



## Security Council

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### Letter dated 28 December 2020 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to my letter dated 20 December 2019 ([S/2019/1012](#)), in which I informed the President of the Security Council of the progress made by the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, and to her reply dated 27 December 2019 ([S/2019/1013](#)), in which she took note of my intention to continue the activities of the United Nations support team to the Mixed Commission, with funding from the regular budget. In this regard, I would like to inform you of the latest activities and achievements of the Mixed Commission.

As you may know, the United Nations established the Mixed Commission to facilitate the implementation of the judgment of the International Court of Justice of 10 October 2002, on the Cameroon-Nigeria boundary and territorial dispute. Through my good offices, and with the support of the Secretariat, I have continued to facilitate the implementation of the judgment.

The mandate of the Mixed Commission includes supporting the demarcation of the land boundary and the delineation of the maritime boundary; facilitating the withdrawal and transfer of authority; addressing the situation of affected populations; and making recommendations on confidence-building measures. Achievements to date in the implementation of the judgment include the withdrawal of Nigeria and the transfer of authority to Cameroon in the Lake Chad area (December 2003), along the land boundary (July 2004) and on the Bakassi Peninsula (a process that began in June 2006 and was completed in August 2008); the delineation of the maritime boundary (May 2007); and the end of the special transitional regime of five years and the exercise by Cameroon of its full right of sovereignty over the Bakassi zone (August 2013).

The Mixed Commission also approved the recommendations of the Working Group on the Maritime Boundary, including the provisions for cross-border cooperation on hydrocarbon deposits straddling the maritime boundary (March 2011).

Over the course of 2020, the Mixed Commission, chaired by my Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, continued to make progress towards the implementation of the judgment, including by supporting dialogue and communication between the two parties.

However, the attainment of the objectives outlined for 2020 was severely constrained by restrictions resulting from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Field operations had to be postponed following the closure of airspaces, as well as land borders in Cameroon, Nigeria and Senegal, starting in mid-March. The United Nations support team was able to convene the parties via videoconference in order to continue its work, albeit in a very limited manner. Field operations resumed in



November with meetings of the Subcommittee on Demarcation and the project steering committee in Cameroon. Pillar construction will resume in January 2021, with the expectation that approximately 322 pillars will be constructed in the Gotel mountains in Taraba and Adamawa States in Nigeria, which correspond to the Adamawa Region of Cameroon. The next phase of construction will continue until late 2021.

The following activities are required to conclude the work of the Mixed Commission:

- (a) Agreement by the two parties on outstanding demarcation areas using an in-office, desktop evaluation and demarcation methodology;
- (b) Facilitation of the construction and emplacement of boundary pillars financed by the trust fund for demarcation activities;
- (c) Production of final maps and a boundary statement;
- (d) Promotion of cross-border cooperation, including maritime cooperation, and coordinated security monitoring along the land boundary;
- (e) Finalization of confidence-building initiatives for local communities affected by the demarcation process;
- (f) Implementation of the completion strategy by progressively handing over the activities of the Mixed Commission to the Joint Bilateral Commission and other subregional structures.

I would like to recall that, until 2003, the Mixed Commission had been funded entirely from extrabudgetary funds. Thereafter, from 2004 to 2020, its activities were funded through the regular budget. The Governments of Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Italy, Norway, Pakistan, Sweden and Uruguay have provided in-kind contributions for the substantive and technical work of the Commission (military and legal experts). In addition, logistical support has been provided by the Governments of Cameroon and Nigeria, and voluntary contributions to the trust fund for demarcation activities have been made by both countries, as well as by Germany. Between 2018 and 2019, the parties contributed \$6 million to the demarcation trust fund.

As has been the case in recent years, and given the cost-effectiveness of the operation and the important tasks remaining at this juncture to help to advance the peaceful implementation of the judgment of the International Court of Justice, it is my intention to ask for resources from the regular budget for the United Nations support team to cover the year 2021.

I would be grateful if you could bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* António **Guterres**

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