



General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
14 April 2020

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 20th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 8 November 2019, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq)
later: Mr. Ahidjo (Vice-Chair) (Cameroon)

Contents

Agenda item 53: Comprehensive review of special political missions

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be sent as soon as possible, under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, to the Chief of the Documents Management Section (dms@un.org), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>)



The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 53: Comprehensive review of special political missions (A/74/338; A/C.4/74/L.8)

1. **Ms. DiCarlo** (Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions (A/74/338), said that, during the reporting period, special political missions had continued to give priority to their core mandates of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and sustaining peace.

2. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the efforts led by the Secretary-General with the support of his Special Envoy had resulted in the conclusion, in September 2019, of the first political agreement between the Government and the opposition, providing for the establishment of a credible, balanced, inclusive, Syrian-owned and Syrian-led constitutional committee, which had been formally established on 30 October 2019. The committee's "large body", comprising all 150 members, had met in working sessions on 31 October and 1 November 2019, while its "small body", comprising 45 members, had held its initial working sessions during the first week of November 2019.

3. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen had continued to engage with all stakeholders in the region, including by supporting parties in implementing the Stockholm Agreement. Despite the challenges encountered, the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) had worked constructively with the Yemeni parties and had a positive deterrent effect.

4. In Myanmar, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General had been working closely with the authorities to resolve the Rohingya crisis by addressing the humanitarian crisis; promoting the safe, dignified, voluntary and sustainable return of refugees and forcibly displaced persons; and ensuring accountability for human rights violations.

5. In February 2019, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) had led an inter-agency mission to Burkina Faso aimed at assessing the repositioning and organization of the United Nations presence in that country in order to address intercommunal violence, terrorism, governance issues and long-term development needs. To that end, the Organization would establish five offices in Burkina Faso, was leveraging the Peacebuilding Fund to address funding gaps, and

had secured the ongoing engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission.

6. The support of regional and subregional partners was essential to the successful implementation of the mandates of special political missions. For example, in West Africa, UNOWAS was working closely with regional stakeholders, in particular the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union, to promote preventive diplomacy and support political processes. In Guinea-Bissau, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) and UNOWAS were collaborating with the African Union, ECOWAS, the European Union and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries in easing political tensions and advancing the electoral process. Furthermore, in cooperation with regional and international partners, UNOWAS had engaged with national stakeholders in Mauritania, Nigeria and Senegal to encourage democratic consolidation in the region ahead of the presidential elections held in those countries in 2019.

7. The United Nations was strengthening its cooperation with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to advance conflict prevention and resolution in East Africa, including in the Sudan and South Sudan. The Organization was also working with the African Union in Somalia to promote peace and security and to strengthen state and local institutions.

8. The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia was collaborating with five countries in that region and, increasingly, with Afghanistan in strengthening regional capacities in the area of preventive diplomacy and in supporting regional cooperation and stability. In collaboration with the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, the Centre had revitalized its work to facilitate regional cooperation on transboundary water management.

9. Special political missions continued to support the implementation of mandates related to women, peace and security. In June 2019, she had issued a policy aimed at ensuring the systematic integration of gender-sensitive analysis into all work of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and at better targeting the Department's support for women's meaningful political participation in peacemaking contexts worldwide. Special political missions were also increasingly integrating gender perspectives into the implementation of their mandates. The establishment of women's advisory boards and groups to assist the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Syria and Yemen had further demonstrated the

commitment of the Department to ensuring that women's voices, needs and concerns were consistently heard and integrated into peace processes. The Department was also encouraging women's direct participation in mediation efforts and political processes more broadly. In Guinea-Bissau, UNIOGBIS had provided technical support for the advocacy efforts of women's organizations which, in turn, had been instrumental in the adoption, in August 2019, of a law on gender parity in political participation and decision-making.

10. In Afghanistan, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) had held a series of nationwide dialogues on women, peace and security. Those dialogues, which had focused on opportunities for, and challenges to, the meaningful participation of women in political processes, had provided a valuable platform for women to voice their concerns. Moreover, in July 2019, together with the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Directors of UN-Women and the United Nations Population Fund, she had visited Afghanistan to engage with national stakeholders, in particular female officials and women's groups, in order to support their roles in peace and political processes, as well as their efforts to preserve the gains achieved with respect to the protection of women's rights in the event of a peace settlement.

11. Global efforts to promote women's meaningful participation and empowerment in peacemaking and peacebuilding should be redoubled and supported by adequate, predictable and sustainable financing. Since 2015, funding allocated to gender equality and women's empowerment under the Peacebuilding Fund had exceeded the Secretary-General's target of 15 per cent, and, in 2018, had reached 40 per cent. Moreover, in allocating funds under its Multi-Year Appeal, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would give priority to initiatives to promote women's participation in a variety of contexts.

12. Special political missions had been involving youth in their work by building their capacities and supporting their participation in peace processes. The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia had launched its Preventive Diplomacy Academy, an initiative designed to increase cooperation and trust among communities in border areas throughout Central Asia and Afghanistan, foster a culture of mutual understanding and mitigate conflict risks. As part of that initiative, the Centre was organizing workshops and outreach activities bringing

together youth aged 18 to 29 to support their initiatives in the areas of intercultural dialogue, leadership and conflict management. In addition, a network of youth focal points had been established across the regional and subregional offices of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC) in order to integrate youth perspectives into the Mission's verification and liaison activities.

13. She paid tribute to the personnel of special political missions and, in particular, to the three staff members who had died in a car bomb explosion in Benghazi, Libya, on 10 August 2019. In such countries as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, personnel of special political missions worked under challenging conditions to fulfil the Charter of the United Nations. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs was working closely with the Department of Safety and Security on risk management strategies and security-mitigation measures to protect staff. She thanked the Fourth Committee and the broader United Nations membership for their support for special political missions and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would continue to work with Member States and other partners to prevent conflict and sustain peace.

14. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support) said that the personnel of special political missions played an inspirational role by transforming the Secretary-General's commitments into reality. In particular, he wished to honour the memory of the three staff members who had died in the Benghazi attack of 10 August. Since its establishment on 1 January 2019, the Department of Operational Support had been strengthening the Organization's work in the field, in particular that of special political missions operating in complex, volatile environments, in line with the principles underpinning the Secretary-General's management reforms, namely simplification of policy frameworks, decentralization of decision-making authority to the point of delivery, and enhanced transparency and accountability for results. The Department of Operational Support had provided guidance and operational support across the Secretariat around the world in the areas of supply chain management, personnel matters and training, and information and communications technology requirements. It worked closely with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and supported all special political missions. Moreover, in consultation with its client entities, it worked closely with the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance to ensure that policies were calibrated to

serve the operational needs of all Secretariat entities in the field.

15. The Department of Operational Support supported its clients in a number of ways. Firstly, its Division for Special Activities provided effective, efficient, responsible and cross-cutting operational support to enable clients to expeditiously fulfil their mandates in special situations such as start-up, surge, drawdown, liquidation and rapid response. Secondly, the Office of Supply Chain Management, under which procurement and logistics management functions were integrated, had enabled a broad range of initiatives to improve sourcing as part of its comprehensive approach to supply chain management. A new Procurement Manual, designed to streamline processes throughout the acquisition cycle, had also been published and was available online to support clients, including special political missions, in fulfilling the Organization's mandates under all operational circumstances. Thirdly, as a result of the consolidation of health-care management and occupational safety and health functions in the Department, progress had been made in implementing health-support plans in countries such as Burkina Faso, Haiti and Yemen. The Department had also given personnel the option to indicate, in sick-leave claims, whether an illness or injury was service-incurred, a development that had helped the Department to quantify the organizational impact of workplace accidents and illnesses. In addition, the Department had introduced an "occupational safety" risk category in the Organization's enterprise risk management system.

16. Fourthly, the Department had been simplifying and improving human-resources processes, focusing initially on recruitment and, in particular, on the delays associated with the candidate assessment conducted by hiring managers. In order to identify the most critical improvements, the Department had been engaging with clients by conducting simulation workshops and flash consultations with hiring managers and recruiters to solicit immediate feedback. The first cycle of improvements had resulted in the introduction of three new tools in August 2019, and hiring managers had indicated that those tools were enabling them to screen candidates up to five times more rapidly than before. The Department would continue to give priority to empowering Secretariat entities by simplifying and improving operational procedures, such as the onboarding of candidates.

17. Fifthly, as decentralized authority became the dominant management paradigm, continued efforts needed to be made to develop and sustain the operational capacities of entity heads. The Capacity-Building and Operational Training Service was

implementing a programme on executive governance and resource stewardship for senior leadership teams and, since July 2019, had conducted on-site leadership training at UNOWAS, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and UNVMC. The Department of Operational Support was also developing a pipeline for interactive online and in-person training, supplemented by mentoring and advisory support. The first online interactive training programme for human resources business partners, in which the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) would be the first participant, would be launched in November 2019.

18. The work of the Department of Operational Support had resulted in tangible benefits on the ground, in particular during mission start-up and transition phases. For example, in cooperation with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department of Operational Support had supported UNMHA since its inception: it had deployed the Head of Mission and his advance team within one day of receiving the initial Security Council mandate, and had deployed medical capacities, including helicopter-extraction and aeromedical-evacuation teams, as well as 18 armoured vehicles and an armoured ambulance from strategic deployment stocks, within 10 days of receiving that mandate. The Department of Operational Support had also sourced and deployed ship-based accommodation for UNMHA, pre-equipped with office, videoconferencing and life-support capacities and medical facilities, providing an all-inclusive solution to sustain the Mission. That arrangement might need to continue for several months into 2020, until land-based accommodation could be secured.

19. The Department was supporting the planning and start-up of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), which had been established on 16 October 2019 following the closure and liquidation of its predecessor mission, the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH). The Department's Operational Planning Service had developed a start-up dashboard for BINUH, which was distributed to the senior leadership team of the Department on a weekly basis. Owing to its local presence in Port-au-Prince, BINUH had a light footprint and a reduced environmental impact. Collocation with the United Nations country team or government institutions in Haiti would be promoted in order to maximize cost efficiencies, security arrangements and coordination. Thanks to the work of the Division of Special Activities, 68 per cent of BINUH staff had been on board on the first day of operations, with the

remaining staff selections well under way. In supporting BINUH, the Department had, to the extent feasible, leveraged newly established commercial contracts and existing arrangements for the premises, equipment, vehicles and services of the United Nations country team and MINUJUSTH.

20. Following the recent escalation of the conflict in Libya, dedicated assistance was being provided to the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), including support for contingency planning to enable the continuation of critical functions, and advisory support for the implementation of administrative arrangements to help staff focus effectively on their work. During the car-bomb attack in Benghazi, the Division of Special Activities had assisted UNSMIL with the administrative and human-resources aspects of the response much more rapidly than during previous such incidents.

21. The United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), overseen by the Department of Operational Support, provided full support for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and logistical support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), as well as assistance to the Somali National Army for joint operations with AMISOM. In addition, the Department of Operational Support had supported the establishment of the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar, including for the implementation of an innovative arrangement whereby day-to-day administrative support was provided to the Special Envoy by the United Nations Development Programme in Myanmar, and location-independent and strategic-level support was provided by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. The Department of Operational Support was also planning the administrative and logistical aspects of the closure of UNIOGBIS and the transition to a United Nations country team. Moreover, the Department was continuing to expand its areas of cooperation with regional organizations such as the African Union, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

22. The Secretary-General's reforms had resulted in tangible improvements to the support provided to special political missions. The collaboration between the Department of Operational Support and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs had strengthened the links among peace and security reform, management reform and, in transition contexts, development-system reform, resulting in better peace outcomes for the people the Organization served.

23. **Mr. Husni** (Sudan) said that his delegation was grateful to the Department of Political and

Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Operational Support for co-organizing the high-level event on the Sudan held on the margins of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly. He asked how the Secretary-General's reforms of the peace and security architecture would enhance support for special political missions in the field. Specifically, he wished to know how the Departments were cooperating with United Nations entities, including regional offices, country teams and special envoys of the Secretary-General, to advance peacebuilding on the ground. In addition, he asked how the two Departments were supporting mediation efforts in the context of peace processes in the Middle East, Africa and other regions, including in the areas of preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution and prevention. Lastly, he wished to know how the United Nations would support the African Union initiative to silence the guns of war by 2020.

24. **Ms. DiCarlo** (Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs) said that the Secretary-General's reforms had enhanced support for special political missions by promoting collaboration in a number of areas. The integration of the former Department of Political Affairs and the former Peacebuilding Support Office into the newly established Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs had resulted in greater collaboration in the provision of political and peacebuilding support. The merging of the regional divisions of the former Department of Political Affairs and the former Department of Peacekeeping Operations into a single structure, shared between the newly established Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the newly established Department of Peace Operations, had enabled the two new Departments to cooperate on a number of regional strategies, in particular in the Great Lakes region, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs was also collaborating with the Department of Operational Support and United Nations country teams to draft the common country analyses required prior to the preparation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

25. Support for peacebuilding efforts on the ground had been strengthened by the establishment of structures to promote communication within Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, as well as between that Department and the Department of Peace Operations and development actors. As a result, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs had been able to effectively align resources with peacebuilding priorities; in Burkina Faso, for instance,

it provided coordinated support for development, peacebuilding, political and peace activities.

26. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs provided its own mediation staff, members of its Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisors, members of the Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation, of which the Department served as secretariat, and external consultants to support peace operations. In particular, the Department had provided mediation support to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria for ensuring the establishment of the constitutional committee in the context of the peace process in the Syrian Arab Republic. It had also provided mediation support to address election controversies. Lastly, the Department had established a framework for cooperation with the African Union on its initiative to silence the guns by 2020.

27. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support) said that the Secretary-General's reforms had enabled more effective joint planning and greater efficiencies in the provision of support for peacebuilding activities. For example, the Department of Operational Support had engaged in joint planning with, inter alia, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Food Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the logistical requirements for the envisaged establishment of five additional United Nations offices in Burkina Faso. In Myanmar, the Department of Operational Support had achieved administrative and cost efficiencies by leveraging the support of the United Nations Development Programme to cover day-to-day needs, and had reduced delays in service delivery by drawing on the support of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for location-independent requirements, rather than relying on remote entities such as the United Nations Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, or the United Nations Secretariat in New York. In order to minimize delays in the establishment of contracts, the Department of Operational Support abided by the principle of mutual recognition, whereby one United Nation system organization could apply contracts concluded by another without the need for further verification. The Department was also addressing the basic requirements of peace operations more effectively, as evidenced by its rapid deployment of capacities to UNMHA, which had been enabled by its cooperation with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.

28. **Mr. Al-Qaisi** (Iraq) said that he commended the work done by special political missions worldwide, in particular in conflict and post-conflict situations and in

situations where terrorism by non-State actors made it difficult to assist internally displaced persons and refugees. He wished to know whether the two Departments were taking action to more effectively address the reintegration component of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes.

29. **Ms. DiCarlo** (Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs) said that the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions in the Department of Peace Operations was developing innovative methods to address challenges related to reintegration.

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

31. **Mr. Halfaoui** (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the Movement acknowledged the need for coherence, synergy and complementarity in implementing the peace and security reforms. The negotiations on the annual draft resolution on the comprehensive review of special political missions provided an important opportunity for States not members of the Security Council to share their views on the matter. It was thus unfortunate that the members of the Movement had not been consulted before the decision had been taken to present, for consideration at the current session, a draft resolution whose text largely reflected that of General Assembly resolution [73/101](#), with only technical updates. That approach had resulted in a missed opportunity to assess, for example, how the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative and peace and security reforms were affecting the work of special political missions, and how to strengthen regional offices. The Movement supported all efforts aimed at improving the effectiveness of special political missions.

32. The sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States must be respected, with the United Nations as primary guarantor of the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The principles of impartiality, consent of parties, national ownership and national responsibility should also be respected. Field-based missions must have clear and achievable mandates formulated on the basis of objective assessments with sufficient political basis and resources. Integrated planning and coordinated approaches linking policy formulation and implementation on the ground were critical for success. In order to enhance budgetary efficiency and transparency, the same criteria, methodology and mechanisms used to fund peacekeeping operations

should be applied to financing special political missions, for which a new separate account should be established.

33. The Secretary-General should give further consideration to transparency, balanced geographical representation and the representation of women in senior leadership positions, particularly as special representatives and special envoys and in the membership of expert groups on sanctions. Consensus on issues related to special political missions was vital, and only matters that had been agreed by Member States collectively should be implemented. The General Assembly remained the most representative body to discuss overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions. In that regard, the annual interactive dialogue provided a valuable opportunity to address such areas of major concern as the impact of the peace and security reforms on conflict prevention, sexual exploitation and abuse, the work of regional offices, guard units and procedures for mandating special political missions. The main points covered in the dialogue should also be included in the Secretary-General's next report under the current agenda item.

34. **Mr. Situmorang** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that special political missions were essential in order to respond to rapidly evolving global security challenges. ASEAN welcomed the restructuring of the United Nations peace and security architecture, which would strengthen conflict prevention and efforts to sustain peace. Those reforms must ensure coordinated action to enhance the accountability, coherence and effectiveness of support for special political missions, and to assist them in implementing their mandates.

35. Host countries had primary responsibility for advancing their nationally identified priorities and peacebuilding initiatives. In order to achieve sustainable peace, there must be close coordination with host countries in shaping the mandates of special political missions. Increased coordination between special political missions and regional and subregional entities was also critical. ASEAN members were committed to strengthening their collaboration with the United Nations on conflict prevention, mediation and sustaining peace, and stood ready to support the work of special political missions.

36. The meaningful participation of women in all stages of the peace process must also be encouraged. While ASEAN welcomed the efforts made to improve women's representation, including in field-based special political missions, more needed to be done to increase their representation in the Organization at all levels.

Broad geographical distribution in special political missions was also necessary, in order both to comply with the Charter of the United Nations and to ensure the Organization's legitimacy and effectiveness.

37. Special political missions should be given the necessary capacities and resources. The same criteria, methodology and mechanisms used to fund peacekeeping operations should be applied to financing special political missions, for which a new separate account should be established. Furthermore, the Secretariat should continue to hold regular, inclusive and interactive dialogues on policy matters pertaining to special political missions, and should continue to communicate with Member States in advance to ensure wide and meaningful participation.

38. Speaking in his national capacity, he said that effective support should be provided for national ownership and capacity-building during transitions between successive peace operations. Integrated analysis and planning should therefore be carried out from the earliest stages. Strong coherence should also be achieved among United Nations system entities, including through the establishment of joint programmes between development and peace and security agencies. In order to build a shared national vision for sustainable peace and development, it was essential to encourage the participation of women, youth and other civil society stakeholders in activities along the entire peace continuum.

39. South-South cooperation was an important mechanism for providing financing and expertise to support peacebuilding and sustain peace. It was therefore time for the United Nations to pay greater attention to South-South cooperation, alongside triangular cooperation, in order to reinforce its political efforts and other activities on the peace continuum.

40. **Mr. de la Fuente Ramirez** (Mexico), speaking also on behalf of Finland and introducing the draft resolution on the comprehensive review of special political missions (A/C.4/74/L.8), said that the debate under that agenda item, as well as the related interactive dialogue held in 2019, demonstrated that the Organization considered such missions to be critical in advancing preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and efforts to sustain peace. As was stated in the draft resolution, special political missions were becoming increasingly relevant given the evolving nature of conflicts worldwide, and needed to be creative, flexible and efficient in assisting conflict-affected societies in attaining and sustaining peace and security.

41. Discussions on ways to ensure that special political missions had a positive impact on the ground

should be informed by the reforms of the peace and security architecture, management and the development pillar; the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; and the consultations on the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture. Member States should consider entrusting special political missions with mandates aimed at ensuring coherence, assisting countries in the design and implementation of public policies, and supporting them throughout all stages of conflict and before, during and after transitions. As further information was needed regarding how those considerations related to the substance of the draft resolution, the text before the Committee was largely based on General Assembly resolution [73/101](#), with some technical updates.

42. **Mr. Elconsul** (Libya) said that the work of the special political missions was an important means to strengthen collective security and should adhere to United Nations principles, particularly respect for the sovereignty of Member States over their entire territory. Accordingly, special political missions should respect the territorial integrity and independent decision-making of States. When fulfilling their mandate, they should consult with internationally recognized Governments and not with parallel entities. In order to have an accurate picture of circumstances on the ground, missions should carry out their duties from within the host countries, and not rely on inaccurate sources such as social media. When appointing envoys and staff of special political missions, linguistic and cultural competence should be taken into consideration, as well as expertise, integrity and impartiality. In addition, missions should be encouraged to make use of local technical and administrative expertise.

43. Libya welcomed the role played by the UNSMIL and supported the renewal of its mandate to 15 September 2020. UNSMIL had made contributions in such areas as women's empowerment and the training and equipping of staff of the Libyan Mine Action Centre. However, it had shown shortcomings in its stances on certain security and political issues. Since the beginning of the war on the Tripoli, on 4 April 2019, waged by a militia called the Libyan National Army under Khalifa Haftar, statements made by the Special Envoy had, in many cases, equated the aggressors and the victims, something that had encouraged the Haftar militias and its State backers to increase pressure on the capital. In addition, the militia had targeted medical staff and infrastructure. On 14 October 2019, shelling had killed three children from a single family; the remaining family members were still in hospital. That incident and others, taken as a whole, amounted to crimes against humanity. His delegation hoped that UNSMIL would play a more effective role in ending the conflict in

accordance with the political agreement reached in Skhirat, Morocco, and with United Nations resolutions. To that end, UNSMIL needed additional financial support.

44. **Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) said that special political missions supported peace processes, helped to establish justice and peacebuilding mechanisms on the ground, promoted preventive diplomacy, assisted in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and ensured respect for sanctions imposed by the Security Council. They should therefore be provided with adequate and predictable resources.

45. His delegation attached great importance to the Committee's consideration of the agenda item and hoped that annual reports on the topic would continue to be submitted in order to increase the missions' transparency and accountability. It was important to develop an approach to sustainable peace which recognized that special political missions served as flexible tools to maintain international peace and security, particularly by preventing conflict and addressing its root causes.

46. It was imperative to fully implement the Secretary-General's management and peace and security reforms. His delegation welcomed the new emphasis placed on prevention and sustainable peace in order to prevent fragmentation and apply a comprehensive strategic approach to preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, development and respect for human rights. The progress made in evaluating the political and operational aspects of special political missions should pave the way for consideration of the relevant financial aspects, and his delegation supported the establishment of a separate account and access to a support account for special political missions. Regrettably, discussions on those matters in the Fifth Committee had been at a deadlock for eight years, but his delegation hoped that the resumption of those discussions in good faith would enable progress to be made.

47. His delegation welcomed the appointment of Helen Meagher La Lime as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of BINUH. Efforts must be made to build on the progress achieved by MINUJUSTH and its predecessor, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). BINUH should support the Government of Haiti in strengthening the rule of law, sustainable development and national institutions, while ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. To be effective, BINUH must take into account the multidimensional issues affecting the country's

development, including climate change and the need for humanitarian assistance. His delegation was confident that, if entrusted with a clear mandate and supported by adequate financial resources, BINUH would improve the situation in Haiti.

48. Argentina welcomed the progress made by UNVMC, which should be provided with the resources required to fully implement its mandate. His Government had participated in the organization of the Mission since its inception and would continue to do so.

49. **Mr. Rugeles** (Colombia) said that the international community must find effective responses to the increasingly complex situations threatening international peace and security. Traditional armed conflict had given way to threats that required bold, comprehensive approaches, which must protect civilians and address unprecedented humanitarian crises, forced migration and the growing impact of climate change on conflict. On the basis of its own experience, his Government believed that special political missions provided a concrete example of what could be achieved when due consideration was given to the realities on the ground, national ownership and the strengthening of democratic institutions.

50. The decision by the Security Council, in its resolution [2487 \(2019\)](#), to renew of the mandate of UNVMC at the request of his Government illustrated the latter's unwavering commitment to the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP) on the basis of the pillars of legality, equity and entrepreneurship. That commitment went beyond the final peace agreement to end the conflict and was based on the values and principles enshrined in the Constitution. Those values and principles had been reaffirmed by the international community through its recognition of the measures taken by the Government to advance reintegration, protection and security. The implementation of the Final Agreement was a cross-cutting component of the national development plan and of various public policies formulated by the Government. For instance, the "Peace with legality" policy, which was supported by the Security Council and the Secretary-General, focused on long-term territorial transformation, with an emphasis on the rights of victims and respect for the rule of law.

51. As evidenced by the progress outlined in the Secretary-General's most recent report on UNVMC ([S/2019/780](#)), the Government was working towards the long-term objectives of bringing the rule of law, physical and legal security, and the services of all public

institutions to all regions of the country. Colombia served as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, in which role it had learned lessons regarding humanitarian and crisis-management initiatives taken in post-conflict situations. Transitions from peacekeeping operations to special political missions, such as that which had taken place in Haiti, demonstrated the important role of the United Nations in improving living conditions.

52. **Mr. Alzahrani** (Saudi Arabia) said that the special political missions played a vital part in upholding collective security, promoting preventive diplomacy, containing conflicts and strengthening the capacity of States to protect and provide for their citizens. In order for the missions to carry out their mandates, coordination and cooperation between Member States and the United Nations must be strengthened. Saudi Arabia had spared no effort in supporting United Nations agencies and missions. It supported the Hudaydah Agreement, which was one of the outcomes of the Stockholm Agreement brokered by the United Nations in an effort to reinforce stability, restore legitimate authority and alleviate suffering both in areas controlled by the legitimate Government and in those controlled by Houthi militias. Saudi Arabia also supported the efforts of UNOWAS. In a similar vein, it had endorsed the political transition process that was currently under way in the Sudan, and it called on the international community to continue its own efforts in that regard.

53. The Charter of the United Nations enabled regional organizations to play an essential role in the peaceful settlement of conflicts. It was high time for those organizations to come forward and help de-escalate the conflicts and wars taking place around the world. It was important to promote collaboration and cooperation between special political missions and the relevant regional organizations with a view to strengthening and developing mechanisms to address, avert and resolve conflicts in accordance with the principles of international collective security and the Charter of the United Nations. Special political missions must, however, comply with the Charter and refrain from using their mandates as a pretext for interfering in the internal affairs of States.

54. **Mr. Mabongo** (South Africa) said that, given their focus on mediation, special political missions, played an important part in preventing conflict and sustaining peace. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's reforms of the peace and security pillar and believed that the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations would ensure the coherence of the work of peacekeeping missions and special political missions.

55. The versatility and flexibility of special political missions enabled them to be used in different phases of conflict. As a result, they played a pivotal role in conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding. The increase in the number of such missions over the previous two decades was a testament to their value. Special political missions also enabled the United Nations to play a more effective role in activities across the conflict-resolution continuum at a time when the resources allocated to peacekeeping operations were being drastically reduced.

56. His delegation welcomed the strengthening of partnerships between special political missions and regional and subregional organizations. It was also encouraged by the coordination and cooperation between United Nations envoys and those appointed under regional mandates. Such cooperation enabled the sharing of expertise and the development of complementary approaches to mutual priority objectives, including those related to cross-border challenges. Special political missions must continue to work with national stakeholders to establish priorities, build domestic capacities and implement common goals.

57. Women's participation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding was essential. Their commitment to non-violence and equality could lead to breakthroughs in the face of resistance to change. They should therefore be included in peace negotiations and appointed to serve as envoys. Moreover, a gender perspective should be incorporated into the work of special political missions, which should be leveraged to promote women's participation in conflict resolution and peace processes. For that purpose, and in order to promote gender parity, his delegation welcomed the initiative of the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs to broaden the pool of candidates for the positions of Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in United Nations field missions. His delegation called for greater transparency and more equitable geographical representation in the appointment of those officials. Furthermore, as many conflict-affected countries had relatively youthful populations, youth had an important role to play in conflict prevention and management, peacebuilding, and efforts to sustain peace.

58. His delegation welcomed the progress made in streamlining special political missions to complement peacekeeping missions and United Nations country teams. Such coordination could increase consultative engagement between special political missions and the

Peacebuilding Commission, thus laying the foundation for smooth transitions from peacekeeping operations to special political missions or United Nations country teams.

59. Adequate, predictable and sustainable financing for special political missions was essential. Recent reductions in the budgets of peacekeeping missions had forced them to downsize; he hoped that the work of special political missions would not be undermined, as that would negatively affect the progress achieved. The establishment of a separate account would ensure the predictability and transparency of the funds allocated to special political missions.

60. **Ms. Gantana** (Namibia) said that her delegation appreciated the efforts of special political missions to maintain international peace and security by supporting mediation in regional and intercommunal conflicts. In 2020, Namibia would celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of its independence, achieved with the support of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group, a peacekeeping force deployed to supervise the peace process and elections in that country from April 1989 to March 1990. The success of that operation attested to the importance of fostering dialogue rather than resorting to conflict and violence. Her delegation therefore strongly supported the establishment of special political missions, which should be enabled to fully implement their mandates.

61. The unprecedented number of fatalities resulting from armed conflict and other forms of violence was depriving developing countries of the talent, skills and resources required to implement the 2030 Agenda. The ultimate sacrifice made by peacekeepers in maintaining peace and security should never be forgotten. The inclusion of women and youth in dialogue, mediation and peacebuilding processes was also imperative.

62. To sustain the work of special political missions, Member States must fulfil their financial commitments to the Organization; non-payment or late payment of contributions hindered the implementation of relevant General Assembly resolutions and further undermined socioeconomic conditions in the affected regions. In view of the increasingly complex environment in which special political missions operated, regional organizations had a vital role to play in strengthening their work. Lasting political solutions were more likely to be found when countries took responsibility for addressing unrest affecting other countries in their regions.

63. Special political missions should focus on conflict prevention, mediation, peacemaking and peacebuilding by advancing preventive diplomacy and addressing the

root causes of violent conflicts in order to achieve sustainable development and protect human rights. The protection of human rights was particularly critical to enabling the lasting political settlement of conflicts.

64. **Mr. Al-Qaisi** (Iraq) said that his delegation welcomed the focus in the report of the Secretary-General on improving performance, transparency, accountability, fair geographical representation, incorporation of a gender perspective and the reform of the United Nations. Special political missions played a commendable role in promoting international peace and security, preventing conflicts, assisting internally displaced persons and refugees and combating transnational organized crime, terrorism and trafficking in persons. His delegation appreciated the efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the United Nations country team to provide humanitarian assistance and garner international support for reconstruction efforts in the liberated areas in order to encourage the return of displaced persons. It welcomed the reports of UNAMI, which set out objective and balanced information concerning the progress made in several areas, including the formation of a Government and its efforts to combat corruption and terrorism and respond to the humanitarian situation.

65. His Government hoped that the international community and the United Nations would provide greater support for the fight against terrorism in Iraq. It urged Member States to continue to comply with Security Council resolutions related to counter-terrorism and work to cut off the sources of funding of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Focus should also be placed on addressing the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters, combating extremist ideology and providing technical support for the social reintegration of victims of terrorism. The Government supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, particularly the measures aimed at addressing the spread of hate speech. It commended the work of the Head of UNITAD and trusted that the Team's investigations would be impartial, transparent and consistent with Iraqi law.

66. UNAMI was helping Iraq to restore peace and foster good governance in line with Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals. Iraq supported the extension of its mandate and hoped that the mission would employ as many local staff as possible. When preparing the quarterly reports submitted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the Security Council for, more consultation with the Government was necessary so that important queries on either side could be addressed.

67. In view of its location and its membership of the United Nations and several specialized agencies, Iraq should be better represented in the Organization and its entities and subsidiary bodies. Iraqis should occupy a greater proportion of the posts allocated to UNAMI, and other specialized agencies should be encouraged to take a similar approach. Lastly, the mandates of special political missions should be consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and the purposes of international law, particularly the principle of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the host country.

68. **Ms. Raz** (Afghanistan) said that special political missions played a vital role in conflict resolution and prevention, the establishment of effective and accountable institutions, and the development of societies underpinned by the rule of law and the democratic aspirations of people. Since its inception, UNAMA had been critical in coordinating the provision of international assistance to Afghanistan in the areas of security, democracy, development, human rights, health, education and humanitarian assistance. Thanks to the work of UNAMA, Afghanistan was on a path towards self-reliance, lasting peace, stability and prosperity. In September 2019, the Security Council had, by resolution [2489 \(2019\)](#), decided to extend the Mission's mandate for an additional year, demonstrating the Organization's continued commitment to promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

69. The activities of UNAMA must support the Government's assumption of ownership and leadership in the areas of security, development, and governance, and must reflect a coherent, "One-United-Nations" approach. As the Security Council was the sole body responsible for establishing the mandates of special political missions, differences among Council members on issues irrelevant to those missions should not hinder efforts to improve their efficiency.

70. Special political missions had a crucial role to play in consolidating democracy. UNAMA provided technical and logistical support for the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections in Afghanistan. Afghan citizens from all walks of life had voted in the country's fourth presidential election in September 2019, demonstrating to terrorists and extremists their commitment to democracy and the rule of law. The results would soon be announced in a transparent and credible manner. The Government appreciated the support that it had received from the international community for the advancement of Afghan-led and -owned peace negotiations with the Taliban. All such support must be aimed at promoting Afghan leadership and ownership and at achieving dignified and lasting peace.

71. The establishment of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would ensure an integrated approach to conflict prevention and resolution, as well as the provision of support for democratic political transitions in tandem with national actors and United Nations development and humanitarian entities. Her delegation appreciated the focus in the Secretary-General's reforms on conflict prevention, which required addressing the structural drivers and root causes of conflicts worldwide.

72. The experience of Afghanistan illustrated the importance of involving women in peace and reconciliation processes. Accordingly, the Government was working closely with UNAMA and other international partners to carry out its national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).

73. **Mr. Rivero Rosario** (Cuba) said that special political missions varied in their mandates, scopes, structures and approaches, and were deployed in diverse political, socioeconomic and security contexts. As a result, they had to be flexible and tailored to the circumstances on the ground. The United Nations did not always have to resort to establishing peacekeeping operations; special political missions had proven to be an important tool in addressing threats to international peace and security. Special political missions must have clear, realistic and achievable mandates, with specific objectives, as well as appropriate material and financial resources. They must also be in strict compliance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

74. The General Assembly should play a decisive role in the establishment, implementation and monitoring of special political missions, and the concerns of all Member States should be taken into account. The establishment of new special political missions should not affect the Organization's regular budget. Instead, the General Assembly should have a comprehensive debate to identify a differentiated mechanism for financing those missions. The Non-Aligned Movement had suggested using the same criteria, methodology and mechanisms as for the financing of peacekeeping operations, including the establishment of a separate account. The effectiveness of special political missions must be improved. To that end, the Secretary-General should continue to submit annual reports on those missions.

75. *Mr. Ahidjo (Cameroon), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

76. **Mr. Umar** (Nigeria) said that special political missions must be adequately funded in view of their important role in preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflicts. The United Nations should take a broad and inclusive approach to building and sustaining peace, including measures to prevent conflicts by addressing their root causes. National ownership of peacebuilding initiatives was critical: special political missions must support their host countries and properly consult with stakeholders.

77. Partnerships with regional and subregional organizations were fundamental to special political missions' success; in that connection, the deepening of the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union was encouraging, and his delegation looked forward to further efforts under the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. His delegation commended the peacebuilding work of UNOWAS and its collaboration with ECOWAS in developing a regional action plan on transhumance and establishing an informal working group on pastoralism and conflict prevention. Special political missions in the region should increase their cooperation with and support for regional and subregional organizations to prevent conflict and sustaining peace.

78. The special political missions should continue to strive for improved expertise and effectiveness, transparency, accountability, geographical representation, as well as better incorporation of the gender perspective and women's equal participation. The Secretary-General should continue to pursue equitable gender and geographical representation in special political missions, particularly at senior levels, and to brief members on policy matters pertaining to special political missions.

79. **Ms. Haile** (Eritrea) said that the reform of the prevention-focused agenda of the peace and security pillar provided an opportunity to further strengthen the work of special political missions, which could play a critical role in sustaining peace. In that connection, her delegation supported holding regular, inclusive and interactive dialogues on related policy matters.

80. The effectiveness of special political missions depended on their relationships with host States and other States concerned. It was therefore important to strengthen those relationships. Because of their presence on the ground, special political missions were well placed to provide input regarding the continuing relevance of their mandates. They must operate under clear, credible and achievable mandates that articulated their goals and purposes, and must have clear exit

strategies to ensure that they did not remain in place beyond the window of effectiveness.

81. **Mr. Kakanur** (India) said that his delegation would appreciate more information regarding the implications of the reform of the peace and security architecture for the functioning of the special political missions on the ground. At every stage of the mission, it was vital to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of host States and the principles of impartiality, consent of parties, national ownership and national responsibility. The formulation, launch and renewal of missions should be genuinely transparent and participatory: the Security Council, General Assembly and Secretariat must communicate better and involve Member States in substantive discussions. In that connection, he hoped that the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would organize more interactive briefings for Member States by heads of special political missions. Lastly, the ad hoc manner in which the budgets of special political missions were handled must be urgently addressed. Special political missions should benefit from a separate account aligned with the budget cycle and scale of peacekeeping operations in order to enhance budget transparency.

82. **Ms. Regis** (Haiti) said that her delegation supported any initiative aimed at making the United Nations more effective, flexible and responsible, and would follow closely the effect of the reforms on the special political missions. The efforts made to increase cooperation with and support for regional and subregional organizations were commendable, as was the missions' promotion of more inclusive peace processes with increased participation by women and young people. It was important to ensure that women participated in decision-making regarding reconstruction and peacebuilding; women had a considerable capacity for adaptation and resilience. Her delegation noted that special political missions had made a significant contribution to reintegration, particularly in Colombia, where UNVMC had facilitated coordination between local communities and former combatants

83. The primary tasks of BINUH included advising the Government of Haiti on promoting and strengthening political stability and good governance, and supporting an inter-Haitian dialogue. It was essential that it have sufficient resources so that it could help find solutions to the ongoing political crisis, socioeconomic problems and worrying humanitarian situation in the country.

84. The current emphasis on collaboration and closer work with country teams was crucial to special political

missions' success. The matter of the financing of special political missions should be carefully considered, taking into account the particular needs of the countries concerned. It was critical that missions receive adequate and predictable financing so that they could play their important role.

85. **Mr. Ngouambe Wouaga** (Cameroon) said that the presence of special political missions on the ground had helped to rekindle dialogue between opposing parties and to develop crises responses and sustainable solutions to conflict. They also helped to restore public services, strengthen the rule of law and combat organized crime. In view of their evolving role, it was important to continuously improve their organization, planning and supply chains. Missions should have clear, achievable mandates and adequate resources. In that connection, Cameroon requested that the funding allocated for the work of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission be increased to enable it to complete its demarcation of the border between the two countries, in line with the judgment of the International Court of Justice. Given the exhaustion of the special fund for the project, the Government of Cameroon had made a voluntary contribution of \$3 million towards the construction of the boundary markers needed to demarcate the remaining 95 kilometres and had agreed with the Government of Nigeria to protect the border area for the duration of the remaining work, thereby demonstrating the two Governments' commitment to completing the task.

86. The current management of the budget for the special political missions was ineffective; the financing of the missions should be based on the same criteria and mechanisms that governed the funding of peacekeeping operations. The establishment of separate, predictable funding for the special political missions would make them more efficient and effective, not to mention increasing the likelihood that peacekeeping operations could be successfully transformed into special political missions and that peace could be rebuilt.

87. **Mr. Attelb** (Egypt) said that his delegation supported the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen coordination and cooperation among the special political missions, the peacekeeping missions and the United Nations country teams, in accordance with their respective mandates; despite their common objectives, those actors tended to work in silos. In order to uphold the principle of State sovereignty and facilitate cooperation between the United Nations and concerned States, it was important to ensure national ownership in the priority areas of preventive diplomacy.

88. In accordance with the principle of African solutions to African problems, his Government had worked tirelessly to strengthen the partnership between the African Union and the Peacebuilding Commission. Cairo was host to the African Union Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, which would soon start work in support of reconstruction and peace efforts in Africa. Its activities would include support for institutional and human capacity-building in accordance with national priorities and national ownership and leadership.

89. In view of the complex environments in which they operated, special political missions should be flexible enough to adapt rapidly to changing conditions. When formulating mission mandates and policies, broader consultations should be held in the General Assembly; it was important to take into consideration the views of all Member States, including host countries, and of regional organizations and other stakeholders. The Security Council, too, should consult with the relevant States, including host countries, when formulating the mandates of the special political missions.

90. Peacekeeping operations made an effective contribution to peacebuilding efforts. Statement No. 27 of 2017 by the President of the Security Council included guidelines regarding the contribution of peacekeeping operations to building sustainable peace. The Security Council should bear in mind those guidelines when formulating and reviewing peacekeeping mandates. Such action would help to address the root causes of conflict and ensure a smooth transition when special political missions came to an end, or when peacekeeping operations were converted to special political missions or other arrangements.

91. **Ms. Arif** (Norway) said that the special political missions needed the wholehearted support of Member States to succeed. The missions formed part of a spectrum of peace operations, and a solid foundation for funding and backstopping them would represent a cost saving for the United Nations. The recent United Nations reforms should make possible closer collaboration between the special political missions, peacekeeping operations and country teams. The creation of a single regional political-operational structure at United Nations Headquarters should further improve coherence. Her delegation welcomed the holistic approach to special political missions outlined in the report of the Secretary-General and, in particular, the focus on promoting women's participation in peace processes and on climate change as a driver of conflict.

92. **Mr. Fajardo Jr.** (Philippines) said that, given that special political missions were part of a peace continuum, they should focus more on conflict prevention and mediation, and should continue to press for the participation of key stakeholders at their inception. More women should be appointed to senior leadership positions, particularly as special representatives and envoys in United Nations missions and country teams.

93. The Philippines continued to support the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on measures to improve funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions, including the establishment of a special account, which would boost their capacity to deliver on their mandates. Robust capacity-building and adequate financial support should be in place for all activities on the peace continuum. Lastly, the Philippines welcomed the scope, terms of reference and modalities of the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture.

94. **Ms. Baumann** (Switzerland) said that special political missions should have tailored mandates that allowed them to adapt their actions to specific contexts and to engage with all stakeholders, including non-State actors and civil society. They should also be equipped to address emerging issues such as climate change and new technologies. Her delegation supported the restructuring of the peace and security pillar; the reforms provided an opportunity to strengthen the work of special political missions, including through stronger links with the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund. The reforms should go beyond a mere reorganization; they should lead to system-wide coherence that would increase operational impact.

95. Forward-looking mission transitions and early benchmarks for drawdowns were critical. When benchmarks were not met, the pace, sequence and direction of transitions should be re-evaluated. It would be interesting to hear how the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission could be further strengthened in the context of transitions.

96. Her delegation welcomed the special political missions' efforts to implement a stronger policy on women, peace and security, and to report on their efforts to promote women's direct participation at all stages of conflict prevention and resolution. Member States should ensure that special political missions had adequate political and financial means to carry out their mandated tasks and contribute to the full and effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

97. **Mr. Viera Salazar** (Ecuador) said, in view of their complex mandates, special political missions should be flexible and able to adapt to different political, socioeconomic and security situations. For that purpose, it was important to promote strong partnerships with regional organizations, host countries, Member States and other stakeholders. Special political missions' mandates should be clear, achievable and consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and, in particular, respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-interference in internal affairs.

98. It would be useful to conduct a thorough and systematic evaluation of the special political missions, bearing in mind their individual characteristics. With regard to the reform of the peace and security pillar, it was essential to maintain a comprehensive strategic focus on preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, development and respect for human rights. Women's participation in special political missions should be increased, sexual violence in relation to conflicts should be prevented and tackled, and a gender perspective should be incorporated in projects. Lastly, the efforts to harness the potential of young people as agents of peaceful change were praiseworthy.

99. **Ms. Thinn** (Myanmar) said that, in order to ensure extensive and meaningful participation, the Secretariat should communicate with Member States in advance of the interactive dialogues on policy matters relating to the special political missions. Her delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's commitment to strengthen women's representation in field-based special political missions and the special political missions' increasing engagement with youth.

100. Her Government was cooperating with the Secretary-General's fourth Special Envoy on Myanmar since 1995, Christine Schraner Burgener, to address the Rakhine issue. The office of the Special Envoy in Nay Pyi Taw, which had opened in 2018, was now fully operational. Her delegation was pleased that, in the report of the Secretary-General, reference was made to the Special Envoy's engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including national authorities, regional and international partners, affected populations and civil society. The report also welcomed the update on the status of the tripartite memorandum of understanding among the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme and the Government of Myanmar with a view to creating conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable repatriation of refugees to their places of origin or of their choosing. The next official visit of the Special

Envoy was scheduled for November 2019. The Government had fully cooperated with her during the eight previous visits, arranging meetings with the relevant authorities and stakeholders from various communities and visits to Rakhine and Kachin States.

101. The Government had taken a holistic approach to finding a peaceful and lasting solution to the issue of Rakhine State and was doing its best to address the root causes of the problems; however, cooperation from the international community was also necessary. The Government would not shirk its responsibility to ensure the security and protect the rights of those who required protection. It remained committed to continuing its work with the support of partners who took a balanced and practical approach to the issue of Rakhine. When introducing the report of the Secretary-General on Myanmar (A/74/311) before the Third Committee, on 23 October 2019 (A/C.3/74/SR.32), the Special Envoy had stated that it was important to recognize progress and help build on any positive momentum, and had underscored the commitment and promising steps made by the Government of Myanmar to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State headed by the late Kofi Annan, including the adoption of a national strategy on the closure of camps for internally displaced persons; the increased transparency of the repatriation process; the signing of the tripartite memorandum of understanding; and the improvement in terms of access to more locations covered under the memorandum of understanding for quick impact projects aimed at supporting recovery and resilience-based development for the benefit of all communities in Rakhine State. The mutual trust and understanding between the Government of Myanmar and the Special Envoy would support an enduring resolution of the challenges in Rakhine state. The ongoing reform of the United Nations system should enable the new Special Envoy to better deliver on her mandates.

102. **Mr. Weld-Blundell** (United Kingdom) said that the versatility of special political missions made them an effective tool for deployment in different phases of conflict; examples included efforts to find a mediated solution in Yemen and to strengthen social cohesion in Iraq. Over the previous year, such missions had demonstrated that a focus on the "primacy of politics" was a cost-effective and efficient way to respond to threats to international peace and security. However, national ownership was key: strategies must be built on national priorities and capabilities and engage a range of actors, including civil society, women and youth groups.

103. The United Nations reforms that had taken place since the previous resolution on special political missions were a priority for his delegation. The shared regional structures of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, and the incorporation of the Peacebuilding Support Office within the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, should enable the United Nations, from Headquarters, to provide more effective support to special political missions on the ground. That support would be critical when countries transitioned from peacekeeping operations.

104. As a permanent member of the Security Council, the United Kingdom recognized that special political missions' mandates must be tailored, sequenced, prioritized and – crucially – realistic. Setting out the difference between contextual benchmarks and core benchmarks, as had been done in the case of BINUH, was a positive step towards giving Member States and the United Nations a better indication of progress.

105. **Mr. Correa Nasser Silva** (Brazil) said that special political missions could help prevent the escalation of political tension or a relapse of civil turmoil. They therefore complemented peacekeeping operations; indeed, a well-equipped, adequately funded and politically supported mission could help to deter the type of threat to international peace and security that might require a traditional peacekeeping presence.

106. UNIOGBIS was working closely with the Peacebuilding Commission to help the country to restore political stability and resume a process that would ultimately lead to poverty reduction and sustainable development. As chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Brazil was monitoring the situation on the ground and looked forward to peaceful elections on 24 November 2019.

107. UNVMC was overseeing the hard-won 2016 peace agreement, and had helped reduce tension and raise awareness of the current status of reintegration of former combatants and the threats to social and human rights activists. The Mission's success was a demonstration of what the United Nations could do when the Security Council stood united.

108. The transition to the new special political mission in Haiti after 15 consecutive years of peacekeeping operations was a landmark in United Nations history. By ensuring that BINUH fulfilled its mandate, the international community could create a model that could be replicated in other post-peace conflict situations.

109. **Mr. Husni** (Sudan) said that the political transition and the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding

in the Sudan was gaining momentum after the December 2018 revolution. The high-level event held on 27 September 2019 at United Nations Headquarters was a testament to the overwhelming support for the transition process from the United Nations, African Union and international community as a whole. At the meeting, participants had expressed a commitment to accompanying the Sudan in its efforts to achieve its immediate priorities, which included building an inclusive, comprehensive peace and moving onto the path to economic recovery and transformation.

110. With regard to special political missions more generally, the principles of impartiality, consent of the parties, national ownership and leadership remained essential. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the United Nations continued to have a primary role to play in the maintenance of international peace and security. Strong regional partnerships were imperative if the United Nations was to have a greater impact on the ground. In particular, the special political missions should continue to work with the United Nations regional offices in Africa, the African Union, regional economic communities and organizations and national authorities, and to collaborate with United Nations agencies and country teams with a view to delivering as one United Nations.

Draft resolution A/C.4/74/L.8: Comprehensive review of special political missions

111. **Ms. Sharma** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Argentina, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, France, Haiti, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Paraguay, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Thailand and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

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

113. *Draft resolution A/C.4/74/L.8 was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.