent of parties, national ownership and national responsibility. The formulation, launch and renewal of missions should be genuinely transparent, participatory and consultative. Lastly, the fragmented manner in which the funding of special political missions was handled must be

addressed. They should benefit from a separate account aligned with the budget cycle and scale of peacekeeping operations in order to enhance budget transparency.

48. **Ms. González López** (El Salvador) said that her country aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. El Salvador contributed actively to peacekeeping forces and remained fully committed to all efforts to improve their effectiveness and strengthen their capacities. The mandates of special political missions should be underpinned by objective analysis and should be defined clearly, realistically and with a long-term vision. The transition and the reconfiguration of the United Nations presence were key processes that often took place in complex situations. As such, they required sufficient planning and resources to sustain the results of special political missions over time. Securing adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding remained a significant challenge, including in the context of special political missions. Her delegation therefore called on Member States, the Secretariat and all relevant actors to redouble efforts to implement General Assembly resolution [76/305](#). Although certain forums, such as the Fifth Committee, were dedicated to financing matters, the Fourth Committee should engage in a more in-depth discussion of the financing challenges and the concrete efforts being made by the Secretariat to obtain financing from the private sector.

49. El Salvador supported the work of the special political missions to promote the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and young people in conflict prevention and resolution in order to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of peace processes. It also supported the recommendations made in A New Agenda for Peace to transform gendered power dynamics in the field of peace and security and to eradicate all forms of gender-based violence. Furthermore, efforts should be made to expand geographical representation within special political missions and achieve gender parity.

50. Strengthening synergies between the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Secretariat was essential to guaranteeing a coherent and coordinated approach to the deployment of special political missions. In particular, the Peacebuilding Commission played an important role in mobilizing political support and resources for national peacebuilding priorities in countries with special political missions, and its role should continue to be strengthened. Mechanisms to facilitate dialogue and the exchange of information between missions and troop-contributing countries were also valuable.



51. **Ms. Zalabata Torres** (Colombia) said that the protection of civilians in armed conflict should remain a key priority and required coordinated multilateral action, with full respect for international law and the Charter of the United Nations. The work of special political missions was a tangible example of what could be achieved when taking into account the specific realities on the ground, the rule of law and the strengthening of democratic institutions.

52. Her Government remained strongly committed to the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. The recent meeting of the Security Council on Colombia, during which the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia had been unanimously renewed, was a clear sign of the commitment of the members of the Security Council to achieve peace in her country. Her Government appreciated the efficient work of the team deployed in Colombia and the support of troop-contributing countries. Her Government had a clear mandate for peacebuilding and focused its actions on the reduction of inequality, the inclusion of women, zero tolerance for corruption and the holding of inclusive regional dialogues to enable local authorities and communities to contribute to policymaking.

53. The experience of Colombia could serve as a source of good practices and lessons learned to overcome violence and guarantee peaceful coexistence, with support from the international community. In that connection, in 2023, Colombia had participated in two thematic sessions of the Peacebuilding Commission on transitional justice and the contributions of Indigenous Peoples during peace negotiations.

54. **Mr. Pierre** (Haiti) said that the United Nations must step up its efforts to safeguard peace and security, prioritizing conflict prevention and collaborating closely with regional and subregional organizations. To that end, special political missions played a vital role in promoting peace, providing good offices in conflict situations, supporting preventive diplomacy and implementing peace agreements. His delegation congratulated the Member States that continued to look to the United Nations for help in resolving their disputes and strongly encouraged the missions to collaborate closely with States to strengthen the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. It was also essential to increase the meaningful participation of women and young people in political and peace processes.

55. His Government highly appreciated the visit of the Secretary-General to Haiti on 1 July 2023, during which he had met with the Prime Minister, the High

Transitional Council, political figures and members of civil society to discuss the crisis. It also welcomed the remarkable work undertaken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, as well as the adoption Security Council resolution [2692 \(2023\)](#), in which the Council had renewed the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti.

56. Haiti faced a troubling security situation that posed immense challenges to the functioning of the State. Despite the resilience of the Haitian people and their desire for peace, confrontations among armed gangs had created a hostile environment, which had caused many citizens to leave the country. Security was essential, not only to guarantee the free movement of goods and people but also to hold general elections and restore democratic institutions. In that regard, his Government welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution [2699 \(2023\)](#), which had authorized the deployment of a Multinational Security Support mission to support the efforts of the Haitian National Police to reestablish security. It also took note of Security Council resolution [2700 \(2023\)](#), in which the Council had renewed the sanctions regime against Haiti, as well as the final report of the Panel of Experts on Haiti submitted pursuant to resolution [2653 \(2022\) \(S/2023/674\)](#). Such sanctions could ease the sociopolitical climate in the country, and his Government awaited the publication of the full list of individuals subject to sanctions.

57. Much work remained to be done to resolve the crisis in Haiti; no sacrifice was too great to achieve peace. His Government deeply appreciated the support of the international community, in particular the Caribbean Community, which acted as mediator. Special political missions, in particular the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, must be provided with the resources necessary to carry out their duties optimally.

58. **Ms. Baimarro** (Sierra Leone) said that, despite increasing global conflicts and the multifaceted challenges facing United Nations peace and security engagements, special political missions continued to make meaningful contributions through cross-cutting interventions in the areas of preventive diplomacy, the implementation of peace agreements, the promotion of human rights and the meaningful participation of women, young people and marginalized constituencies in political and peace processes. To that end, her delegation recalled the role played by the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, which had helped to strengthen partnerships between the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations and Sierra Leone during the peace consolidation process. It welcomed the efforts of special

political missions in mediation and the provision of good offices to support regional initiatives to restore constitutional order following unconstitutional changes of government.

59. Member States must ensure that special political missions had adequate resources and urgently invest in preventive diplomacy and good offices. It welcomed the Secretary-General's recommendation that Member States commit to developing national prevention strategies in order to address the various drivers and enablers of conflict and violence in their society. Stronger collaboration between Member States and the United Nations, through special political missions, was needed to support the implementation of such strategies. Special political missions must identify tools to address emerging issues in their region and support continued dialogue and engagement with relevant regional and subregional organizations to that end. In that regard, Sierra Leone commended the efforts of UNOWAS to consolidate peace and democracy in the region.

60. Her delegation welcomed efforts to mainstream the women and peace and security agenda and the youth, peace and security agenda. Breaking down those groups into additional categories, for example, based on age or ethnicity, could also deepen their engagement. Lastly, Member States and host countries must guarantee the safety and protection of all personnel of special political missions, in particular those in difficult and hostile environments.

61. **Mr. Alem** (Algeria) said that, given the unprecedented rise in tensions in many regions of the world, a genuine platform for negotiations was needed to intensify diplomatic efforts to bridge the gap between parties. Special political missions operated in environments characterized by unconstitutional changes of government, inter-State tensions, fragile transitions and failed peace processes. They must therefore intensify engagement with different actors in a balanced, neutral and unbiased manner in order to advance peace processes. The sophisticated, and somewhat fragmented, peace and security architecture at the global and regional levels could benefit from regular and inclusive exchanges of views to build on success stories, assess shortcomings and determine the optimal use of available preventive diplomacy tools.

62. The mandates of special political missions must be designed to respond to the needs on the ground and support the efforts of host Governments. The peacebuilding dimension of their work must be reflected during their formation, review and reconfiguration. Further investments must be made in prevention as a cost-effective tool to assist countries in building

institutions and avoiding instability. The flexible and responsive nature of special political missions allowed them to adapt to unpredictable situations and changing operational circumstances. As a result, they played a crucial role in peacebuilding and conflict prevention and management. They must also be provided with adequate resources to fulfil their mandates.

63. Special political missions were urged to strengthen cooperation with resident coordinators and United Nations entities on the ground. At the same time, cooperation with relevant regional organizations must appear as an essential component of their mandates in order to strengthen regional ownership. In that connection, the United Nations and regional organizations must maintain and enhance the steps taken to formalize and strengthen their cooperation, including through cooperation agreements, joint missions and periodic meetings. In order to strengthen regional capacities for conflict prevention and peacemaking, mechanisms should be developed to assess common risks and threats to peace.

64. **Ms. Mitsui** (Japan) said that special political missions, along with peacekeeping operations, were among the most powerful functions of the United Nations. Her delegation appreciated the way in which their roles and functions had evolved in response to the changing nature of conflicts over the last 75 years. At the same time, their capacity to carry out preventive diplomacy through good offices remained a central component that was crucial for assisting host countries in preventing the recurrence of conflict and paving the way for long-term peacebuilding. To facilitate a smooth transition in that regard, cooperation should be further strengthened between special political missions and their various partners, including United Nations entities, funds and programmes; international financial institutions; regional organizations; and civil society. Peacebuilding required time and the efforts of various stakeholders, including the host country. The hasty departure of a mission was therefore not beneficial to any party. Her delegation was encouraged by the work of the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa to better coordinate the collective efforts of the United Nations in the region with a view to supporting lasting peace and sustainable development.

65. The international community must ensure the full, meaningful and equal participation of women in political and peace processes. In that connection, her delegation welcomed the efforts of UNSOM and the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, in coordination with their respective country teams and other United Nations entities, to include women from

civil society in relevant dialogues. Member States must remember the importance of providing political support to special political missions for the effective implementation of their mandates. Consolidated support from the Security Council was crucial. Coordination among host countries, special political missions and other actors at Headquarters and on the ground must be strengthened throughout the life cycle of the mission.

66. **Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) said that special political missions were a flexible tool to support States in areas such as maintaining peace, preventing situations from slipping into a new conflict phase and achieving sustainable national reconciliation. The effectiveness of their work hinged on close cooperation with host countries. Respect for national responsibility and the principle of national sovereignty was also essential. Genuine success could be achieved only with full consideration for national priorities. Leveraging the capacity of regional and subregional organizations whose approaches aligned with those of the United Nations could also be of some benefit.

67. The tasks of special political missions had become increasingly complex. In addition to traditional political functions, they were sometimes required to assist in areas such as maintaining law and order, drafting basic laws and constitutions, conducting elections, protecting human rights, reforming the security sector, addressing the impacts of climate change, and advancing the women and peace and security agenda and the youth, peace and security agenda. The intertwined nature of those tasks was also characteristic of the entire United Nations system. In that context, it was important to remember the prerogatives, individual functions and authority of the Organization's various bodies. Experience had shown that duplicating efforts could not yield worthy results. The mandates of special political missions must therefore be clear and feasible, and their primary task should remain laying the groundwork for the establishment of political processes and the achievement of national reconciliation.

68. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council considered disputes and situations that could lead to international tensions. It recognized the importance of responding to emerging threats on a case-by-case basis. Her delegation therefore urged caution in the consideration of the recommendations contained in A New Agenda for Peace concerning a broader integration of special political missions and peacekeeping operations. Any decision taken in that regard must be based on concrete tasks and realities on the ground and should not be applied universally. Member States should engage in a broad

discussion of A New Agenda for Peace before borrowing any ideas from that document.

69. **Mr. Van Schalkwyk** (South Africa) said that it was important to keep the matter of the special political missions under scrutiny, to ensure that such missions remained fit for purpose. South Africa supported increased cooperation between the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. There was a clear need for the mandates of special political missions to be well-defined, adequately resourced and feasible and to maintain respect for the sovereignty of host States. The flexibility and adaptability of special political missions made them an invaluable tool to prevent and resolve conflicts and sustain peace. They had embraced cooperation with regional organizations, and many of their mandates involved supporting regional counterparts in peacebuilding activities. In A New Agenda for Peace, the Secretary-General urged Member States to invest in diplomacy and good offices and offered support for the development and implementation of national prevention strategies through missions, in partnership with Member States.

70. Special political missions should continue to be used as a platform to promote the participation of women in conflict resolution and peace processes and to incorporate a gender perspective into peacebuilding work, which were prerequisites for inclusive democracy and good governance. In Africa, where the impact of conflict disproportionately affected the youth population, special political missions should continue to engage meaningfully and support young people in political and peace processes.

71. As peacekeeping missions drew down, his delegation urged continued close consultation between departing missions, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund, special political missions, host countries and other relevant United Nations entities in order to ensure that gains were not lost. Furthermore, special political missions should receive adequate, predictable and sustainable funding to build on those gains.

72. **Mr. Da Cruz** (Angola) said that UNOCA served as the secretariat of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, which provided a framework for confidence-building and conflict prevention and resolution for States in the subregion. Angola supported the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region in the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. His

country played an important role in conflict prevention, management and resolution and the promotion of peace and democracy in Africa, in particular in the Great Lakes Region. As the current Chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Southern African Development Community, the President of Angola had been actively engaged in assisting the Democratic Republic of the Congo in addressing security concerns in the eastern part of the country and in normalizing diplomatic relations with Rwanda.

73. His delegation welcomed the efforts of special political missions to improve their expertise and effectiveness, transparency, accountability, geographical representation, gender perspective and the equal participation of women, and youth participation. It encouraged the inclusion and meaningful participation of young people and women, as well as inclusive partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and other relevant stakeholders.

74. Special political missions faced challenges in carrying out their activities owing to financial constraints and must be provided with the necessary tools and adequate resources to implement their mandates effectively. His delegation encouraged cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union to establish joint special political missions to address peace and security concerns on the continent. As a founding member of the Peacebuilding Commission, Angola was committed to the peaceful settlement of disputes and the promotion of international peace and security as keystones of its foreign affairs policy. It was also committed to multilateralism in addressing global challenges and encouraged the continued promotion of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

75. **Ms. Al-Ali** (United Arab Emirates) said that special political missions played an important role in preventing conflict, such as UNOWAS and UNOCA; in facilitating political dialogue between parties to a conflict, such as UNSMIL; and in achieving stability, such as UNAMI. As conflicts worsened as a result of the spread of extremism, racism and hate speech, the Security Council had adopted resolution [2686 \(2023\)](#) requesting special political missions to monitor those issues and their impact on peace and security.

76. Despite their efforts, special political missions faced challenges in carrying out their duties. In many cases, conflicts necessitated efforts to bring together warring parties. To provide effective support, the unique situation of each country must be taken into consideration, with a full understanding of the historic, geographical and social aspects of the country. There must also be a clear time frame for the beginning and

end of a mission's mandate. Missions must respect the national sovereignty of the host country and coordinate closely with them and the region as a whole.

77. It was important to guarantee the effective participation of women in special political missions and ensure that their mandates did not ignore the needs of women in host countries. In 2021 and 2022, under its agreement with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the United Arab Emirates had provided \$400,000 to support projects to assist Member States in conflict prevention so that they could focus on the full, equal and meaningful integration of women in all peace and political processes. Her delegation called for the capacities of special political missions to be strengthened and their performance to be continually improved through reviews and assessments, including for missions whose mandates had ended, in order to identify where improvements could be made to enhance their efficiency.

*Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.9: Comprehensive review of special political missions*

78. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

79. **Ms. Buenrostro Massieu** (Mexico), introducing the draft resolution also on behalf of Finland, said that special political missions remained a vital instrument to respond to peace and security challenges through preventive diplomacy, good offices, dialogue and peacebuilding. Following extensive discussions, the draft resolution had been updated to acknowledge the importance of including special political missions in the discussions to be led by Member States on A New Agenda for Peace, to recognize that financing for peacebuilding remained a critical challenge and to request that the report of the Secretary-General be results-based. The updated text also reflected the adoption of Security Council resolution [2668 \(2022\)](#) on the mental health of United Nations peace operations personnel.

80. **Ms. Ukabiala** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had joined the sponsors: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Belize, Brazil, Croatia, El Salvador, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Malta, Malawi, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Spain and United Republic of Tanzania.

81. Draft resolution [A/C.4/78/L.9](#) was adopted.

*The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.*