



## Security Council

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### **Letter dated 15 December 2017 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

Please find attached the report on the work of the Security Council during the presidency of France in October 2017 (see annex). This document was prepared under my supervision, following consultation with the other members of the Council.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* François Delattre



## **Annex to the letter dated 15 December 2017 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

### **Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of France (October 2017)**

#### **Introduction**

Under the presidency of France in October 2017, the Security Council held 20 public meetings, including 3 open debates, 2 private meetings and 11 consultations of the whole. The Council adopted two resolutions and agreed on four presidential statements and eight press statements. A Security Council mission to the Sahel was organized.

In accordance with the Organization's practice, France began its presidency with the presentation of the provisional programme of work of the Council for the month, which was adopted at the Council's consultations of the whole, on 2 October.

#### **Africa**

##### **Libya**

On 5 October, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [2380 \(2017\)](#), extending for a third one-year period the authorization, established under resolution [2240 \(2015\)](#), for Member States to inspect, as permitted under international law, on the high seas off the coast of Libya, vessels that they have reasonable grounds to believe have been, are being, or imminently will be used by organized criminal enterprises for migrant smuggling or human trafficking from Libya.

On 10 October, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement on the situation in Libya ([S/PRST/2017/19](#)), in which it endorsed the United Nations action plan presented by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ghassan Salamé, in support of a Libyan-led transition that will lead to the establishment of stable, unified, representative and effective governance in the framework of the Libyan Political Agreement, which remains the only viable framework to end the Libyan political crisis. The Security Council also strongly urged all Libyans to engage constructively in the inclusive political process set out in the action plan.

##### **Mali**

On 5 October, the Security Council held a briefing, followed by closed consultations, on the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of MINUSMA, Mahamat Saleh Annadif, delivered a briefing via videoconference from Bamako. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, African Integration and International Cooperation of Mali, Abdoulaye Diop, also made a statement via videoconference from Bamako.

The Special Representative indicated that the period under review, from mid-June to mid-September, had been marked by a debate over a draft revision of the national Constitution and by armed clashes between the Platform coalition of armed groups and the Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad. He commended the efforts of Malian stakeholders, which had overcome the crises, but he noted that delays in implementing the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali persisted. He recalled that commitments to end the hostilities had been signed in September.

Notwithstanding that progress, the human rights situation remained a concern. He emphasized the progress made in fighting impunity, including the conviction of Aliou Mahamane Touré, and the importance of the recently authorized sanctions regime established under resolution 2374 (2017). He expressed concern over the nearly daily losses of life of United Nations peacekeepers due to anti-personnel mines and improvised explosive devices and reiterated the need for enhancing the capacities of MINUSMA. He described the deployment of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel as an opportunity to ensure a conducive environment in Mali for MINUSMA to fulfil its mandate.

The representative of Mali expressed his surprise that the report of the Secretary-General had indicated that hardly any progress had been achieved regarding the implementation of the peace agreement. He recognized the difficulties encountered by his Government, but underlined that significant progress had been made. He praised the positive outcome of the 20 September high-level meeting in New York and recalled the determination of the Government of Mali to implement the peace agreement as quickly as possible. He welcomed the imposition of the sanctions regime and the increased deployment of mixed patrols. He added that local and regional elections were scheduled to be held before the end of 2017 and that the referendum on the draft Constitution had not been cancelled, but only postponed. He called for reinforcement of the operational capacities of MINUSMA and for increased coordination between the Mission and Malian security and defence forces. Finally, he conveyed condolences over casualties on the Niger-Mali border and asked for more consistent support to the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, stressing that such violence underlined the need for rapid deployment.

On 6 October, the Security Council issued a press statement on Mali, expressing its deep concern over the persistent delays in the full implementation of key provisions of the peace agreement and urging the Government of Mali and the Platform and Coordination armed groups to take urgent and concrete action to fully and expeditiously deliver on their remaining obligations under the agreement. In another press statement, issued on 26 October, the Security Council condemned the attack against MINUSMA on the road between Tessalit and Aguelhok.

### **Democratic Republic of the Congo**

On 11 October, the Security Council held a briefing, followed by closed consultations, on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), on the basis of the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/824). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Maman Sidikou, briefed the Council members in person. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, joined in the consultations to brief the Council on the special report of the Secretary-General on the strategic review of MONUSCO (S/2017/826). The Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Léonard She Okitundu, participated in the briefing and made a statement.

The Special Representative stressed the vital need to advance the political process. He conveyed two main messages: (a) it is essential to publish quickly a credible, fair and consensual electoral calendar; and (b) a conducive environment must be secured in order to organize peaceful elections, based on the implementation of the 31 December agreement and respect for human rights. In closed consultations, he warned about the possibility that armed groups could take advantage of the political vacuum to undermine the Government.

The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo told the Council that the update of the electoral registry was in its final phase. He also claimed that the disproportionate use of force was not an established practice of his country's security forces.

The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations recalled the main recommendations of the strategic review report and provided some clarification, emphasizing the importance of cooperation with regional actors such as the African Union, the progress in reducing violence in Kasai, the necessary adaptation of MONUSCO towards more flexibility, the prospect of complementary resources and the implementation of an internal investigation of the lack of responsiveness of the United Nations during the incident in which 37 Burundians died.

All speakers condemned the attack against the MONUSCO base on 9 October, in which two peacekeepers were killed and many others were injured.

On 10 and 30 October, the Security Council issued press statements on the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

### **Somalia**

On 15 October, the Security Council issued a press statement on the terrorist attack that occurred on 14 October in Mogadishu. It was reported that over 350 people were killed and at least 500 more were injured in the attack.

On 17 October, at the opening of the proceedings, the President of the Security Council requested a minute of silence for the victims of the terrorist attack in Mogadishu.

### **Sudan and South Sudan**

On 17 October, the Security Council held a briefing and consultations on the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Security Council on the Secretary-General's 30-day report. The Permanent Representative of South Sudan also attended the meeting and made a statement.

The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations said that the deployment of the regional protection force was under way, while the security situation in the country was still worsening. He described armed clashes between the Sudanese People's Liberation Army and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition. He stressed that, despite highly effective humanitarian operations, the humanitarian situation remained a cause for serious concern, with 2 million people having fled the country since 2013 and 1.9 million displaced people within the country. He warned that population movements would increase at the end of the rainy season. He reported a rise in attacks against humanitarian staff, with over 100 incidents observed in August. Two persons were killed in those incidents. He also informed the Security Council that bureaucratic impediments imposed by the Government of South Sudan, including an increase in taxes and fees, were constraining the activities of aid workers, in particular non-governmental organizations. According to his assessment, the credibility of the National Dialogue Steering Committee had been undermined by the unwillingness of significant opposition groups to join because of current military operations. He called for support for the high-level revitalization forum of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and for the encouragement of all parties to support this initiative. He stressed the importance of an inclusive and shared power and the need to put an end to what he called "personality politics".

The representative of South Sudan recalled the commitment of the Transitional Government of National Unity to the high-level revitalization forum and to the peace agreement.

On 26 October, the Security Council held a briefing, followed by closed consultations, on the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and on the Sudan and South Sudan. The Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Alexander Zuev, and the Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan, Nicholas Haysom, briefed the Council. The Permanent Representatives of the Sudan and South Sudan also made statements.

The Assistant Secretary-General stressed the progress made, but said that tensions between the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan persisted owing to the lack of progress in implementing the 20 June 2011 agreement. He noted that the Sudan and South Sudan, as well as the African Union, considered the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism essential. He commended the stabilizing role played by UNISFA in Abyei and urged both Governments to engage in further discussions to make use of the mechanisms they had established to address their problems and improve the situation in the long term.

The Special Envoy focused his briefing on the progress made in terms of dialogue between the Sudan and South Sudan. He added that internal conflicts and mistrust still impeded the full implementation of agreements and the normalization of bilateral relations. He mentioned, in particular, the cooperation in the oil sector, the willingness to boost border trade, the provision of humanitarian aid and the prospect of a meeting between the two Heads of State. He warned about the risk of border tensions, which the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism was meant to prevent. He commended the sustained efforts by UNISFA to reduce the risk of a relaunching of the conflict. Regarding the conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, he pointed out that delivery of humanitarian aid to territories under the control of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) remained difficult. He noted that the Government of Sudan had reiterated its willingness to implement the proposal by the United States of America on humanitarian access, but that the position of SPLM-N had not changed; he intended to continue engaging with the parties on the basis of that proposal, under the auspices of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel.

The representative of the Sudan called on the Government of South Sudan to increase cooperation with the Sudan and the African Union to implement the Abyei process. He also called for the preservation of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. The representative of South Sudan highlighted the efforts of his Government to facilitate the smooth functioning of UNISFA and the Mechanism.

### **Visit of the Security Council to the Sahel**

Following the issuance of the report of the Secretary-General on the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel ([S/2017/869](#)) and ahead of the ministerial-level meeting on peace and security in Africa on 30 October, the Security Council visited the Sahel from 19 to 23 October. The visit included Mali, Mauritania and Burkina Faso. The mission was co-led by Ethiopia, France and Italy. It aimed at providing Council members with a first-hand assessment of the situation on the ground, as well as with an opportunity to discuss the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General with representatives from States of the Group of Five for the Sahel as well as from MINUSMA. The Council heard a briefing on the visit on 26 October.

In Mali, the Security Council met with the President and several ministers. The mission then travelled to the headquarters of the Joint Force in Sévaré, where it met with the Head of the Joint Force, General Didier Dacko. The Council also exchanged

views with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of MINUSMA. Discussions were held with stakeholders from the French and European operations in the area. The Council met with civil society representatives, including women's organizations and youth organizations, in Bamako and Mopti, and attended a ceremony paying tribute to MINUSMA peacekeepers killed in the line of duty. Finally, the Council held a meeting with the members of the Agreement Monitoring Committee, seizing the opportunity to deliver directly to the parties to the Agreement the messages contained in the press statement of 6 October on Mali.

In Mauritania, discussions were held with President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz and with the Permanent Secretary of the Group of Five for the Sahel, Najim Elhadj Mohamed.

In Burkina Faso, the Security Council held a meeting with President Roch Kaboré and high Government officials. The Council also participated in a ceremony of commemoration of the terrorist attack that took place in Ouagadougou during the night of 13 August.

During the visit, all of the Group of Five interlocutors reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring the full operationalization of the Joint Force in a timely and effective manner.

On 26 October, the Security Council held its customary briefing regarding the mission. The Permanent Representatives of Ethiopia, France and Italy assessed the Council's visit and its outcomes.

### **Central African Republic**

On 24 October, the Military Adviser for Peacekeeping Operations, Lieutenant General Carlos Humberto Loitey (Uruguay), briefed troop- and police-contributing countries in a private meeting on the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

The Military Adviser noted that the persistence of difficulties in the Central African Republic should not obscure significant progress made on the ground, notably thanks to the efforts of troop- and police-contributing countries. Nevertheless, the country had seen renewed violence since May 2017, in particular in the south-eastern and north-western parts of the country. This surge in violence was linked to the departure of the African Union Regional Task Force to combat the Lord's Resistance Army as well as the appearance of new armed groups. This new dynamic of violence was accompanied by intercommunal violence and a trend of constant targeting of peacekeepers. MINUSCA needed to adapt in order to meet these new security challenges. The Military Adviser also underlined that President Faustin-Archange Touadéra had taken some initiatives to ease political tensions and ensure the extension of State authority, such as reshuffling his Government and appointing new prefects and deputy prefects.

In this context, he underlined that the recommendations of the Secretary-General were intended to reverse the current worsening trend in the security situation in the Central African Republic by increasing the troop ceiling of MINUSCA by 900 additional peacekeepers. Even if this increase would not allow MINUSCA to protect all civilians, it would help the Mission to strengthen its positions in the east and the centre of the country, as well as its mobility and flexibility, so that MINUSCA could be proactive rather than reactive. In the longer term, this deployment would also help the extension of State authority and create the conditions for the proper delivery of basic services to the population.

In his conclusions, he focused on the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse, stressing that the allegations in this regard had undermined the United Nations

mission in the Central African Republic. The voluntary compact on preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse would therefore play an important role. He specified that half of the MINUSCA troop- and police-contributing countries (26 of 53) had signed the compact.

### **Peace and security in Africa**

On 30 October, the Security Council held a ministerial-level briefing, chaired by the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, Jean-Yves Le Drian, on the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. The Council was briefed by the Secretary-General, by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mali (in accordance with Mali's current chairmanship of the Group of Five for the Sahel), by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission via videoconference and by the European Union Special Representative for the Sahel. The members of the Group of Five for the Sahel were all represented at the ministerial level.

The Secretary-General said that the situation in the Sahel was a challenge for all. The recent attacks underscored the security threats. The countries of the region had demonstrated their will to cooperate by creating the Joint Force. He emphasized the need for political and operational support for the Force, both bilaterally and multilaterally. Such support would enhance the Joint Force and would alleviate threats to MINUSMA. He added that support from the United Nations would strengthen the strategic partnership between the Organization and the African Union. The initiative of the Group of Five for the Sahel had to be improved in the following areas: (a) enhancing political guidance and including it in the African Peace and Security Architecture; (b) establishing control mechanisms to ensure compliance with international law and human rights; and (c) clarifying the objectives and the calendar towards the gradual establishment of a full-fledged regional force. He also recalled that only the full implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and a multidimensional response in the region would bring stability in the Sahel.

The representative of Mali, speaking as current Chair of the Group of Five for the Sahel, stressed the impact of regional instability on international security. He underscored that the Joint Force aimed at complementing the work of other regional forces, such as MINUSMA and Operation Barkhane, and that the countries of the Group of Five were determined to operationalize the Joint Force. He called on the international community to participate in the international meeting on the security and development of the Sahel to be held in December and stressed that multilateral support would ensure foreseeable and lasting resources, as well as operational support on the ground.

The representative of the African Union said that the countries of the Group of Five had demonstrated their willingness to tackle the regional challenges and that it was the duty of the international community to support them. He presented the United Nations as the best framework for dealing with those issues. He endorsed the appeal of the Secretary-General to the Security Council to provide ambitious and sustainable financial support. He stressed that the Joint Force should be coupled with the implementation of the Malian peace process and with lasting efforts in development and governance.

The European Union Special Representative also pointed out the importance of the United Nations framework. He welcomed the options presented by the Secretary-General, specifying that the European Union was already involved in supporting the Joint Force and mobilizing the international community.

All of the members of the Security Council expressed their support for the Joint Force, as well as the need to enhance international support for it. The United States announced a €60 million bilateral contribution. France announced its intention to

come back to the members of the Council with recommendations to enhance international support to the Joint Force, including through MINUSMA.

## **Middle East**

### **United Nations Disengagement Observer Force**

On 3 October, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Security Council in quarterly consultations on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF).

The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations noted that the ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic had been maintained during the last three months, despite some incidents of firing observed in the central parts of the area of separation, including explosive impacts close to Camp Fawar on 28 September. He recalled that any presence of armed personnel and military equipment other than that of UNDOF in the area of separation was a violation of the 1974 Agreement on Disengagement of Forces. He said that the redeployment of UNDOF east of the Bravo line, approved by both parties, would increase the Force's observation and reporting capacities. He specified that phase 1 of the deployment plan had been achieved and that phase 2 had started with a slight delay. It would involve the resumption of limited patrols in the northern part of the area of separation over a period of six to eight months. He noted that the relocation of UNDOF and Observer Group Golan headquarters from Damascus to Camp Fawar would be considered in phase 3, as well as the reoccupation of observation posts 52, 56, 71 and 72. He said that the full implementation of phase 2 required appropriate technology, such as surveillance trailers, to ensure the safety and security of UNDOF personnel. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations also requested the appointment of a Political Adviser in the mission. Finally, he said that the Head of Mission, Major General Jai Shanker Menon, had left office on 30 September.

The members of the Security Council expressed their full support to UNDOF and called on all the parties to remain committed to the terms of the disengagement agreement. They all agreed that it was important for UNDOF to progressively resume its activities in the Bravo area. Many Council members insisted on the need to make available to UNDOF all appropriate technology and expressed their concern over the recent incidents, recalling the importance of ensuring the security and safety of UNDOF personnel. Some Council members also raised the threat posed by the presence of armed groups, including groups listed by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1267 \(1999\)](#) in the UNDOF area of operations.

### **The situation in the Middle East (Syrian Arab Republic)**

On 4 October, the Security Council held closed consultations and was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, on chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

On 24 October, the Security Council voted on a resolution presented by the United States on the renewal of the mandate of the Joint Investigative Mechanism of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations, which resulted in an outcome of 11 in favour to 2 against, with 2 abstentions. The resolution was not adopted, owing to the negative vote by one permanent member of the Council (the Russian Federation). The vote was preceded by a request by the Russian Federation to adjourn the meeting to 7 November, which gathered 4 votes in favour, 8 votes against and 3 abstentions, and accordingly did not pass.



On 26 October, the Security Council held a briefing, followed by closed consultations, on the recent developments regarding the political process on the Syrian crisis. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, reported on his efforts, via videoconference from Geneva.

The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General described significant developments in the fight against terrorist groups, mentioning, in particular, Raqqa, Mayadin and Dayr al-Zawr. He expressed concern regarding the persistence of violence and the trend of re-escalation in some areas, as well as the impediments to humanitarian access. On the political process, he emphasized the central role of the United Nations mediation process and the importance of the framework of resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#) and announced the next round of talks in Geneva scheduled for 28 November. The Special Envoy welcomed any initiative aiming at fostering the unity of the international community and underscored regional and international players' efforts.

During the consultations following the briefing, all of the members of the Security Council expressed support for the mediation efforts by the United Nations and the Geneva talks, within the framework of resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#).

On 30 October, the Security Council held the monthly briefing required under resolution [2139 \(2014\)](#) and closed consultations on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. Council members heard a briefing from the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, via videoconference from Amman.

The Under-Secretary-General depicted a critical humanitarian situation, referring to the more than 6 million internally displaced persons. He said that more than 13 million people still required humanitarian assistance. He described the situation in Raqqah, Dayr al-Zawr, Homs, Al-Roukban and eastern Ghutah. He reported on United Nations activities, which represented the vast majority of humanitarian work during that period. He hoped for tangible progress in delivering humanitarian assistance in the framework of the trilateral mechanism implemented with the Russian Federation and the Syrian Government. He stressed that it was crucial to ensure the preservation of cross-border and cross-line delivery of aid.

During the consultations, many members of the Security Council expressed their concern over the humanitarian situation in Syria, including eastern Ghutah. One Council member expressed concern over the humanitarian situation in Raqqa.

### **The situation in the Middle East (Yemen)**

On 10 October, the Security Council held a briefing and closed consultations on the situation in the Middle East (Yemen). The Council heard briefings from the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, and the Director of the Operational Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, John Ging. The Permanent Representative of Yemen also made a statement.

The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General underlined that the persistence of the conflict had serious consequences for the dire humanitarian situation. The implementation of a comprehensive ceasefire was urgently needed, as was the resumption of a credible peace process. He therefore announced that he would propose to the parties a comprehensive political plan, starting with confidence-building measures. The support of the Security Council for the plan would be needed.

The Director of the Operational Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs stressed that the humanitarian situation in Yemen was worsening. He underlined that civilians were the main victims of the conflict and that they were living in unacceptable conditions. According to him, the interruption of

regular salary payments for more than one million civil servants contributed to the thrusting of one quarter of the population into food insecurity. He indicated that the Yemen humanitarian response plan was only funded at 55 per cent.

The Permanent Representative of Yemen argued that the Government of Yemen had demonstrated willingness to promote the negotiations and denounced the alliance between Houthis and former President Ali Abdallah Saleh. Members of the Security Council voiced their frustration with the ongoing deterioration of the humanitarian situation and the lack of political progress.

After the consultations, the President of the Security Council read press elements on behalf of the members of the Council urging all sides to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law and reaffirming the need for all parties to engage meaningfully on the Special Envoy's proposals for peace and to make progress towards a ceasefire and a political solution to the conflict.

### **The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

On 18 October, the Security Council held an open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Miroslav Jenča, briefed the Council.

The Assistant Secretary-General expressed support for the ongoing reconciliation process, following the signing of the Fatah-Hamas Agreement on 12 October thanks to mediation by Egypt. He expressed hope that the political process would help alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. He reiterated that the Israeli settlement policy was illegal under international law and undermined peace efforts, and deplored recent decisions announced by the Israeli authorities. The representative of Israel and the Permanent Observer of Palestine made statements.

More than 40 States Members of the United Nations, including members of the Security Council, made statements. Many Member States expressed their commitment to the two-State solution, their worries regarding the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, their hope that the Cairo Agreement would lead to genuine Palestinian unity in line with internationally agreed principles and their serious concern about Israel's continued settlement policy.

### **Iraq**

On 18 October, the Security Council issued a press statement on recent tensions and violence in Kirkuk.

On 26 October, the Security Council discussed the situation in Iraq in closed consultations under the agenda item entitled "Other matters", at the request of France and Sweden. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Ján Kubiš, briefed the Council via videoconference from Baghdad.

The Special Representative reported on his recent visit to Kurdistan. He noted that Kurdish authorities stood prepared to conduct a dialogue with the Government of Iraq. He expressed concern over the worsening situation on the ground, where there were 66,000 internally displaced people in the contested areas and 76,000 in Kirkuk. He asked the Security Council to remain seized of the situation in Iraq and the United Nations to remain ready to respond to both parties' requests within the mandate of UNAMI. He called for re-establishment of a dialogue between Baghdad and Erbil, especially in the context of the fight against Da'esh.

Many members of the Security Council shared their concerns about the situation on the ground and the risk of escalation. They also expressed support for the

mediation efforts of the Special Representative, the call of both parties for renewal of the dialogue and the Iraqi efforts in the fight against terrorism.

After the consultations, the President of the Security Council read press elements on behalf of the members of the Council expressing concern about the increased tensions between Iraqi federal forces and Kurdish Peshmerga, calling on the parties to refrain from threats and from the use of force and to engage in a constructive dialogue, recalling the need for the rights and aspirations of all Iraqi citizens to be met through full implementation of the Iraqi Constitution, noting the willingness demonstrated by both sides to engage in a dialogue on the basis of the Iraqi Constitution and reaffirming their respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Iraq, as well as the importance of defeating Da'esh.

## **Lebanon**

On 24 October, the Security Council held closed consultations on the semi-annual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#) (S/2017/867). The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, briefed the Council.

The Under-Secretary-General and members of the Security Council unanimously underlined positive institutional developments in Lebanon following the election of a President, the designation of a Prime Minister and the adoption of a new electoral law and a budget. The Under-Secretary-General and members of the Council also emphasized the commitment of the Lebanese Armed Forces and their success in fighting against terrorist groups at the north-eastern border. The Under-Secretary-General called for reinforcement of the capacities of the Lebanese Armed Forces, in order to enable them to exercise control over the whole territory of Lebanon.

The Under-Secretary-General stressed the complementary nature of resolutions [1559 \(2004\)](#) and [1701 \(2006\)](#), which should not be confused. With respect to the implementation of resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#) and the disarmament of militias, he said that only a little progress had been made: he described a strengthened Hezbollah, but also Palestinian armed groups that were active inside and outside the refugee camps. Regarding resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#), he underlined Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace (military flights) and territorial integrity (non-settlement of the Shab'a farms and North Ghajar litigations). On the issue of Syrian refugees, he called for a cautious approach, especially in view of the upcoming Lebanese general elections.

## **Asia**

### **Afghanistan**

On 17 October, the Security Council issued a press statement condemning the terrorist attacks in Afghanistan, which resulted in the deaths of more than 70 people and the wounding of more than 200, for which the Taliban had claimed responsibility.

## **America**

### **Colombia**

On 5 October, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [2381 \(2017\)](#) extending the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia to include temporary participation in the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism of the ceasefire between the Government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the progress of the peace process in Colombia. They commended the commitment to peace shown by the parties and stressed the need for all stakeholders to continue to fulfil their commitments.

The Security Council also adopted a presidential statement ([S/PRST/2017/18](#)), which marked the completion of the 12-month mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.

## **Haiti**

On 17 October, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement on Haiti ([S/PRST/2017/20](#)), in which it recognized the contribution of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti in restoring security and stability on the ground and welcomed the work of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti. This new mission is dedicated to strengthening rule of law institutions in Haiti, further supporting and developing the Haitian National Police and engaging in human rights monitoring, reporting and analysis.

## **Thematic issues**

### **United Nations peacekeeping operations: strategic force generation**

On 5 October, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Security Council on strategic force generation. The representatives of Bangladesh and Canada also briefed the Council from the perspective of troop- and police-contributing countries. The Under-Secretary-General recalled the necessities and challenges of force generation, which concerned tens of thousands of troops and police from 120 countries. He said that the creation of the Strategic Force Generation and Capability Planning Cell in 2015 was essential and that the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System offered a new perspective. He referred to the involvement of 83 Member States contributing to the System. He argued that, despite these successes, peacekeeping operations were still lacking specialized capabilities, such as helicopters, explosive ordnance disposal units and quick reaction forces. In order to help fill these gaps, he called on the Council to continuously adapt and prioritize the operations' mandates based on changes observed on the ground and take into account capability gaps; ensure cooperation with the host-States to facilitate smooth conduct of the missions; support and ensure full implementation of efforts to improve performance, training and conduct; and support the Secretariat's efforts towards continuous improvement.

The representative of Bangladesh recalled his country's significant involvement in force generation efforts and initiatives. He also recalled that Member States committed during the Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping in 2015 to providing 40,000 peacekeepers and policemen, as well as helicopters, engineering capacities and equipment. He stressed the need for enhanced consultation with troop- and police-contributing countries on this topic. He stressed the importance of the enhanced participation of women in peacekeeping operations. He called on the Security Council to deliver realistic mandates, consistent with corresponding capabilities and resources. He underlined the importance of linguistic skills, for which smart pledges would be useful.

The representative of Canada stressed that the United Nations Peacekeeping Defense Ministerial Conference, to be held in Vancouver, Canada, on 14 and 15 November, would aim at closing capability gaps and taking stock of promises already made. He added that concrete measures to eradicate sexual exploitation and abuse would be reviewed and that the participation of women at all levels was directly linked to operational effectiveness.

The members of the Security Council noted the creation of the Strategic Force Generation and Capability Planning Cell and the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System. Several speakers called for the strengthening of triangular consultations among the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the host countries. Several delegations pointed out the lack of significant progress toward a better gender balance in peacekeeping personnel.

### **Maintenance of international peace and security**

On 12 October, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Secretary-General on the threat of famine in Nigeria and the threat of famine and conflict in South Sudan, Somalia and Yemen.

The Secretary-General commended the response of the international community to his call for pledges in February, as 68 per cent of the needs had been funded so far. He reported on the situation in South Sudan, Nigeria, Somalia and Yemen, where high risks of starvation were still observed. He asked for additional significant efforts to alleviate famine in those countries. He condemned impediments to the access of humanitarian personnel and supplies, as well as bureaucratic hurdles. He condemned attacks against humanitarian actors and called for a fight against impunity for the perpetrators of those crimes. He stressed the importance of a peaceful and lasting settlement of conflicts, which would contribute to putting an end to food insecurity. He recalled that prevention must be a common watchword and urged investment in sustainable peace and comprehensive long-term solutions.

Most members of the Security Council reiterated the importance of implementing an early warning system to alleviate the risk of starvation. Many argued against impediments to humanitarian access and stressed the role of the Council in tackling the root causes of famine. Some underlined the negative impact of climate change.

### **Children and armed conflict**

On 31 October, the Security Council held a ministerial-level open debate, chaired by the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, on children and armed conflict. The Secretary-General, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Virginia Gamba, and a civil society representative, Mubin Shaikh, briefed the Council. More than 80 speakers made statements.

The Secretary-General presented an alarming overview of the violations committed against children, stressing that they were source of a global shame. Armed groups were forcing children to become suicide bombers and children were being stigmatized for having been recruited by armed groups. He urged the Security Council to more efficiently address the problem. He acknowledged, however, that some progress had been achieved and called for additional legal and political commitments.

The Special Representative introduced the latest report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict ([A/72/361-S/2017/821](#)). She called for the inclusion of child-protection provisions in ceasefire and peace agreements, for greater regional and subregional cooperation and for the provision of the means necessary in order to gather best practices and to report adequately.

The representative of civil society described his childhood and path to adulthood, and especially the six-year period of radicalization he went through, which led him to side with the Taliban. He warned against indoctrination. He said that, sadly, the recruitment and use of children by non-State armed groups could be witnessed every day. Such groups were taking advantage of children's vulnerability, and he

therefore asked Member States to do everything they could to prevent and end those practices, including by training their armed forces and peacekeepers.

Many speakers urged Member States that had not yet done so to sign and ratify relevant international treaties, including the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. Many speakers also encouraged Member States to consider endorsing the Paris Principles and the Paris Commitments. They condemned all violations against children, including the recruitment and use of children, notably their use as human bombs. Most of them called for putting an end to impunity for the perpetrators of those crimes, including in cases of sexual violence. They noted the importance of child protection in peacekeeping mandates and child violation criteria in sanctions regimes, and the provision of sufficient funding and staffing. Many speakers underlined the need to consider children recruited by armed groups as victims rather than security threats and therefore noted that detention should be used in accordance with relevant provisions of international law. They also condemned attacks on schools and medical facilities.

The Security Council issued a presidential statement ([S/PRST/2017/21](#)).

### **Terrorism**

On 21 October, the Security Council issued a press statement condemning the terrorist attack in El-Wahat Desert, Egypt, in which a large number of policemen were killed or injured.

### **Women and peace and security**

On 27 October, the Security Council held an open debate on women and peace and security. The Secretary-General's Chef de Cabinet, Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti; the Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka; a civil society representative, Charo Mina-Rojas; and the Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie, Michaëlle Jean, briefed the Council. In addition to Council members, more than 80 speakers delivered statements. Participants took stock of 17 years of efforts to fully reflect women's participation in the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts. They stressed that, while the protection of women as victims should remain at the core of the agenda, women's meaningful participation in conflict prevention and resolution and peace processes, as well as post-conflict situations, needed to be increased. Member States were invited to highlight concrete actions aimed at strengthening the implementation of existing Security Council resolutions and ensuring a more robust monitoring of those commitments.

The Chef de Cabinet presented the report of the Secretary-General on the subject ([S/2017/861](#)) and stressed that the underrepresentation of women in the security sector undermined conflict prevention. She noted that currently only 3 per cent of United Nations peacekeepers are women and described in detail the proposals made by the Secretary-General to achieve gender parity.

The Executive Director of UN-Women presented the women and peace and security agenda as an essential pillar of global affairs. Noting that there had been little progress in the participation of women in peace processes and in leadership positions, she called for greater funding for gender expertise and projects in conflict zones.

The representative of civil society described measures included in the Colombian peace agreement as a new source of hope for women's empowerment and for gender inclusiveness, and underlined further steps to be taken.

The Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie reported on initiatives undertaken in favour of women's participation and recalled the absolute necessity of protecting women from violence during armed conflicts.

The representatives of Member States agreed that more progress was needed, despite the efforts made since the adoption of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). Many speakers asked for improved data collection in order to monitor progress and to reinforce gender analysis. Many countries presented their national efforts, domestic policies and cooperation with international and United Nations frameworks on women and peace and security. Speakers urged an end to violence against women, accountability for perpetrators and implementation of the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy with respect to sexual exploitation and abuse.

### **International Court of Justice**

On 25 October, during a private meeting, the Security Council heard a briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice, Judge Ronny Abraham. Council members then engaged in an exchange of views with the President of the Court.

### **Informal meetings**

In addition to the meetings scheduled in the programme of work of the Security Council, members of the Council organized informal meetings related to the following issues:

- (a) Myanmar (Arria formula meeting organized on 13 October by France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in the presence of Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General and Chair of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State);
  - (b) Attacks on schools (Arria formula meeting organized on 13 October by Italy, France, Sweden and Uruguay, in the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and a civil society representative).
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