

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 30 December 2019 from the Chair of the
Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

In my capacity as Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, it is my pleasure to forward to you herewith the report on the activities of the Working Group for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019 (see annex).

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

(Signed) Kacou Houadja Léon **Adom**
Ambassador
Chair of the Security Council Working Group on
Peacekeeping Operations



Annex to the letter dated 30 December 2019 from the Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Report on the activities of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019

I. Introduction

1. The present report contains summaries of statements or interventions made by briefers and representatives of Member States during the meetings of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations. Its content is not intended to reflect the consensus position of the Security Council on peacekeeping issues.

2. Between 1 January and 31 December 2019, the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations held four meetings, chaired by Côte d'Ivoire. The meetings were aimed at promoting triangular cooperation between the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat, with a view to improving coordination between peacekeeping partners.

3. At those meetings, during which the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations was briefed by representatives of the Secretariat, United Nations peacekeeping missions and other institutions, including the Permanent Representatives of Mali and Burkina Faso, participants focused on the following themes:

(a) Cooperation between peacekeeping operations and host States for stronger peacekeeping and peacebuilding;

(b) Follow-up on the Action for Peacekeeping initiative;

(c) Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations: how to strengthen the partnership for peace and security in Africa, including through the case of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the Group of Five for the Sahel;

(d) Transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding presence through the example of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

II. Cooperation between peacekeeping operations and host States for stronger peacekeeping and peacebuilding

4. On 25 April 2019, the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations held a meeting on cooperation between peacekeeping operations and host States for stronger peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

5. Briefers included the Deputy Director for the Central and Southern Africa Division of the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations and team leader of the integrated operational team for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Ugo Solinas, and the Deputy Director of the East Africa Division of the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations and team leader of the integrated operational team for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Francois Grignon.

6. Mr. Solinas underlined in his presentation that the consent of the parties to conflict, including the host Government, was one of the key principles of

peacekeeping. He noted that the quality of consent could vary over time and in quality, along a spectrum from basic consent to a mission's deployment to a shared vision between the Mission and the host Government. He gave several examples from MONUSCO to illustrate the range of levels of consent the Mission had seen, and noted that dealing with challenges of consent was a collective responsibility of the Security Council, the Mission and troop- and police-contributing countries. Constant dialogue with host authorities at all levels was a *sine qua non*, but when dialogue was not sufficient, Security Council engagement was required. He further stated that Council visits to the Democratic Republic of the Congo at crucial moments had conveyed the image of a united Council to ensure strong cooperation. However, he noted that the Council should think more about how to ensure that certain behaviours did not go unnoticed and unanswered, especially when they hindered core mandate tasks. Looking forward, Mr. Solinas noted that any attempt to frame a transition or benchmarks had to be carried out in close collaboration with authorities to help create the conditions for a smooth exit.

7. Mr. Grignon reflected on lessons from the past several years in the peacekeeping operation in South Sudan. First, he emphasized that tensions between the Mission and host Government reflected tensions between the host Government and the Security Council, since the Mission was the political instrument of the Council. Mr. Grignon outlined four distinct phases in the relationship between the Mission and the host Government since 2011, each with varying levels of tension and different challenges. Presenting his conclusions from the four phases, he underscored the importance of the quality of political dialogue between the Council and the host Government, since it informed the conditions for mission implementation. He noted that fundamental aspects of peacekeeping missions meant that they often were not popular with host Governments. As the relationship faced inherent tensions, it needed to be conducted with clear intentions in order to translate consent into support for a peace process. Active, regular and consistent dialogue, especially in the capital city, was vital, in particular to help minimize the risks taken by troop- and police-contributing countries.

8. Mr. Grignon also stated that dialogue could be supported through Security Council visits, collective commitments in capital cities and informal discussions, and that host States must understand that missions would not stay forever and exit strategies could help indicate the intentions of the United Nations in that regard.

9. The delegate from Belgium noted that all host Governments except one had endorsed the Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, indicating their commitment to good relations with missions. She underscored the need for speedy rotations to ensure the proper deployment of troops in South Sudan and highlighted the challenges of host Governments also serving as troop- and police-contributing countries in peacekeeping operations.

10. Noting that the intention of the meeting was to discuss tools for engagement between the Security Council and host Governments, the representative of France asked whether country visits by the Council had led to improvements and what more the Council could do, for example through public diplomacy or by discussing challenges in advance of country visits.

11. The representative of Mali stated that a recent trend was transposing peacekeeping models onto situations that were not appropriate for those models. He called for specific analysis of each situation and adaptation of the rules of engagement and concepts of operations in order to achieve results. He also recalled the need for constant dialogue throughout the life cycle of a mission with the goal of building a shared vision. The delegate noted that host Governments agreed to peacekeeping

missions when “a knife is at their throat” and when the internal resolution of disputes was no longer possible. While recalling that the United Nations was not suited for counter-terrorism, he drew attention to the local population’s lack of understanding of the mission’s mandate. He highlighted the need to provide peace dividends to the population, including through small projects that allowed the population to see what the mission was doing. Referring to the large numbers of fatalities in Mali, he called on countries to ensure that troop- and police-contributing countries possessed the necessary equipment to protect themselves. He also recalled the importance of subregional organizations, such as the G5 Sahel and the Economic Community of West African States, which were also important for stabilization.

12. The representative of the Sudan stated that status-of-forces agreements differed from country to country, recalling the extensive negotiations between the African Union, the Sudan and the United Nations on the status-of-forces agreement for UNAMID. He highlighted the importance of sensitizing troop- and police-contributing countries to the agreement to ensure that they respected its limitations, and sensitizing host Government institutions to facilitate cooperation. The representative asked the briefers if they thought acting in a “one size fits all” manner was a common phenomenon in the Secretariat, and whether that approach was appropriate given the diversity of host Governments and troop- and police-contributing countries.

13. The representative of Egypt called for maintaining the momentum of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative and highlighted the need to widen the ownership of peacekeeping decision-making processes, including through quadrilateral engagement between the Secretariat, troop- and police-contributing countries, host Governments and the Security Council in drafting mandates, as seen at the Cairo conference. He called for collective interaction to be formalized and systematized. He also noted his country’s intention to ensure that peacekeeping was a top priority while it chaired the African Union in 2019.

14. The representative of Germany noted that a cooperative approach was key, but that host States also had responsibilities stemming from the Charter of the United Nations and must take concrete steps to abide by their commitments in status-of-forces agreements and status-of-mission agreements. The delegate asked the briefers whether the Secretariat had a system for systematically recording status-of-forces agreement violations over time, and whether a standard operating procedure existed for when and how the Security Council was informed.

15. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland emphasized the importance of establishing national ownership for mission transitions, asking what steps could be taken to establish a shared vision on transition benchmarks. Dialogue should include civil society, in particular women and youth. On cooperation, the representative shared her country’s concern regarding the decision of the Federal Government of Somalia to declare the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Nicholas Haysom, persona non grata in January 2019, as well as the unwillingness of the Government of Somalia to engage with the Panel of Experts on Somalia. She asked the briefers how the Security Council could better ensure accountability for status-of-forces agreement violations. With regard to UNMISS, the representative asked the briefers what steps should be taken to ensure meaningful dialogue where there was a history of low trust between the parties to the conflict and the Mission. Regarding MONUSCO, she asked whether the political sensitivities of elements of the host Government towards the Mission reported during the pre-election period had continued since the election, as well as about measures taken to address them.

16. The representative of China highlighted the need to adhere to the three principles of peacekeeping and to the Charter. First, the representative laid out her country's view of key aspects of the relationship with host States. With regard to dealing with host States, she noted the need to seek the full acceptance of and collaboration with the host State and to demonstrate respect for the sovereignty and ownership of the host State. She also noted that missions should help host Governments to enhance their capacity to prevent the resurgence of conflict. Missions should be strictly neutral in conflict situations, since the differentiated treatment of parties to conflict creates risks to the safety and security of peacekeepers. Second, she underlined the importance of strengthening political settlements as the best way to resolve conflicts. If no political process was under way, the United Nations should enhance its good offices. Regional mechanisms should create synergy in that process. Finally, the representative noted the importance of improving mandates, which should have clear priorities and be regularly updated in line with the situation on the ground. They should reflect host government needs, security conditions and the capacities of troop-contributing countries so that mandates could be planned and respond to changes. On the protection of civilians, there should be a holistic focus on building host State capacity and a clear scope of implementation. When the host State asked for it and when conditions on the ground allowed it, the Security Council should give clear instructions for exit. The voices of troop- and police-contributing countries should be considered when developing mandates.

17. The representative of Indonesia noted the importance of capacity-building for the host State, since missions are of limited duration, and called for improving the skills of peacekeepers, in particular soft skills, such as confidence-building, community engagement, facilitation and mediation. Lastly, platforms to strengthen cooperation with the host State were useful, for example the tripartite platform with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), Lebanon and Israel, the quadrilateral formula proposed by Egypt or the Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law. The representative concluded by asking the briefers how similar platforms might help in strengthening cooperation.

18. The representative of Guatemala highlighted that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations of the General Assembly (also known as the Committee of 34) covered all topics under discussion in the meeting. The representative noted that cooperation issues with host States impacted the performance of troops. While the host State was responsible for sustaining peace, he highlighted that the reforms of the peace and security and peacebuilding architectures by the Secretariat might have an impact on peacebuilding. Finally, he asked to be given more notice before the next meeting so that the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries could reach a common position.

19. The representative of the Russian Federation expressed support for the assertion of Guatemala about the role of the Committee of 34. Noting her country's support for the basic principles of peacekeeping, the representative reiterated that the host Government bore the primary responsibility for the safety of the population and for addressing crises and encouraging recovery. Calling for the establishment of constructive daily cooperation with host authorities, the representative stated that peacekeeping operations should be carried out in cooperation with host Governments at the forefront of addressing conflict, since civil society and non-governmental organizations could not replace the host State. When developing mandates, the specifics of each situation should be taken into account. She also expressed wholehearted support for the principle of African solutions to African problems and regional cooperation with the African Union, and concluded by asking the briefers how they envisioned strategies for the drawdown of peacekeeping operations.

20. The representative of the United States of America noted his country's continuing concerns about safety and security in South Sudan, highlighting the recent example of a status-of-forces agreement violation in which a casualty evacuation flight had been delayed for 20 hours. He noted that such examples made the United States question whether the United Nations should be looking to other solutions, including regional approaches, and stated that the current pace of progress was not sufficient for his Government. The representative asked the briefers what lessons could be learned from successful examples of transitions and cooperation between the United Nations and host Governments and questioned whether training and support for national security forces could be better aligned to incentivize host government consent.

21. Taking the floor after the comments and questions of participating countries, Mr. Solinas agreed regarding the need for strong dialogue with host Governments throughout the life cycle of a mission. He acknowledged the temptation to build mandates based on templates as a result of both political interests in the Security Council and bureaucratic interests in the Secretariat. He stated, however, that the Secretariat was very conscious of the need to ensure that mandates were prioritized, reflected needs on the ground and were adjusted in response to changes.

22. Regarding communication about status-of-forces agreement violations, he drew attention to efforts to ensure systematic accounting of status-of-forces agreement violations, but noted that more systematic reporting called for a more systematic response. He also noted that many issues stemmed from the misunderstanding by the host Government of the mission mandate, and that Security Council visits were critical for helping to resolve them. Mr. Solinas acknowledged that transitions could create both risk and opportunity, referring to encouraging signals about cooperation from the new President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Regarding the implementation of national priorities, he said that it was not the role of peacekeeping missions to address the underlying social root causes of instability, but to facilitate the work of other actors.

23. Mr. Grignon noted that the status-of-forces agreement model heavily reflected criteria of the General Assembly and international law and that there was little room to adjust it. Therefore, reviews to adapt the mission to the context, such as the Secretary-General's independently led review process, were very important. Mr. Grignon also noted that UNMISS recorded status-of-forces agreement violations on a monthly basis. He emphasized, however, that the institutions of the host State were not necessarily strong, and that status-of-forces agreement violations were sometimes the result of institutional weakness, not political will. He encouraged the permanent members of the Security Council to look at ways to support cooperation around mandate implementation. Mr. Grignon highlighted that when a host State agreed to host a mission, consent was relative, since no country agreed enthusiastically to the presence of foreign troops on its territory and because the State was in a difficult situation. The mission needed to develop a strategy for change management to encourage the development of conditions that would lead to withdrawal. He emphasized that the United Nations needed to ensure strong communication to prevent countries from being surprised by developments, which could undermine a constructive working relationship. A joint vision should be developed as soon as possible for transitions.

24. The representative of the Netherlands concluded by asking why the Secretariat had not yet begun reporting on each status-of-forces agreement violation, as requested in the statement by the President of the Security Council of 14 May 2018 ([S/PRST/2018/10](#)). Mr. Grignon replied that the fundamental question was not how status-of-forces agreement violations could be better reported, since the Secretariat had made considerable strides in that area, but rather the actions of the Council once

a violation had been reported. He called upon the Council to discuss developing a collective approach to dealing with those violations.

III. Follow-up on the Action for Peacekeeping initiative

25. On 23 August 2019, the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations held a meeting on the topic of follow-up on the Action for Peacekeeping initiative.

26. The Chief of the Policy and Best Practices Service in the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division of the Department of Peace Operations, Rania Dagash, briefed the assembled representatives of Member States on the status of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative one year after the issuance of the Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. She highlighted several key Secretariat achievements in the implementation of the initiative, such as the roll-out of the comprehensive performance assessment system, as well as continuing gaps. Ms. Dagash gave an overview of the champions initiative to boost Action for Peacekeeping implementation by Member States.

27. Ms. Dagash called on all champions to share their workplans with the Secretariat by the end of September 2019 and offered them the support of the Secretariat. She noted that the Secretariat had developed a gap analysis to help the champions identify potential activities. In addition, the Secretariat was working on a web-based, publicly available dashboard to showcase the achievements of peacekeeping partners. To populate the dashboard, she asked Member States to respond to the Secretariat's survey by 10 September.

28. The Deputy Police Advisor from the Department of Peace Operations, Shaowen Yang, noted that the Police Division had created a task force to implement the police-related components of the Declaration of Shared Commitments. He highlighted a number of Action for Peacekeeping achievements so far. In relation to improving performance, the standard operating procedures for formed police unit evaluations had been finalized, and all currently deployed formed police units had been evaluated. Predeployment operational assessments were being conducted before deployment or upon rotation. Efforts were also underway to revise the standard operating procedure for the assessment of individual police officers. Mr. Yang noted, however, that much remained to be done, including deploying more senior women police officers, developing an accountability framework for police commanders and ensuring the effectiveness of training efforts.

29. The Chief of Staff ad interim for the Office of Military Affairs, Department of Peace Operations, Colonel Lucian Andrei, focused on the 2019 United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference and the implementation of the action plan to improve the security of peacekeepers. He recalled that the latest update of the uniformed capability requirement paper had been sent to Member States on 22 August 2019, and that, as of August, the majority of pledges from the 2019 Peacekeeping Ministerial had been submitted in the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System. Noting that the Peacekeeping Ministerial had focused on performance and women and peace and security, Colonel Andrei called for embedding more women in peacekeeping units to improve situational awareness and contact with civilians. He noted that 14 per cent of military observers were women and stated that the Department hoped to increase that proportion to 16 per cent by the end of 2019. He also noted that, of the 125 actions identified in the action plan, 71 had been completed and 54 were in progress.

30. The representative of the United Kingdom called for Member States to focus on achieving concrete outcomes in line with several principles for Action for Peacekeeping implementation, including adopting a "light touch" approach, respecting the voluntary nature of Action for Peacekeeping implementation,

encouraging tailored efforts by individual Member States, focusing on sharing best practices, and ensuring that efforts were cross-regional and inclusive. She stated that it was regrettable that the Action for Peacekeeping spirit of consensus had not been seen in the Committee of 34 last year.

31. Noting that the United Kingdom was a champion for politics and peacebuilding, she stated that the United Kingdom had been trying to streamline mandates for missions for which it was a penholder, with one recent example being the African Union Mission in Somalia, and that it hoped to do the same when renewing the mandate of UNAMID in autumn 2019. She noted that the United Kingdom was supporting the comprehensive performance assessment system, had increased its contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund and had contributed \$1.2 million to the Elsie Initiative Fund, launched by Canada and the United Nations to increase the participation of uniformed women in United Nations peacekeeping. She said that, as the United Kingdom prepared for its MINUSMA deployment in 2020, it would look at how partnerships, especially for training, could help improve capabilities. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of thinking about implementation not only in terms of activities and outcomes, but in terms of their impact on the ground. She stated her hope that the briefing of the Security Council by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, on 9 September would include a discussion of impact, in particular regarding the Council resolution [2436 \(2018\)](#) performance agenda and efforts to remediate underperforming contingents.

32. The representative of Morocco noted that it was important to take stock of collective efforts to implement the Action for Peacekeeping initiative. Regarding the champions mechanism, his country was planning to support safety and security, as well as conduct and discipline, reflecting its commitments to those areas. The representative highlighted several implementation actions, including enhanced training and equipment for Moroccan contingents, which had resulted in positive evaluations. Morocco had created a specific module for female personnel in its rapid deployment units, and the country had increased the participation of women in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and MONUSCO in the past year. To help to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations, Morocco would also make 50 female officers available.

33. The representative of the Russian Federation noted that all initiatives in the United Nations should be taken in line with decisions of Member States and that States had not yet agreed upon any decisions with regard to the Action for Peacekeeping initiative. While the Committee of 34 had been close to a decision that year, the report had ultimately not been adopted. Nonetheless, the Committee of 34 had agreed that its report structure would be changed on a trial basis to bring it into line with the main themes of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative. It was hoped that the change would facilitate decisions by Member States and to help to create a framework for the initiative. Regarding the champions initiative, the representative noted that his country viewed that work as informal, although the efforts might provide food for thought for the main session of the Committee of 34. He emphasized that efforts should not be geared towards advancing controversial proposals, but towards proposals with strong support among Member States.

34. The representative of Belgium stated that it was good that the Committee of 34 had aligned its report structure with the themes of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative. Regarding the national efforts of Belgium towards implementation of the initiative, the representative noted that her country was supporting the deployment of mobile training teams and the development of manuals, the details of which would be provided in its survey response. She stated that her country was a champion for

performance and politics and, in particular, was trying to advance the alignment of mandates and resources by encouraging the Security Council and the Fifth Committee to better understand each other. She called upon other Member States to share ideas with Belgium for that purpose. She noted that the Council had made a genuine effort in recent months to create clearer and more achievable mandates, but asked the briefers whether they saw other ways for the Council to do more to advance Action for Peacekeeping objectives.

35. The representative of Indonesia recalled that, during its Security Council presidency, his country had held an open debate on training and capacity-building for the safety and security of peacekeepers, one of several Action for Peacekeeping implementation efforts by Indonesia. The country had also conducted regional activities, including a regional conference in June on preparing modern forces for twenty-first century peacekeeping, as well as a regional meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on women and peace and security. The representative noted that many initiatives had been taken by all stakeholders, but that it was important to fit all those initiatives into a larger, overarching framework. He agreed with the Russian Federation that agreement by all stakeholders was important. He noted that voluntary reporting might be a burden for some colleagues and called for other ways to identify actions on the ground. Finally, he asked the briefers how implementers might agree on an overarching framework to gather all Action for Peacekeeping initiatives carried out by stakeholders.

36. The representative of Germany noted that her country had agreed to act as a champion in the areas of politics and sustaining peace and transitions. The representative noted that Germany was still discussing its own Action for Peacekeeping implementation, but that current actions included supporting mobile training teams, as well as offering more training of trainers to improve safety and security. Germany was providing in-mission training to mission headquarters personnel and assistance with command post exercises for staff officers and force personnel in UNMISS and MONUSCO. The country also supported the standing police capacity, providing \$1 million in 2019 and 2020; assisted with the United Nations police training architecture; and had hosted the United Nations Police Commanders course in Berlin. The German representative noted that Germany hoped the Action for Peacekeeping structure would result in Committee of 34 support for meaningful implementation of the initiative.

37. The representative of India called for a way forward for the implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative in the absence of a Committee of 34 report or cross-cutting resolution. He read the last paragraph of the Declaration on implementation modalities and emphasized that it provided Action for Peacekeeping endorsers with space for following up on the initiative. India, as a troop-contributing country, was implementing Action for Peacekeeping on a daily basis, having carried out a co-deployment with Kazakhstan and having deployed a female contingent in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The representative stated that India was a champion for performance and accountability, focusing on the integrated performance policy framework, caveats and mobile training teams. He anticipated that issues with mission assessment would cease with the roll-out of the comprehensive performance assessment system by July 2020. Regarding conduct and discipline, India was helping to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by funding training for peacekeeping commanders about the issue.

38. The representative of China noted that her country had volunteered to serve as a champion for performance and accountability and for safety and security. China had strengthened training, equipment, discipline and enforcement for its peacekeepers. The country had enhanced its training facilities to improve predeployment training and had helped to train 1,800 peacekeepers from other countries. The peacekeeping

centre operated by China, which focuses on capacity-building for troop-contributing countries from Africa, would continue to strengthen peacekeepers, including by providing emergency capability and safety and security training. China asked the briefers to share any specific ideas they might have for an overarching idea or road map for implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative.

39. The representative of the United States agreed with several other speakers that implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative should not be “one size fits all”. He noted that the United States was seeking to better sequence and prioritize mandates. In the area of women and peace and security, the Global Peace Operations Initiative had trained 11,000 women around the world and was facilitating women’s participation by, for example, building barracks for women at peacekeeping training sites. The United States had also created training materials in French and English for the United Nations Mine Action Service and contributed support for the upcoming conference led by the MINUSMA Force Commander. The representative stated the interest of the United States in the performance and accountability area and noted that his delegation had reviewed with interest the note from the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, on the performance reporting of the Secretariat. He called for clearer, more systematic and more transparent reporting on performance issues in the field. He asked the briefers for clarification regarding the delay in sending more strategic planners into the field to implement the comprehensive performance assessment system.

40. Ms. Dagash responded to the question posed by the United States, stating that obtaining more strategic planners had to be approved by the Fifth Committee. She recalled that many missions did not have strong planning capacities, despite their size, yet planning functions were critical for decision-making and uniformed and civilian performance. Regarding the comment by Indonesia about inclusivity, she noted that it was at the heart of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, and she called upon representatives from both the global North and South to push the initiative forward. In response to the question asked by Belgium, she referred to the gap analysis carried out by the Secretariat, which identified ways in which the Security Council could help further, including by helping to develop parameters for the sequencing and prioritization of mandates later in the year. She stated that the Secretariat hoped that the new Committee of 34 report structure would help push partners towards Action for Peacekeeping implementation. She concluded by reminding Member States that the Secretariat was eager to receive the plans of all champions for the following six months by 30 September.

41. Mr. Yang expressed his appreciation for the strong political and financial support for the United Nations police, especially by Germany and China. Regarding measurement of the performance of peacekeepers, whether military, political or civilian, he noted that it was also important to measure the capacity of the host State to assess whether peacekeepers had been able to improve their ability to provide security to civilians. Finally, he recalled that the police always represented the main actors for the security of a country. When it came to mission transitions, the Security Council should measure whether the host State was ready to take over police responsibilities from the mission.

IV. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations: how to strengthen the partnership for peace and security in Africa, including through the case of MINUSMA and the Group of Five for the Sahel

42. On 22 October 2019, the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations held a meeting on the topic of “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations: how to strengthen the partnership for peace and security

in Africa, including through the case of MINUSMA and the Group of Five for the Sahel”.

43. The Deputy Permanent Representative of Côte d’Ivoire chaired the meeting, which included briefings by the Permanent Representative of Mali, Issa Konfourou; the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso, Yemdaogo Eric Tiare; and the team leader of the Mali integrated operational team, Claudia Banz.

44. Mr. Konfourou noted that increased instability in the Sahel had exceeded the capacity of Sahel Member States to manage the situation on their own, and he recognized the contributions of partners, including France, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union and MINUSMA. Recognizing that action was similarly required at a subregional level, the G5 Sahel had been formed in 2014. The authorization of technical and logistical support by MINUSMA through Security Council resolution [2480 \(2019\)](#) had been very welcome, but financing for the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel remained much lower than required. Mr. Konfourou expressed disappointment at the resistance from some Council members to authorizing the G5 Sahel mission under Chapter VII. He called attention to the possible deployment of foreign fighters from Syria to the Sahel, noting that insecurity in the Sahel could spread elsewhere. Finally, he highlighted the need for support for the G5 Sahel development pillar.

45. Mr. Tiare drew attention to the deteriorating security situation in Burkina Faso. He expressed appreciation for the adoption by the Security Council of resolution [2480 \(2019\)](#), noting that it should correct issues with the implementation of resolution [2391 \(2017\)](#) by allowing MINUSMA to support G5 Sahel battalions operating outside of Mali. He said that he looked forward to the European Union signing the tripartite agreement on support between the European Union, the United Nations and the G5 Sahel. He stated that the G5 Sahel continued to operationalize the Joint Force and that 5,000 deployed troops had carried out nine operations so far that year. To strengthen respect for human rights, police components had accompanied all of those operations. Mr. Tiare also called for further support, including a Chapter VII mandate for the Force and bilateral and multilateral development cooperation.

46. Ms. Banz provided an overview of the mandate of MINUSMA in relation to the Joint Force, which would be covered in the next report on the Mission, due in November. She gave a preview of the key findings in the report, including increases in terrorist acts and intercommunal violence that increasingly affected coastal Sahel States. She stated that the Force had not deployed rapidly enough to keep up with events and had so far carried out only a small number of operations. While the rainy season was partly responsible, other challenges included poor infrastructure, a lack of training and equipment and insufficient camp structures. She referred to the challenges of the current support model, noting that it provided little predictability and required continual fundraising. Donor pledges had been slow to arrive, while the mobilization of major equipment like armoured personnel carriers was a lengthy process. Following the adoption of resolution [2480 \(2019\)](#), MINUSMA had received requests for support from all battalions and was working to respond. Ms. Banz called for enhanced cooperation to support the subregion, including clear and strong mandates, predictable and sustainable funding and strong organizational support that took into account humanitarian and human rights considerations.

47. The representative of the United Kingdom noted that the United Kingdom had contributed \$2.8 million in bilateral funding for the operationalization of the Joint Force, and approximately 15 per cent of the €100 million contribution from the European Union. However, she stated that the United Kingdom did not see a legal need for a Chapter VII mandate for the Joint Force, since the Force was composed of national militaries that were already operating with mutual consent across each

other's borders inside a limited zone, and she asked the briefers to clarify why they believed that the Force required a Chapter VII mandate. She asked the briefers for more information on the impact of the nine operations carried out by the Force; challenges to the implementation of Force compliance frameworks; their assessment of the success of the trust fund with disbursements and ways to increase donor confidence; efforts to address broader issues in the Sahel, including through the development pillar and the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel; and plans to operationalize the pledges made at the Brussels summit in February 2018 and the pledge made by ECOWAS leaders at the Ouagadougou summit in September 2019 to mobilize up to \$1 billion for counter-terrorism efforts.

48. The representative of the European Union recalled that the topic of the meeting was how regional organizations such as the European Union could contribute to peace. He noted that the call by Mr. Konfourou for predictability resonated with them, and stated that the European Union could be counted on in the Sahel. He emphasized that the support of the European Union for the G5 Sahel already amounted to €100 million, not including support for MINUSMA. He expressed the hope that the European Union would soon sign the tripartite agreement between the European Union, the United Nations and the G5 Sahel and noted that the European Union had been a reliable partner in the political process and development efforts.

49. The representative of France noted that the international community should be prepared to assist when problems exceeded the capacity of individual States. The representative stated that G5 Sahel members had created the organization without support or resources, recognizing that the focus of MINUSMA was on protection and the political process in Mali. Despite the newness of the organization, its efforts were paying off in increased cooperation, new structures and joint operations. The country's Operation Barkhane was quite willing to support the G5 Sahel. But donor support was also key, especially given that only half of the \$420 million pledged had been disbursed. He stated that France would continue to support a Chapter VII mandate for the Joint Force and noted that France was looking forward to the discussion in the Security Council the following month.

50. The representative of Belgium expressed her country's support for the G5 Sahel and stated that a number of things remained to be done, in particular the operationalization of the police. The representative also emphasized the importance of implementing the human rights compliance framework and noted that the region required security, but also needed to look at the root causes of the conflict, including injustice. She recalled her country's contributions to MINUSMA, including the construction of the Timbuktu base, and suggested that those contributions could be used for the Joint Force.

51. The representative of the United States called attention to his country's long history of support in the region and highlighted its \$100 million pledge to the G5 Sahel. He asked the briefers to share more information on the status of the trust fund, how the Joint Force was using the support provided so far and the remaining gaps in support. He expressed the opinion that bilateral assistance was more effective than assistance through the United Nations, and he aligned with the United Kingdom regarding the lack of a need for a Chapter VII mandate for the Force.

52. The representative of South Africa called upon the Security Council to help the G5 Sahel before the situation worsened, and stated that the Joint Force required the full capacity to implement its mandate. The representative noted that assistance should be provided through organizations such as ECOWAS and the African Union to support the goals of the region and called for advancing cooperation to prioritize the security of the Sahel.

53. The representative of China called the role of United Nations peacekeeping “irreplaceable” for advancing political settlements and highlighted that African Union troops complemented United Nations efforts in the Lake Chad, Somalia and Sahel regions. He expressed concern about the heavy toll in the Sahel region and expressed support for African solutions to African problems, with United Nations financial support. He stated that MINUSMA should provide backstopping to the Joint Force as outlined in Security Council resolution 2480 (2019), and concluded by highlighting his country’s support for the G5 Sahel, including \$1.5 million for the Joint Force headquarters.

54. The representative of Indonesia stated that regional organizations were in a unique position to ensure the success of peacekeeping. The representative welcomed the progress of the Joint Force, including the deployment of 80 per cent of troops, a civilian component and a human rights compliance framework, and called for MINUSMA to build on that. He also noted his country’s support for the efforts of ECOWAS to mobilize \$1 billion for the region, which would enhance financial predictability and sustainability. The representative noted that MINUSMA should not be a substitute for the State but should strengthen it by enhancing the capacity of political, justice and administrative structures and by helping to address societal grievances, in line with the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel.

55. Mr. Konfourou stated that the G5 Sahel was already seeing the very positive effects of the nine Joint Force operations. He drew attention to the challenges of the central region of Mali, saying that the Force sought to reassure the population and limit the free movement of armed groups. He called for jobs and schools to prevent young people from being indoctrinated by terrorists and encouraged support for G5 Sahel projects in water, infrastructure and schools to benefit young people and women. Regarding human rights compliance, Mr. Konfourou stated that the international community should have no doubt about the intention of Mali to protect. He also stated that some troops had been recalled for not distinguishing between civilians and armed groups. Noting that human rights violations are worst where the State is absent, he called for capacity-building in support of the redeployment of State control, rule of law and services.

56. Mr. Tiare stated that all Joint Force troops and police had received training on human rights and international humanitarian law. He asked for support in providing care and security for 700 prisoners in Burkina Faso who had been accused of terrorist acts, in order to ensure their human rights. He noted that resources had been insufficient to carry out more than the nine operations so far. The decentralized approach of armed groups required aerial transport to facilitate operations. Regarding the trust fund, not enough funding was being received, since donors preferred to have control. To address the root causes of the crisis, investment in jobs and infrastructure was important, but security was required to avoid investments being lost.

57. Regarding the impact of Joint Force operations, Ms. Banz recalled that the two most recent operations had led to the seizure of ammunition and arms and the arrest of several suspected terrorists. She noted that the sensitivity of those operations made it difficult for the Secretariat to obtain information on their impact. Ms. Banz drew attention to “good progress” regarding human rights compliance, stating that the status-of-forces agreement for the Joint Force had been adopted, relationships built and training initiated.

58. To improve donor confidence, she called for enhanced reporting and transparency for the Joint Force. She noted that reporting on the impact of MINUSMA logistics support for the Force would be provided later.

V. Transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding presence through the example of UNAMID

59. On 11 November 2019, the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations convened a meeting on the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding presence through the example of UNAMID. The Deputy Director of the Eastern Africa Division, Samuel Gahigi, briefed the Working Group on that occasion.

60. Mr. Gahigi provided an overview of the situation in the Sudan since the start of the transition. The strategic review of UNAMID in March 2019 had set a trajectory that saw the end of 2020 as the closing date for the Mission. Since that time, the security situation had not significantly evolved, but with the establishment of the new Government in Khartoum, there had been a shift in priorities by the Sudanese authorities, including Prime Minister Hamdok seeking the extension of the mandate of UNAMID by 12 months. He also mentioned that the new mandate of UNAMID provided for selected priorities, including support for the peace process and peacebuilding activities as well as the protection of civilians.

61. Mr. Gahigi said that the Secretariat was actively working with UNAMID leadership to reconfigure the Mission to enable it to assist in the peace negotiations and the implementation of a future peace agreement, including ceasefire monitoring, as well as the processes of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform. Those were new elements that had not been envisioned in the initial transition plan. UNAMID was currently conducting a mapping exercise to identify key issues and needs emanating from the peace process and necessary expertise that the United Nations could provide in response.

62. Mr. Gahigi also said that a second aspect of the transition pertained to the State liaison functions, in particular enhancing the rule of law and human rights in Jebel Marra, where the existing Jebel Marra task force would be reconfigured into a State liaison function. The Mission was examining how to set that process in motion and enhance the State liaison function in greater Jebel Marra by 2020, including by bringing together military observers and police functions that might be in a position to form the nucleus of a follow-on United Nations-African Union function in Darfur. Challenges associated with those efforts included the difficulties faced by the United Nations country team in generating resources beyond programmatic funding for peacekeeping. It would therefore take some time for the country team to reinforce its presence in Jebel Marra to be part of the State liaison function.

63. Mr. Gahigi said that another priority was the drawdown of the Mission itself. According to Security Council resolution [2495 \(2019\)](#), by the end of January 2020, the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission should provide a special report on options for a follow-on presence to UNAMID, based on the views and the needs of the Government of the Sudan, and by 31 March 2020 the Council should decide on courses of action regarding the possible drawdown and exit of the Mission. It would be challenging to complete the drawdown within six months. The repatriation of military and police contingents and their equipment alone would take six to nine months to complete.

64. Mr. Gahigi said that, regarding the follow-on presence, in early October, the tripartite African Union-United Nations-Government of the Sudan mechanism on UNAMID had established a joint task force to explore possible scenarios for a United Nations-African Union presence following the departure of UNAMID. The joint task force would launch consultations in early December to frame the recommendations, which would be included in the report to the Security Council in January 2020.

65. Mr. Gahigi concluded by noting that the strong unity of Security Council members and the unity between the Council and the African Union were enabling

factors for the peace process. The continued engagement of the African Union in the peace process, the stability of government institutions and remaining firm with spoilers were critical to progress. The Mission would require flexibility to manage the various challenges that might arise in the coming months.

66. The representative of the United Kingdom emphasized the new mandate of UNAMID to support the peace process, and in that context asked if there had been a discussion on replacing the African Union High-level Implementation Panel. The representative asked whether increased collaboration from the new Government could speed up the liquidation timeline and asked for an update on the previous UNAMID team sites handed over to the Government, and whether they had been used for civilian purposes. She also asked about United Nations internal coordination in terms of the follow-on presence and how it could be integrated within the United Nations country team.

67. The representative of Germany outlined three considerations for the design of a follow-on presence: (a) the need for a design based on dialogue among the Government of the Sudan, the African Union and the United Nations, as well as civil society; (b) needs and realities on the ground, for which Germany considered that a special political mission would be best suited; and (c) a relationship with a focus on Darfur and the nationwide mandate of the United Nations country team. In this context, he also enquired about the degree of United Nations-wide integration in planning for the follow-on mechanism.

68. The representative of France requested further details on options for the follow-on mechanism, in particular its possible United Nations-African Union hybrid nature.

69. The representative of Belgium asked about how the gains made during a decade of peacekeeping, especially in terms of human rights, could be preserved.

70. The representative of the Russian Federation expressed agreement with the conclusion that there had not been any significant changes in the security situation. Noting that the challenges currently facing Darfur were more of a peacebuilding than a peacekeeping nature, the representative reiterated the call made during the high-level debate on peacebuilding for the lifting of sanctions on the Sudan.

71. The representative of Indonesia expressed hope that the recently established United Nations-African Union coordination cell would strengthen planning and coordination on a transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. Transition must be based on actual needs and priorities and consultation with national stakeholders to ensure national ownership. In line with the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, the mandate of the follow-on presence must be clear, focused and achievable. He looked forward to seeing the recommendations of the joint task force but also wished to enquire about the possible scenarios and whether there was a previous model that could be adopted.

72. Mr. Gahigi, in response to the United Kingdom, expressed hope that the timeline for closure and drawdown could be shortened from nine months. However, there had not been any indication that the change of government in the Sudan had positively impacted the granting of visas and movement, especially for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei. On the conditions for handing over team sites to civilian users, a tripartite mechanism of the United Nations, the African Union and the Government of the Sudan had endorsed the conditions during a meeting on 7 October. The first team site that would be handed over in the coming weeks would be the Nyala supercamp. The Mission would monitor how the process unfolded.

73. On the peace process, Mr. Gahigi stated that the outcome of the process would influence the configuration of the follow-on presence. The United Nations had yet to hear from the African Union on how it intended to respond to requests from the parties

to provide a new mandate for the peace talks, including the location of the talks and the role of the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, as a mediator. The African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smaïl Chergui, would be in the United States, and the United Nations leadership would continue to engage with him on issues pertaining to the peace process and United Nations-African Union support, including the follow-on presence. The United Nations family, including UNAMID and also UNMISS in Juba, could provide secretariat and advisory capacities for the peace talks. Going forward, it would be important to retain the hybrid nature of the United Nations-African Union political engagement in the Sudan, but the modalities of doing so needed to be discussed, whether in the form of a joint envoy, the establishment of a special political mission in Khartoum or the expansion of the role of the Resident Coordinator, subject to the needs and priorities of the Government. In terms of United Nations coordination, the United Nations country team had taken part in the previous meeting of the tripartite mechanism, and the joint visit of Assistant Secretaries-General from the Department of Peace Operations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and the Under-Secretary General and Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme in February 2019 was also a testament to the integrated approach. Sustaining the gains made by UNAMID would remain at the core of the follow-on mechanism.

74. Morocco welcomed the progress made by UNAMID and asked about the role of the Peacebuilding Commission going forward. In response, Mr. Gahigi stated that an idea during the March strategic review and the joint visit in February was to examine how the Commission could take over when Darfur was no longer on the agenda of the Security Council. The context had since evolved further, and Prime Minister Hamdok had requested the Secretary-General to mobilize the Peacebuilding Fund. For the future, it was important to say how the Commission could support the country's transition.
