



United Nations

SECURITY COUNCIL ROUND-UP RELEASE

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Security Council Adopts Text Deeming Israel's Settlements to Lack Legal Validity, as Other Critical Measures Meet with Defeat, Veto

Rare Vote Caps 2016 as Conflicts Continue Raging Elsewhere, Generating Growing Tragedy from Middle East to Africa

In a push to dislodge entrenched positions around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Security Council ended 2016 by adopting the first of its resolutions in more than three decades to target settlements, capping a year of intermittent divisions and contentious debate over how and even whether to intervene in the world's fiercest conflicts, from Syria and Yemen in the Middle East to the Central African Republic, Mali and South Sudan in Africa.

The Council convened a total of 237 public meetings in 2016, an increase from the 228 held in 2015. It adopted 77 resolutions and issued 19 presidential statements. While most of its actions were taken by consensus, deadlock remained on several of the most difficult issues. The Council failed to adopt two draft resolutions meant to end attacks in Aleppo as they met with vetoes, while two others intended, respectively, to demand a halt to aerial bombardments of the besieged city, and to ban arms sales to South Sudan, were defeated.

Adopting resolution 2334 (2016) on 23 December, the Council demanded that Israel end its settlement building on Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, reiterating that they lacked legal validity and were a major obstacle to the two-State vision of two States living side by side in peace and security, within internationally recognized borders. It called upon both sides to the conflict to work towards credible negotiations on all final-status issues relating to the Middle East peace process.

The contentious settlements measure passed by 14 votes in favour, with the United States abstaining rather than wielding its veto, a striking departure from past practice. That country's representative said her delegation had long considered settlements an obstacle to peace, but Israel had been treated differently from other States for as long as it had been a Member State of the United Nations. Because of a bias laid bare in 18 resolutions condemning Israel in the General Assembly

and the Human Rights Council in 2016 alone, she emphasized, the United States could not support the resolution.

Malaysia, New Zealand, Senegal and Venezuela tabled the draft a day after Egypt had withdrawn its own text under pressure from Israel and the United States.

In another dramatic shift, the Council capped a difficult year of efforts to end the war in Syria with its 31 December adoption of resolution 2336 (2016), which supported a truce brokered days earlier by the Russian Federation and Turkey. “If you don’t want to help, make sure you don’t complicate things,” the Russian Federation’s representative said after the vote, emphasizing that the international community must be guided by the goal of achieving a political settlement in 2017.

Preceding that success were three failed attempts to alleviate human suffering, particularly in Aleppo, Syria’s largest city. The Council rejected two draft resolutions on 8 October — one submitted by France and Spain, and the other by the Russian Federation — the first of which would have demanded an end to aerial bombardments over Aleppo, and the second of which would have called for an immediate cessation of hostilities. Permanent members China and the Russian Federation vetoed a draft resolution that would have barred attacks in the embattled city and demanded a cessation of hostilities throughout Syria.

Concerning Yemen, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs confirmed to the Council that thousands of civilians had been killed and more than 3 million forced to leave their homes, with 7 million others facing food insecurity. He said the April cessation of hostilities and the start of peace talks had collapsed by 31 October after the parties to the conflict had rejected his road map for an ending the fighting. The humanitarian suffering had only worsened, he added.

Also looming over the Council’s deliberations were concern for civilians caught in the cross-fire amid South Sudan’s internal power struggle, as well as questions over whether to impose an arms embargo on key leaders. In early July, four days of fighting in Juba, the capital, had left hundreds of people dead, including two United Nations peacekeepers, prompting the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Affairs to suggest an arms embargo. Despite the warning sounded on 17 November by the Secretary-General’s Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) about the risk of full-blown conflict and the Secretary-General’s call for an arms embargo, the Council had failed — by a vote of 7 in favour to none against, with 8 abstentions — to impose a ban.

The situation in Mali also took on new urgency, with the Council authorizing the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to adopt a more proactive and robust posture, including when protecting civilians against asymmetric threats. It increased troop and police levels, and authorized French forces to intervene when under imminent

threat. The action followed alerts warning that delays in implementing the 2015 peace accord would mean gains for extremist groups betting on its collapse.

Authorizing similar action in the Central African Republic, the Council adapted the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSCA) to new circumstances. Supporting that decision was the Council's one-year renewal of the arms embargo, asset freeze and travel ban on designated individuals in that country.

The Council monitored violence elsewhere, including Burundi, authorizing the deployment of up to 228 police officers to that country by a vote of 11 in favour to none against, with 4 abstentions (Angola, China, Egypt, Venezuela). Meanwhile, the build-up of tensions in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo over delayed elections also caught the Council's attention. On 30 March, it renewed the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and its Force Intervention Brigade for one year, without a reduction in troop levels, despite recommendations to the contrary.

On the non-proliferation front, the Council marked the twentieth anniversary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty on 23 September, calling for its early entry into force. Adopting resolution 2310 (2016) by 14 votes in favour to none against, with 1 abstention (Egypt), the Council urged all States that had either not signed or ratified the Treaty to do so.

Women's issues came to the fore amid discussion of the myriad crimes perpetrated by extremists. An open debate on human trafficking heard from some 70 speakers, including a civilian activist for Yazidi women's rights, who said that Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) had abducted more than 6,000 women and children and sold them to slave markets. The Council also considered new thematic issues, including water, peace and security, and the primacy of the United Nations Charter.

The Council maintained its traditional focus on cooperation with regional organizations, adding meetings with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and with similar Eurasian and South Asian entities to its agenda. It also kept its working methods under scrutiny, holding four monthly "wrap up" meetings, and an open debate that yielded mixed reviews of Council efforts to increase efficiency and transparency.

In addition to convening meetings, the Council issued 106 press statements, at least 39 of which condemned particular terrorist acts around the world, and continued to monitor compliance with counter-terrorism resolutions through its subsidiary bodies. It also issued a presidential statement calling upon its Counter-Terrorism Committee to propose, by 30 April 2017, an international framework to challenge terrorist narratives.

While it authorized no new peacekeeping operations in 2016, it did, however, terminate the sanctions regime imposed on Liberia and authorize a final mandate extension for the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), until 30 June 2017. The Council also established an observer force and approved the deployment of 450 observers, in support of the fresh peace agreement in Colombia.

The Council welcomed Bolivia, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan and Sweden as new, non-permanent members elected by the General Assembly in October to serve two-year terms beginning on 1 January 2017. Italy and the Netherlands agreed to split their two-year term after five rounds of balloting left them deadlocked. They replaced Angola, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain and Venezuela, which completed their terms at the end of 2016. Egypt, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay retain their seats until 31 December 2017. China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and the United States are permanent Council members.

Following are summaries of public meetings held in 2016:

Middle East

Syria

Meetings: 15 January, 27 January, 24 February, 26 February, 30 March, 28 April, 4 May, 27 May, 23 June, 29 June, 25 July, 22 August, 21 September, 25 September, 29 September, 8 October, 26 October, 31 October, 17 November, 21 November, 30 November, 5 December, 13 December, 19 December (SC/12637, SC/12639), 21 December, 23 December, 31 December.
Resolutions: 2268, 2294, 2314, 2319, 2328, 2330, 2332, 2336; Rejected: 8 October (S/2016/846, S/2016/847), 5 December (S/2016/1028).

Capping a difficult year of efforts to end the conflict in Syria, the Security Council adopted resolution 2336 (2016) on **31 December** in support of a truce brokered days earlier by the Russian Federation and Turkey. The measure was among the central actions taken to alleviate civilian suffering. In its earlier adoption of resolution 2332 (2016), on **21 December**, the Council renewed until 10 January 2018 its 2014 authorization for United Nations humanitarian agencies to cross conflict lines, and for the panel created to monitor the loading of relief consignments to continue its work. That action bolstered a key demand of resolution 2328 (2016), adopted on **19 December**, that all parties provide “safe, immediate and unhindered” access for the monitoring of evacuations from Aleppo and the protection of civilians throughout Syria.

However, 2016 opened with a shattering of expectations for a change of the calculus on the ground as a result of the Council's **26 February** endorsement of a then-fresh cessation-of-hostilities agreement reached by the Russian Federation and the United States. The representative of the

United States described the accord as “the best chance to stop the violence”, while the Russian Federation’s Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs emphasized that it would not apply to such terrorist groups as Jabhat al-Nusrah and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da’esh).

With the truce faltering and the death toll in Aleppo mounting, the Council endured several setbacks, most notably its failure to adopt two draft resolutions on **8 October**. The first, submitted by France and Spain, failed to win adoption by a vote of 11 in favour to 2 against (Russian Federation, Venezuela), with 2 abstentions (Angola, China). It would have demanded a halt to aerial bombardments and military flights over Aleppo. The second text, tabled by the Russian Federation, would have urged an immediate cessation of hostilities, particularly in Aleppo. It was rejected by a vote of 4 in favour (China, Egypt, Russian Federation, Venezuela) to 9 against (France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States), with 2 abstentions (Angola, Uruguay).

On **5 December**, the Council again failed to adopt a resolution — by 11 votes in favour to 3 against (China, Russian Federation, Venezuela), with 1 abstention (Angola) — that would have barred “any and all” attacks in the embattled city and demanded a cessation of hostilities throughout Syria. The Russian Federation’s representative expressed concern that the vote had violated Council procedure and ignored progress made by his country and the United States on the withdrawal of fighters from Aleppo and on humanitarian relief.

The Council heard 16 briefings throughout 2016, many delivered by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator. On **27 January** and **30 March**, he called for bold decisions as well as support for the February cessation-of-hostilities accord, only to plead with the Council, on **28 April**, to revive the fraying ceasefire so that aid could be delivered to Aleppo, Homs, Idlib, Latakia and rural Damascus. On **23 June**, he warned that assistance to besieged and hard-to-reach areas must be expanded significantly in the second half of 2016. His **27 May** call for urgent political action had escalated by **25 July**, to a plea for a 48-hour pause in the fighting to facilitate delivery of aid to 250,000 people in Aleppo and other areas.

Aleppo had become the “apex of horror”, with 275,000 people in its eastern districts all but cut off from food, water, medicine and electricity, the Emergency Relief Coordinator said on **22 August**. He went on to press the Council, on **29 September**, to restore the cessation of hostilities, and on **26 October**, called upon members to do the minimum required to allow wide-spread aid delivery. “At the very minimum, I call upon all Council members who have operational military assets in Syria to take concrete steps to halt the aerial bombardment of civilian areas,” he said, describing himself as “incandescent with rage”. Those maintaining sieges in Syria knew that the Council was unable or unwilling to agree on the steps to end them, he said on **21 November**. The Operations Director at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) pointed out

on **23 December** that humanitarian and protection needs were as acute as ever as the year drew to a close.

In an emergency meeting on **30 November**, the Special Envoy for Syria, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa all pressed the Council to address the dire need in Aleppo. Delegates called attention to a text drafted by Egypt, Spain and New Zealand to ensure humanitarian access.

Addressing the Council on **21 September** and **13 December**, the Secretary-General challenged members to use their influence to restore the cessation of hostilities, enable humanitarian assistance and support the United Nations in charting a political path for Syrians. "You have now no higher responsibility," he emphasized. The Special Envoy noted on **25 September** that a tiny window of opportunity remained for a ceasefire to hold.

The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs warned on **4 May** that widespread carnage had left Aleppo a shell of its former self, in an echo of remarks by the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs on **15 January**, to the effect that siege and starvation had become systematic in Syria. The use of starvation as a weapon amounted to a war crime, she stressed.

On other Middle East issues, the Council adopted resolution 2294 (2016) on **29 June**, when it extended the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) until 19 December 2016. On **31 October**, it adopted resolution 2314 (2016), extending the mandate of the Joint Investigative Mechanism of the United Nations-Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for two weeks, until 18 November. It subsequently adopted resolution 2319 (2016) for an additional year.

Question of Palestine

Meetings: 26 January, 18 February, 24 March, 18 April, 25 May, 30 June, 12 July, 29 August, 15 September, 19 October, 23 November, 16 December, 23 December.
Resolution: 2334.

The Security Council's 13 formal meetings on the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict culminated in the **23 December** adoption of a resolution condemning Israel's continuing construction of settlements on occupied Palestinian territory. Adopting resolution 2334 (2016) by 14 votes in favour, with the United States abstaining, the Council reaffirmed that the settlements lacked legal validity and constituted a flagrant violation of international law and as well as a major obstacle to the vision of two States living side-by-side in peace and security within recognized international

borders. It also demanded that Israel immediately cease its settlement activity and called for collective efforts to launch credible negotiations.

Opening the Council's monthly debate on the Middle East the Secretary-General warned on **26 January** that a relentless wave of extremism was gripping the region, and urged Israelis and Palestinians to "act now" to prevent the two-State solution from "slipping away forever". In the ensuing discussion, the observer for the State of Palestine pressed the Council to fulfil its responsibility to end the occupation, emphasizing: "It is your duty and it cannot be delegated, delayed or dismissed." Israel's representative said the Palestinians had refused to come to the negotiating table. The Council must call upon them to condemn terror attacks and demand that they stop incitement, he added.

Nickolay Mladenov, the Secretary-General's Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, emphasized on **18 February** that the onus was on both sides to shape their future as violence raged unabated. Against the backdrop of radicalization, terror, sectarian violence, war and tectonic geopolitical shifts, peace and security were imperative for both Israel and Palestine, now more than ever, he stressed. However, the planning and construction of settlements remained an impediment to peace, he said, pointing out that, so far in 2016, the demolition of 29 Palestinian-owned structures per week on average was three times the average for 2015.

As the stabbings and shootings in Israel and the occupied West Bank continued, the Special Coordinator urged the Council to move beyond mere condemnations, reiterating on **24 March** that "stabbing someone on the street will not bring about a Palestinian State". By the same token, more walls, administrative detentions, and movement restrictions bred more anger among people who already felt collectively humiliated, punished and facing discrimination. "The time has come to ring the alarm bells that the two-State solution is slipping from our fingers, that it is disappearing as the realities on the ground make the prospect of a viable and independent Palestinian land less possible and less likely," he stressed. There could be no peace without hope, but fostering hope required courageous leadership, willing to articulate a clear political horizon.

Accelerated settlement activity was also in focus on **18 April**, when the Secretary-General told the Council that for six months, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory had been gripped by a surge of deadly violence, triggered by individual attacks perpetrated by Palestinians. Israel's representative questioned the desire of Palestinians for peace, recalling that a wave of attacks had left 34 of his compatriots dead and hundreds injured over the previous few months. "Will you condemn Palestinians who commit terror attacks against Israelis?" he demanded of the Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine. "You can do it right now." The Permanent Observer responded by stating that Palestinians were defending themselves against Israeli incitement. "You are oppressing us," he pointed out. "You are sitting on our lives. Leave us alone. Let my people be free."

The Special Coordinator briefed the Council again on **25 May**, saying that May had seen the biggest escalation of violence between Israel and Hamas since the conflict of 2014. While the pace of demolitions and confiscations of Palestinian structures had slowed in comparison to April, more such actions had occurred in 2016 than in the whole of 2015, displacing at least 900 people and otherwise affecting 2,500 others. Noting that Gaza residents currently received only 8 to 12 hours of electricity a day, he emphasized that the enclave's chronic energy and water crisis must be tackled without delay.

On **30 June**, he briefed the Council again, pointing out that negative trends on the ground continued to jeopardize prospects for peace. Two Palestinians had opened fire and killed four Israelis, while security forces had killed a Palestinian teenager on a highway. Both tragedies had provided political fodder for cynical advocates of divisiveness, further undermining trust between communities, he said.

During the Council's quarterly debate on **12 July**, the Secretary-General warned that the failure by Israeli and Palestinian leaders to advance peace had created a vacuum which extremists were ready to fill. Urging both sides immediately to begin discussions with the Quartet, and to coordinate with regional stakeholders in order to break the entrenched political impasse, he underlined the need for both sides to make compromises going forward.

Briefing again on **29 August**, he emphasized that prospects for resuming peace negotiations remained "nowhere in sight". Israel's illegal settlement construction continued, Gaza remained beyond the control of the legitimate Palestinian authorities and political leadership on both sides continued to shy away from taking the steps needed for peace, he noted.

Secretary-General Ban echoed those sentiments on **15 September**, warning that the two-State solution was at risk of being replaced by a one-State reality of perpetual violence and occupation. Encouraging both sides to take the difficult steps needed to change that destructive trajectory, he called attention to plans for another 463 housing units in Area C of the occupied West Bank in the previous two weeks alone. The settlement policy was diametrically opposed to the creation of a Palestinian State, he said, emphasizing that the "stifling and oppressive" occupation must end.

During a day-long debate on **19 October**, Council members and other speakers cautioned that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must not be ignored, despite other crises raging across the Middle East. Citing outbreaks of violence, settlement activity, Palestinian political turmoil and militant activity as well as the continuing suffering in Gaza, Special Coordinator Mladenov said the region needed moderate forces to unite and stand up to radicalization. The meeting also heard from the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, as well as 46 other speakers.

Briefing again on **23 November**, the Special Coordinator called upon all stakeholders to counter the “hate-driven agenda” threatening to destroy the possibility of a two-State solution. Carefully worded statements and well-crafted speeches would not reverse the current trajectory, he stressed, calling instead for action to reverse Israel’s settlement expansion and heal the internal divisions among Palestinians.

Delivering his final briefing on the Israeli-Palestinian question, the Secretary-General said on **16 December** that he was saddened by the absence of optimism for the future. “We are fast approaching a precipice as a direct result of the actions of those seeking to destroy the prospects for peace,” he said, as he presented his last report. Among other things, he strongly urged Israeli lawmakers to reconsider advancing a bill, currently under consideration, that could lead to the “regularization” of more than 50 outposts built on private Palestinian land.

Iraq

Meetings: 16 February, 6 May, 15 July, 25 July, 9 November.

Resolution: 2299.

The domestic political impasse, with its backdrop of fighting ISIL, was the dominant theme of the Council’s five meetings dedicated to Iraq. In his first 2016 briefing, on **16 February**, Jan Kubiš, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), warned that the humanitarian crisis in that country was expected “to widen and worsen”, despite some success in rolling ISIL back. He urged the international community to step forward with more technical support and funding, while also calling attention to the lack of progress in implementing a national political agreement. Iraq’s representative cited the war against terrorism, declining oil prices, infrastructure reconstruction and the restoration of basic services in areas liberated from ISIL as significant challenges.

Returning to the Council on **6 May**, Special Representative Kubiš said a profound political crisis was paralyzing the Government of Iraq and the Council of Representatives at a time of increased terrorist attacks and a humanitarian crisis ranking among the worst in the world. Reiterating Iraq’s critical plight during another briefing, on **15 July**, he called for additional international support for the country. On **25 July**, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2299 (2016), extending UNAMI’s mandate until 31 July 2017 while reiterating its grave concern over the ongoing presence of terrorist groups, ISIL in particular. Delivering his last briefing of 2016, the Special Representative described the battle to liberate Mosul from ISIL, saying it marked the beginning of the end for the so-called “Da’esh caliphate in Iraq”. Going forward, leaders of all communities and groups in the country would have to address numerous past grievances, and reconciliation was the only way to ensure a sustainable military victory over the group.

Yemen

Meetings: 16 February, 17 February, 24 February, 3 March, 15 April, 25 April, 21 June, 31 August, 31 October.

Resolution: 2266.

Presidential Statement: S/PRST/2016/5.

Concern among Council members over instability in Yemen gave way to cautious optimism prompted by a nationwide cessation of hostilities agreed in April and the start of peace talks. Several months later, however, the fighting continued and the humanitarian situation had taken a turn for the worse after parties to the conflict rejected a road map for ending the violence.

The Council responded by unanimously adopting resolution 2266 (2016) on **16 February**, extending until 26 February 2017 the 2016 asset freeze and travel ban it had imposed on those threatening stability in Yemen. Informing that decision were briefings delivered on **16** and **17 February**, when the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator spelled out the conflict's humanitarian cost. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen, said the country was living through "the most heart-rending days in its history".

Briefing again on **15 April**, before the start of peace talks in Kuwait, he stated: "We have never been as close as we are today for peace". The Council responded to his appeal for support on **25 April**, issuing a presidential statement that welcomed both the talks and the cessation of hostilities. The Special Envoy reported on **21 June** that the negotiations had been moving slowly but constructively, and that he would soon be setting out a proposal for advancing the process. However, the talks ended on 6 August with no agreement, a severe breakdown in the cessation of hostilities and a dangerous escalation of military activities. The Special Envoy reported again on **31 October**, saying he had presented a comprehensive road map, and had learned informally that it had been rejected. Meanwhile, the Emergency Relief Coordinator said humanitarian suffering had only worsened, with thousands of Yemenis killed, tens of thousands injured, more than 3 million forced from their homes and 7 million suffering from food insecurity.

Lebanon

Meetings: 22 July, 1 November.

Presidential Statements: S/PRST/2016/10, S/PRST/2016/15.

Issuing a presidential statement on **22 July**, the Security Council underscored "in the strongest possible terms" its deepest concern that Lebanon had had no President for two years, particularly in light of regional challenges including the influx of Syrian refugees. It encouraged all

parties in the country to demonstrate renewed unity and determination “to resist a slide into violence and conflict”.

A second presidential statement, issued on **1 November**, welcomed the election of President Michel Aoun. It urged him and other leaders to form a new Government swiftly and take other steps to promote Lebanon’s stability, which was essential to regional stability and security.

Africa

Sudan-South Sudan

Meetings: 25 January, 10 February, 19 February, 2 March, 17 March, 31 March, 6 April, 7 April, 26 April, 12 May, 31 May, 9 June, 14 June, 29 June, 13 July, 29 July, 12 August, 4 October, 15 November, 17 November, 13 December, 15 December, 16 December, 23 December.

Resolutions: 2265, 2271, 2280, 2287, 2290, 2296, 2302, 2304, 2318, 2326, 2327.

Presidential Statements: S/PRST/2016/1, SPRST/2016/3.

Concern for civilians caught in the cross-fire of an internal power struggle and questions about whether to impose an arms embargo on key leaders loomed over the Security Council’s deliberations on South Sudan during a year in which the world’s youngest country endured bloodshed and political instability.

At the outset of 2016, on **19 February**, the Chair of the Security Council’s 2206 (2015) Committee on South Sudan Sanctions reported that both sides in the conflict, which began in 2013, had engaged in actions that met the criteria for imposing targeted sanctions. On **31 March**, briefers described the deteriorating humanitarian situation and ongoing clashes, as human rights violations continued unabated.

South Sudan’s representative rejected allegations of killings, rapes and torture involving Government troops.

Unanimously adopting resolution 2280 (2016) on **7 April**, the Council renewed, until 1 June, a package of sanctions — including a ban on travel and a freeze on assets — imposed by resolution 2206 (2015) against those deemed to be blocking peace in South Sudan. In a separate action, it issued a presidential statement welcoming progress in such areas as implementing security agreements in Juba and the return to the capital of some Sudan People’s Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO) members.

Addressing the Council on **26 April**, Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, stressed: “It is essential that the parties seize this opportunity to show

genuine determination to move forward with the peace process.” He spoke after the arrival in Juba of Riek Machar, leader of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army-in-Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) and First Vice President-designate. South Sudan’s representative emphasized that his country’s Government was fully committed to implementing the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

However, the Council renewed its sanctions regime until 31 May 2017, unanimously adopting resolution 2290 (2016) on **31 May** while expressing deep concern at the failure of South Sudan’s leaders to end hostilities and to implement the peace agreement in full.

South Sudan’s representative expressed “great disappointment” that the resolution failed to recognize his country’s sovereign right to govern and manage its own affairs without interference from the Security Council. He questioned the motive behind language in the text on the arming of the SPLA, stressing that the country’s stability depended on the army’s readiness to protect itself against aggression in a region awash with weapons. He called upon the Council to engage positively with the Transitional Government as it implemented the peace agreement.

Four days of fighting in early July left several hundred people dead in Juba, including two United Nations peacekeepers, prompting Under-Secretary-General Ladsous to urge the Council, on **13 July**, urgently to consider imposing an arms embargo. Acting unanimously on **29 July**, the Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) until 12 August, extending it again on **12 August** until 15 December 2016. In doing so, it decided to include a Juba-based regional protection force within UNMISS to bolster the protection of civilians.

Nevertheless, Ellen Margrethe Løj, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS, warned the Council on **17 November** that South Sudan’s deteriorating economy and the increasingly fragmented conflict had put the country on a potential downward slide towards greater divisiveness and the risk of full-scale civil conflict. “The guns have to be silenced if the suffering of the people is not going to become more dire,” she stressed.

With 2016 drawing to a close, the Council unanimously renewed the UNMISS mandate, first on **15 December** by one day, then on **16 December** until 15 December 2017. In doing so, the Council, through resolution 2327 (2016), authorized UNMISS to use “all necessary means” to protect civilians, increased the Mission’s overall force levels, and expressed its intention to consider sanctions against those whose actions undermined peace, stability and security. Three days later, the Secretary-General called for an arms embargo to stem the capacity of South Sudan’s rival leaders to wage war. However, the Council failed on **23 December** — by 7 votes in favour to none against, with 8 abstentions — to adopt a resolution that would have imposed an arms embargo as well as targeted sanctions on three key Government and opposition figures.

The Council also held a number of meetings on Sudan, including one on that country's western region of Darfur, where a resumption of hostilities prompted Under-Secretary-General Ladsous to stress, on **25 January**, the importance of the Government of Sudan ensuring full support for implementation of strategic United Nations priorities. On **10 February**, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2265 (2016), renewing the mandate of the Panel of Experts monitoring the sanctions imposed on those behind instability in Darfur until 12 March 2017. At the same time, it signalled its intention to impose additional measures on those perpetrating violence. The Under-Secretary-General returned to the Council on **6 April** to report that intensified fighting since January between Government forces and fighters of the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdel Wahid (SLA/AW) had exacerbated the security situation and caused large-scale displacement.

Fatou Bensouda, Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, criticized the Council's "persistent failure" to bring those indicted for atrocities in Darfur to justice on **9 June**, saying that its silence had emboldened President Omar al-Bashir to travel across borders despite warrants issued for his arrest. Acting unanimously on **29 June**, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2296 (2016), renewing the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) until 30 June 2017. It demanded that all parties to the conflict immediately end the violence and urged the SLA/AW to join the peace process without preconditions.

The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council again on **14 June**, reporting that the nature of the conflict in Darfur remained unchanged. On **4 October**, he stressed the need for follow-up action after the signing up of additional parties to a road map for ending the conflict. Sudan's representative called for a partial drawdown of UNAMID. Meanwhile, Prosecutor Bensouda returned on **13 December**, when she emphasized that as long as the impasse in Darfur continued, five suspects indicted for grave crimes committed there would remain at large as impunity encouraged new crimes.

On **12 May** and again on **15 November**, the Security Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) for six months, unanimously adopting resolutions 2287 (2016) and 2318 (2016). Recognizing that the situation along the Sudan-South Sudan border remained a serious threat to international peace and security, it underscored the need for cooperation between the Governments of those two countries.

West Africa and Sahel

Meetings: 14 January, 25 April, 26 May, 11 July, 27 July, 28 July.

Presidential Statements: S/PRST/2016/4, S/PRST/2016/11.

Issuing a presidential statement on **25 April**, the Security Council expressed deep concern over piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea. It also stressed the importance of a comprehensive approach — led by States in the region, with international support — to tackle the problem's root causes. Another presidential statement, issued on **28 July**, welcomed the merger between the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel and the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA).

Briefing the Council on **14 January**, Mohamed ibn Chambas, Special Representative and Head of UNOWA, said terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime continued to plague the subregion, despite peaceful elections in several nations. Returning on **26 May**, he said desertification, poverty and violent extremism had come together to put West Africa and the Sahel at a crossroads. In the same meeting, Jean-Paul Laborde, Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, described climate change as an “aggravator” of conflict and violent extremism. In the ensuing debate, some Council members emphasized that the Council was not the appropriate forum for discussing climate change or development questions.

Returning to the Council on **11 July**, the Head of UNOWA said he intended to establish a regional task force on the prevention of violent extremism in West Africa and the Sahel. He appealed for greater efforts to counter the spread of terrorism and associated lawlessness, at a time when 4.5 million people in the Sahel had been displaced and 6 million needed emergency food assistance. On **27 July**, the Council heard from Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, each of whom briefed on his tour of the region. Together, they reported that violence by Boko Haram had led to massive forced displacement and a widespread humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin.

Liberia

Meetings: 17 March, 25 May, 25 August, 14 September, 2 December, 23 December.
Resolutions: 2288, 2308, 2333.

Deeming that Liberia continued to make steady progress towards recovering from the devastating civil war of the 1990s, Security Council action centred on lifting sanctions and the transfer of responsibility for security from the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to national forces. Completing the security transition on 1 July would be one of Liberia's most significant milestones since the signing of the peace agreement in 2003, Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIL, told the Council on **17 March**. In anticipation of the transition, the Council terminated the remaining sanctions imposed on Liberia, including arms restrictions, on **25 May**.

Following the transition, the Special Representative emphasized the crucial need for international support in enabling Liberia to maintain stability and face its numerous challenges. The country's next critical test would be presidential and legislative elections slated for October 2017, he said. During a **2 December** joint briefing, Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Affairs, said that addressing deficiencies in the economic, security and justice sectors was of key importance in maintaining stability. The need to address sexual violence and the aftermath of Ebola was also emphasized. The Council first extended UNMIL's mandate until 31 December, requesting an assessment of options for the future United Nations presence in Liberia, including any drawdown. On **23 December**, it extended the mandate for a final period, until 30 March 2018, reducing its military component by about two thirds to a ceiling of 434. The Council called on the Government to prioritize national reconciliation, economic recovery, anti-corruption efforts and the 2017 elections.

Guinea-Bissau

Meetings: 17 February, 26 February, 14 June, 30 August.

Resolution: 2267.

Briefing the Security Council on **17 February**, Modibo Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), warned that the cycle of instability that had dogged Guinea-Bissau since the 2012 coup d'état would not end until political leaders engaged in constructive dialogue to overcome their differences. The Council responded by extending the UNIOGBIS mandate on **26 February**, adopting resolution 2267 (2016). Describing his attempts to defuse tensions, on **14 June**, the Special Representative urged the Council to pay close attention following the President's dismissal of his Cabinet in late May, which had led to a precarious two-week stand-off with dismissed officials who had refused to leave the Government Palace. On **30 August**, he and the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission warned of turmoil to come if divisions between the Executive and Legislative branches were not resolved soon, particularly given the possible departure of the security mission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Mali

Meetings: 11 January, 5 April, 16 June, 29 June, 6 October, 3 November.

Resolution: 2295.

Presidential Statement: S/PRST/2016/16.

The Security Council's consideration of the situation in Mali centred on implementation of the landmark Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation between the Government and armed groups, which laid out conditions for peace and reconciliation. "The peace process in Mali is still fragile,"

the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations cautioned the Council on **11 January**, at its first formal meeting of 2016. In a follow-up briefing on **5 April**, he warned that delays in implementing the peace accord meant gains for extremist groups betting on its collapse. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), echoed that view on **16 June**, emphasizing that the slow pace of implementation was undermining the entire process.

In response, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2295 (2016) on **29 June**, authorizing the Mission to adopt a more “proactive and robust posture”, including when protecting civilians against asymmetric threats. It also extended MINUSMA’s mandate until 30 June 2017, raised its force levels to a ceiling of 13,289 troops and 1,920 police officers and authorized French forces to intervene in support of the Mission when it came under imminent threat.

Speaking on **6 October**, 18 months after the peace agreement’s signing, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations drew the Council’s attention to a lack of concrete progress in its implementation and to the deteriorating security situation. MINUSMA would be unable to implement its mandate fully if the signatories failed to implement the accord, he emphasized. The Council responded on **3 November** by issuing a presidential statement that strongly condemned repeated ceasefire violations and urged armed groups as well as the Government to carry out expeditiously all their commitments under the peace and reconciliation agreement.

Central Africa and Great Lakes

Meetings: 21 March, 31 March, 13 May, 27 July, 2 November, 27 December.

Presidential Statement: S/PRST/2016/2, S/PRST/2016/7.

François Louncény Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), told the Council on **7 December** that a recent outbreak of violence in the Central African Republic — following the peaceful and successful transition earlier in 2016 — demonstrated the fragile situation in that country. The Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and Boko Haram continued to menace the region, and while collective anti-terrorism efforts by Lake Chad Basin countries had met with success, they lacked sufficient resources to finance operations or ensure development in liberated areas.

The Council marked the official launch of the United Nations Regional Strategic Framework for the Great Lakes region by holding an open debate on **21 March**. Speakers emphasized the need for investment, strong leadership and sustained support for State-building and anti-poverty efforts. Following up on that meeting was a presidential statement issued on **31 March**, which expressed the Council’s regret over the limited progress made in implementing national and regional commitments under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and

the Region. Another presidential statement, issued on **13 May**, the eve of a regional security summit in Abuja, Nigeria, strongly condemned Boko Haram's attacks in the Lake Chad Basin and demanded that the group immediately halt all violence, human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law.

On **27 July**, senior United Nations officials told the Council that violence by Boko Haram had prompted massive forced displacement and widespread humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin. Speakers called for more international support for regional efforts to both combat terrorism and meet the needs of 9.2 million people facing unimaginable desperation across Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. On **2 November**, Said Djinnit, Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, called for concerted efforts to avert a reversal of the commendable gains achieved thus far. He was briefing on the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region (Framework Agreement) and on a high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism in Luanda, Angola, on 26 October.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Meetings: 14 January, 23 March, 30 March, 23 June, 7 July, 11 October, 5 December.

Resolutions: 2277, 2293.

Presidential Statement: S/PRST/2016/18.

While remaining focused on the protection of civilians from armed groups in the country's eastern region — the main mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) — the Council also monitored closely the build-up of political tensions in Kinshasa, the capital, and elsewhere as the 19 December expiry of President Joseph Kabila's mandate approached and as opposition parties blamed delayed elections, previously scheduled for 16 November, on the governing party's desire to remain in power.

Maman Sidikou, Special Representative and Head of MONUSCO, warned on **14 January** of mounting human rights incidents arising from political tensions, and called for greater progress in the national dialogue process. On **7 July**, Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson conveyed the Secretary-General's concern that election tensions could spark a severe crisis, as opposition members argued that dialogue could lead to the extension of the President's term. In the wake of scores of killings on 19 and 20 September, following large-scale demonstrations in Kinshasa and elsewhere, the Special Representative addressed the Council on **11 October**, underlining the responsibility of the Government and all stakeholders to preserve hard-won gains. The Council acknowledged an 18 October agreement reached by Congolese parties by issuing a presidential statement on **5 December**, following a visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. By that text, the Council urged the parties to reach consensus on an election process and to resolve their differences peacefully. It also called on the Government to hold accountable those responsible for the September killings.

The Council renewed MONUSCO's mandate and that of its Force Intervention Brigade for a further year by unanimously adopting resolution 2277 (2016) on **30 March**, without a reduction in troop levels despite recommendations to the contrary. It stressed that any drawdown and exit should happen gradually, in consultation with the Government and according to the situation on the ground. Adopting resolution 2293 (2016) on **23 June**, the Council renewed the arms embargo and sanctions regime imposed on the country, reaffirming, however, that the measures no longer applied to the transfer of arms and related materiel to the Government.

Somalia and Eritrea

Meetings: 28 January, 18 February, 24 March, 27 May, 7 July, 19 August, 9 November, 10 November.

Resolutions: 2275, 2289, 2297, 2316, 2317.

Presidential Statement: S/PRST/2016/13.

Despite a challenging security environment and a humanitarian crisis that left 40 per cent of Somalia's population dependent on aid, politics was increasingly displacing violence as a means of resolving differences, the Council heard on **28 January**. Delivering a briefing, Michael Keating, the new Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), emphasized that 2016 would be a critical year of transformation, requiring Somali leadership, support from the Council and management of the threat posed by Al-Shabaab. In a follow-up meeting on **18 February**, Council members called for improved coordination to staunch the illegal charcoal trade in Somalia, while pressing Eritrea for "frank and sincere" cooperation over its reported involvement in the Yemen conflict. The Council dispatched a visiting mission to Somalia on 19 May.

The Council subsequently adopted resolution 2275 (2016) on **24 March**, extending UNSOM's mandate until 31 March 2017. It also renewed its authorization for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) until 31 May 2017, agreeing with the Secretary-General that conditions were not appropriate for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission. Issuing a presidential statement on **19 August**, the Council welcomed Somalia's continuing political and security progress and underscored the need to main that momentum towards democratic governance through an inclusive, transparent and credible national electoral process on the path to universal-suffrage elections in 2020. On **9 November**, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2316 (2016), renewing its authorization for international naval forces to combat piracy off the Somali coast for another year, stressing that while the threat had receded, it remained a matter of grave concern.

Acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Council adopted resolution 2317 (2016) on **10 November**, extending the arms embargo on Somalia until 15 November 2017,

and reaffirming its arms embargo on Eritrea. It took that action by a vote of 10 in favour to none against, with 5 abstentions (Angola, China, Egypt, Russian Federation, Venezuela). The Council also extended the mandate of the Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group until 15 December 2017.

Western Sahara

Meeting: 29 April.

Resolution: 2285.

Meeting on **29 April**, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) for another year, adopting resolution 2285 (2016) by a vote of 10 in favour to 2 against (Uruguay, Venezuela), with 3 members abstaining (Angola, New Zealand, Russian Federation) due to concerns about transparency in consultations as well as language issues. Noting recent tensions, the Council emphasized the urgent need to return MINURSO to full functionality through dialogue with all stakeholders, and reaffirmed its commitment to help the parties reach a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that would provide for self-determination.

Côte d'Ivoire

Meetings: 13 January, 20 January, 12 April, 28 April.

Resolutions: 2260, 2283, 2284.

The Security Council lifted the sanctions imposed on Côte d'Ivoire and prepared to draw down the United Nations operation there, adopting resolution 2284 (2016) under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. After the Operation's head hailed the milestone of successful 2015 elections in a **13 January** meeting, the Council on **20 January** authorized a reduction in the military contingent. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations confirmed that the country was still "well on the right track" on **12 April**, leading to the lifting of arms, travel and financial sanctions through resolution 2283 (2016) of **28 April**. In the same meeting, the Council separately adopted resolution 2284 (2016) that authorized UNOCI's final extension, until 30 June 2017.

Burundi

Meetings: 18 March, 1 April, 29 July.

Resolutions: 2279, 2303.

The political stalemate in Burundi, as well as the prevailing unrest, violence and detention of opposition party members, drew the attention of the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other senior United Nations officials, all of whom expressed their deep concern

during a meeting on **18 March**. The Council subsequently adopted resolution 2279 (2016) on **1 April**, requesting options for the deployment of United Nations Police to monitor the situation. Condemning all human rights violations, it urged the Government of Burundi to guarantee fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, and called upon all parties to reject violence and cooperate fully with the mediation led by the East African Community. It subsequently authorized the deployment of up to 228 police officers on **29 July**, adopting resolution 2303 (2016) by a vote of 11 in favour to none against, with 4 abstentions (Angola, China, Egypt, Venezuela). Those abstaining cited a lack of consultation with the Government and the absence of compromise on alternative proposals.

Central African Republic

Meetings: 27 January, 9 February, 15 April, 26 April, 15 June, 8 July, 26 July, 10 October, 16 November.

Resolutions: 2262, 2264, 2281, 2301.

Presidential Statement: S/PRST/2016/17.

The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping told the Council on **10 October** that international support for the new Government of the Central African Republic was the key to tackling the country's problems and dealing with the rival "spoiler" armed factions known as the anti-Balaka and ex-Séléka. Joining him in briefing the Council were the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission's Central African Republic configuration, who noted the lack of reconciliation programmes. The Council welcomed the signing of a national reconciliation plan and other critical strategies in a presidential statement issued on **16 November**. It emphasized that the way forward lay in a commitment by all parties to address the root causes of the conflict.

Acting to curb the activities of armed groups, the Council adopted resolution 2262 (2016) on **27 January**, renewing the arms embargo, asset freeze and travel ban imposed on the country for one year. On **9 February**, it raised the number of corrections offices deployed within the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) by unanimously adopting resolution 2264 (2016). During a meeting held on **26 April**, it also extended MINUSCA's mandate until 31 July to allow the adaptation of a future mandate to post-transition stabilization efforts. The Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2301 (2016), on **26 July**, maintained the Mission's force levels constant at 10,750 military personnel, 2,080 police and 108 corrections officers. MINUSCA's priority tasks under that text would entail supporting reconciliation and stabilization processes, extending State authority and preserving the Central African Republic's territorial integrity, while supporting security-sector reform, demobilization of armed combatants, strengthening the rule of law, managing natural resources and enforcing the arms embargo.

Libya

Meetings: 2 March, 15 March, 31 March, 26 May, 6 June, 13 June, 14 June, 22 July, 13 September, 6 October, 9 November, 6 December, 13 December.

Resolutions: 2273, 2278, 2291, 2292, 2298, 2312, 2323.

Chronic instability in Libya five years after the Qadhafi regime's downfall prompted no fewer than 13 Council meetings, during which participants underlined the urgent need for a national unity Government amid the growing threat posed by ISIL. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), told the Council on **2 March** that in the absence of effective State institutions, terrorist groups and criminal networks had been able to establish deep roots. It was essential that a Government of National Unity be allowed to take up its duties in Tripoli, he said, while emphasizing the imperative of unifying and reforming Libya's security forces.

On **15 March**, the Council extended UNSMIL's mandate until 15 June 2016. It subsequently renewed measures imposed by resolution 2146 (2014) on the prevention of illicit crude oil exports from Libya, by adopting resolution 2278 (2016) on **31 March**. During a meeting on **26 May**, Fatou Bensouda, Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, told the Council that justice and the rule of law remained critical for Libya's return to stability. Presenting her eleventh report, pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), she said investigations conducted by her Office had been going more slowly than desired due to a lack of resources and the adverse security situation in Libya. Concerning the case of Saif al-Islam Qadhafi, son of the former regime's leader, she called for his transfer to the International Criminal Court.

Returning to the Council on **6 June**, Special Representative Kobler said that the sense of hope and optimism that had followed the signing of Libya's Political Agreement was giving way to growing impatience and concern. He drew attention to the country's run-down health-care system, the staggering number of displaced persons and the plight of migrants, many of whom were drowning at sea.

On **13 June**, the Council again renewed UNSMIL's mandate until 15 December. On **14 June**, it authorized Member States — whether acting nationally or through regional organizations — to carry out high-seas inspections of vessels off Libya's coast believed to be in violation of the arms embargo imposed by successive resolutions since 2011. Going further on **22 July**, the Council authorized Member States to acquire, control, transport, transfer and destroy chemical weapons identified by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in Libya, to ensure that the country's stockpile was eliminated in the "soonest and safest" manner.

Briefing on **13 September**, the Special Representative said political divisions in Libya were deepening amid progress in the fight against terrorism. He appealed for strong action to convince stakeholders to build open and participatory institutions that would address the needs of citizens. Deploing the loss of life arising from migrant smuggling and human trafficking off Libya's coast, the Council extended, on **6 October**, its authorization for Member States to intercept vessels suspected of involvement in such activities. Libya's representative noted that his country was at the heart of the unprecedented waves of migration. Resolving the problem would require tackling its root causes in source countries, such as conflict and poverty, he said.

Ms. Bensouda briefed the Council again on **9 November**, saying that her Office intended to expand significantly its investigations in Libya during 2017, and to bring charges for recent alleged serious criminal activity falling under the International Criminal Court's jurisdiction. In his final 2016 briefing, the Special Representative said that serious challenges remained a year after the signing of the Political Agreement. If not addressed, they could result in chaos, he warned. Money was a major concern, he said, noting that Libya's financial reserves had shrunk dramatically. The country was running a budget deficit of about 70 per cent of gross domestic product and "billions of dollars [are] disappearing into shadowy accounts", he said. On **13 December**, the Council extended UNSMIL's mandate until 15 September 2017.

Non-Proliferation

Weapons of Mass Destruction

Meetings: 23 August, 23 September, 15 December.

Resolutions: 2310, 2325.

Stating that "the disarmament agenda has stalled in several areas", the Secretary-General expressed disappointment with the lack of progress on eliminating nuclear weapons on **23 August**, calling upon all States to focus on eradicating weapons of mass destruction. Speakers in that meeting underscored the evolving threat of such weapons falling into the hands of non-State actors and terrorist groups. Addressing the Council before the next review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, beginning in May 2017, the Secretary-General urged the Council to "refocus serious attention on nuclear disarmament" and to develop further initiatives to bring about a world free of weapons of mass destruction. Concerning biological weapons, he questioned the international community's ability to prevent or respond to a biological attack. He also suggested taking a closer look at the nexus between emerging technologies — such as information and communications technologies, artificial intelligence, 3-D printing and synthetic biology — and weapons of mass destruction.

Marking the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Security Council called on **23 September** called for that instrument's early entry into force and for all States to refrain from and maintain their moratoriums on nuclear-weapon tests or any other nuclear explosions. Adopting resolution 2310 (2016) by a vote of 14 in favour to none against, with 1 abstention (Egypt), the Council urged all States that had neither signed nor ratified the Treaty — particularly the eight remaining Annex 2 nuclear-weapon States — to do so without further delay. It also encouraged all signatory States to promote the instrument's universality, affirming that its early entry into force would help to enhance international peace and security.

During an open meeting on **15 December**, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2325 (2016), calling for intensified efforts towards an international framework to keep weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of terrorists and other non-State actors. It called upon all States to strengthen national anti-proliferation regimes in implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), which seeks to keep non-State actors from acquiring nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. "Preventing non-State actors from acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction is among the most important responsibilities of the international community," Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson emphasized at the outset. "In our rapidly evolving global security environment, gaps will continue to open."

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Meetings: 2 March, 24 March, 30 November.

Resolutions: 2270, 2276, 2321.

Meeting on **2 March**, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2270 (2016), condemning a nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 6 January in the strongest terms. Describing the test as a challenge to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and to peace and stability in the region and beyond, the Council imposed several fresh sanctions, including the inspection of cargo to and from that country and the prohibition of trade with that country in coal, iron, iron ore, gold and other materials. Moreover, it decided that Member States should expel Pyongyang's diplomats, governmental representatives or nationals acting in a governmental capacity who assisted in the evasion of sanctions or the violation of related resolutions.

Unanimously adopting resolution 2276 (2016) on **24 March**, the Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts assisting the Sanctions Committee on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea until 24 April 2017. It also set a 15 March 2017 deadline for the Panel to submit a final report to the Council containing its findings and recommendations.

Further strengthening its sanctions regime against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2321 (2016) on **30 November**. Condemning that country's nuclear test on 9 September, it decided, among other measures, that Member States would suspend scientific and technical cooperation with Pyongyang and limit the number of bank accounts held by its diplomats, diplomatic missions and consular posts. Also by the text, the Council extended a list of individuals subject to a travel ban and asset freeze, and added 11 items to a list of prohibited nuclear- and/or missile-usable items. Speaking after that action, the Secretary-General noted that resolution 2321 (2016) contained the toughest and most comprehensive sanctions regime ever imposed by the Council. However, such measures should be anchored in a comprehensive strategy for peace and security, he cautioned, emphasizing the importance of commitment to a peaceful diplomatic and political solution.

The Republic of Korea's representative urged Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear ambitions and return to the negotiating table. The representative of the United States said the measures just adopted would make it harder for Pyongyang to use its diplomats to advance its nuclear programme. China's representative stressed the need to seek a negotiated solution within the six-party framework, but noted that certain parties had stepped up their military presence on the Korean Peninsula, thereby intensifying tensions.

Iran

Meeting: 18 July.

Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, briefed the Council on **18 July** concerning implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), adopted a year earlier, which endorsed the Joint Comprehensive Action Plan on Iran's nuclear programme. He emphasized that all participants in the process must stay the course and work through current challenges in a spirit of cooperation and compromise. During the same meeting, Román Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain), Facilitator for Council-related tasks in resolution 2231 (2015), said information on Iranian ballistic missile launches was inconsistent with the text. Meanwhile, João Pedro Vale de Almeida, Head of the European Union delegation and Coordinator of the Joint Commission responsible for overseeing implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Action Plan, said the deal was on track and that it demonstrated that, given political will, perseverance and multilateral diplomacy, solutions could be found to the most difficult problems. Council members described the progress made in implementing the Action Plan as a significant step for peace and security.

Asia

Afghanistan

Meetings: 15 March, 21 June, 14 September, 19 December.

Resolution: 2274.

Presidential Statement: S/PRST/2016/14.

Press Statement: 19 April.

Unanimously adopting resolution 2274 (2016) on **15 March**, the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) until 17 March 2017. In doing so, it expressed concern about illicit opium production, internally displaced persons and the use of children in suicide attacks by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other violent extremist groups.

Providing an overview of the situation, Nicholas Haysom, the Secretary-General's Special Representative and Head of UNAMA, said the country was being tested in 2016 as severely as it had been in 2015, when violence had killed more than 11,000 people, including 3,000 children. "Survival does not mean inaction or treading water," he emphasized. "It means active engagement in confronting these challenges." The international community must support efforts by the Government of Afghanistan to bolster growth and end corruption, he added.

In a press statement on **19 April**, the Council condemned, in the strongest terms, a terrorist attack in Kabul on the same day that had claimed at least 28 lives and wounded more than 300. The Taliban had claimed responsibility for the attack on a National Directorate of Security office.

Delivering his final briefing to the Council as Special Representative on **21 June**, Mr. Haysom said Afghanistan could make significant strides towards peace and stability in 2016, despite persistent political, economic and security challenges. He added, however, that he remained concerned about the impact that the high level of violence was having on the civilian population.

Issuing a presidential statement on **14 September**, the Council reaffirmed its support ahead of a major donor conference to be held in Brussels on 5 October. It called on Member States to continue their assistance to Afghanistan, underscored the progress the country had made, and called on all political entities to work together for a peaceful and prosperous future. Tadamichi Yamamoto, the new Special Representative, said that success at the donor conference would give Afghanistan's National Unity Government the time and space to move towards stability and self-reliance. Speaking during the ensuing debate, delegates emphasized the need to reverse the deterioration in the security situation in the face of attacks and military gains by the Taliban.

Briefing the Council again on **19 December**, Mr. Yamamoto said that, despite great progress, a better future for Afghanistan would not be possible without an inclusive peace process involving Afghans from all strata of society, including women and young people. Calling upon the Taliban to commit to direct talks with the Government without preconditions, he said that a peace agreement with Hizb-I-Islami demonstrated that the Government was ready to negotiate on key issues.

Afghanistan's representative said it was essential to impose sanctions on select irreconcilable Taliban leaders.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Meeting: 9 December.

The Council decided to discuss the human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on **9 December** following a rare procedural vote of 9 in favour to 5 against (Angola, China, Egypt, Russian Federation, Venezuela), with 1 abstention (Senegal). Speaking in explanation of position, China's representative said the discussion of human rights contravened the goal of stabilizing the Korean Peninsula, describing the situation there as complex, sensitive and dire. However, Japan's representative said that in the absence of a tangibly improved human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and its destabilizing impact on the wider region, the reasons for holding the meeting persisted.

Briefing the Council, Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson emphasized both Pyongyang's obligations under international law and the international community's collective responsibility to live up to the "principle and norm of the responsibility to protect". Meanwhile, Andrew Gilmour, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, reported no improvement in the "truly appalling" human rights violations in that country since December 2015, adding that their nature and scale underscored the link between human rights on the one hand and peace and security on the other.

Americas

Colombia

Meetings: 25 January, 13 September, 21 September.

Resolutions: 2261, 2307.

The Council acted to support a peace agreement which, before its rejection in a national plebiscite, had been poised to end the half-century-long conflict between the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC-EP). It established an observer force on **25 January**, and approved the deployment of 450 observers on **21 September**, when the President of Colombia presented the peace agreement to the Security Council, with the Secretary-General in attendance.

Haiti

Meetings: 17 March, 11 October, 13 October.

Resolution: 2313.

Calling attention to the critical democratization crossroads during a **17 March** meeting, the Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) said the Mission must carefully watch the situation on the ground as it considered progressive disengagement. Challenges included a troubled electoral process, persistent security weaknesses and the continuing recovery from the 2010 earthquake. During the Council's **11 October** meeting, she reported that Hurricane Matthew had rendered the holding of presidential elections on 9 October impossible, and that the Provisional Electoral Council and the Haitian National Police needed vigorous support in that regard. She therefore recommended a six-month extension of the MINUSTAH mandate until 15 April 2017, without a reduction of troop levels and police strength. Unanimously adopting resolution 2313 (2016) on **13 October**, the Council decided to authorize the extension.

Europe

Ukraine

Meeting: 28 April.

In the Council's only 2016 meeting on Ukraine, senior officials of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) called upon all parties to the two-year-old conflict in the eastern part of that country immediately to lay down their weapons and make good on their commitments under the Minsk agreements, citing frequent ceasefire violations and pressing human rights concerns.

Cyprus

Meetings: 28 January, 26 July.

Resolutions: 2263, 2300.

The Council extended the mandate of the four-decade-old United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) twice, raising its force level to 888 personnel during a **28 January** meeting. On **26 July**, it renewed the mandate again, until 31 January 2017 and encouraged leaders of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot parties to grasp with determination current opportunities to negotiate a comprehensive and durable settlement of the conflict dividing their island nation.

Kosovo

Meetings: 29 February, 16 May, 25 August, 16 November.

Delivering quarterly briefings to the Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) reported a consistently stable security situation, even in the face of persistent tensions between ethnic

Serb and Albanian Kosovar communities, and between Belgrade and Pristina. Polarization of the political landscape had fed violent incidents and impeded progress, that official said on **29 February**.

During the **16 May** meeting, he said that while UNMIK no longer had an administrative function, it remained an important bridge between the international community and Kosovo's population, helping to promote dialogue between the communities, handling migrant flows, ensuring minority rights and discouraging young people from extremism. With the European Union perspective as the main driver of reform in the Balkan region, leadership from both sides was essential going forward, he emphasized on **25 August**. Noting a rise in tension following controversial legal enactments by the Kosovo authorities, he urged reconciliation at all levels during the **16 November** meeting.

Meanwhile, speakers addressing the Council following the briefings continued to press for implementation of agreements on practical issues reached in the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue, as well as progress on such issues as reform and the creation of situation conditions for the return of displaced persons.

Representatives of Serbia, the Russian Federation and other countries that rejected Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence continued to insist on the relevance of UNMIK's full mandate under resolution 1244 (1999), while others recognized its diminished role and called for fewer meetings on Kosovo.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Meetings: 5 May, 8 November.

Resolution: 2315.

In his biannual briefings, the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina praised the progress of the Federation's reform agenda and its bid for membership in the European Union, while warning against divisive actions, particularly on the part of some Republika Srpska leaders. Some of the progress towards European integration, foreseen during the **5 May** meeting, had actually taken place, but Republika Srpska authorities had violated the Dayton Accords by such actions as holding a referendum on celebrating "Republika Srpska Day", in contravention of a judgement by the Constitutional Court, he told the **8 November** meeting. "Can we accept that some of the country's leaders work for European Union integration and the internal disintegration of the country at the same time?" The meeting also saw the Council renew its authorization of the European Union-led multinational stabilization force (EUFOR ALTHEA) in the Federation for an additional year.

International Justice

International Criminal Tribunals

Meetings: 29 February, 8 June, 6 September, 8 December, 19 December.

Resolutions: 2269, 2306, 2329.

The Council turned its attention to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia on **8 June**, as Carmel Agius, its President, said that the court's work was on track for completion by the end of 2017. However, full cooperation with its decisions and orders would be critical to ensuring that grave crimes did not go unpunished. Judgements had been delivered in the appeal of Jovica Stanišić and Franko Simatović, and in the trials of both Radovan Karadžić and Vojislav Šešelj, he reported. Moreover, the Judges of the Appeals Chamber had delivered, on 14 December 2015, final judgement in the largest appeal case ever adjudicated by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda — *Nyiramasuhuko et al*, otherwise known as the “Butare” case. Returning to the Council on **8 December**, he expressed confidence that the former Yugoslavia Tribunal would “close its doors” at the end of 2017. It had only had one trial, one appeal and one contempt case remaining, he said, requesting that the Council authorize a final extension of the judges' mandates until the end of November 2017.

Adopting resolution 2269 (2016) by a vote of 11 in favour, with 4 abstentions, the Council decided on **29 February** to appoint Serge Brammertz as Prosecutor of the International Residual Mechanisms for Criminal Tribunals, to serve a term beginning on 1 March 2016 and ending on 30 June 2018. It also decided that the Prosecutor, judges and Registrar of the Residual Mechanism might be appointed or reappointed for two-year terms.

Unanimously adopting resolution 2306 (2016) on **6 September**, the Council amended the Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to enable the Secretary-General to appoint a former judge of that Tribunal or of its counterpart for Rwanda to serve on the Appeals Chamber on an ad hoc and temporary basis. Such an appointment could be made — at the request of the Tribunal President and after consultations with the Security Council President — if no permanent Tribunal judge was available for the Appeals Chamber.

Acting unanimously on **19 December**, the Council adopted resolution 2329 (2016), extending the terms of office of seven of the Tribunal's permanent judges until 30 November 2017 or the completion of the cases to which they were or would be assigned. In doing so, it reiterated its request that the Tribunal complete its work and facilitate its closure as expeditiously as possible. Also by that text, the Council reappointed Mr. Brammertz as Prosecutor effective from 1 January 2017 until 30 November 2017, subject to earlier termination by the Security Council upon completion of the Tribunal's work.

Subsidiary Bodies

Meetings: 4 May, 19 December.

On 4 May, the Council heard briefings on the work of its three terrorism-related subsidiary bodies: the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001), also known as the Counter-Terrorism Committee; the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) and Al-Qaida, also known as the Al-Qaida Committee; and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) concerning the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, also known as the 1540 Committee.

That meeting dovetailed with another held on **19 December**, featuring the Chairs of the Al-Qaida Committee, the 1540 Committee and the Committees established pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan. Also participating were the Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, and the Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. The meeting touched on the use of sanctions and the need to reform the Council's sanctions committees, with the Chair of the Al-Qaida Committee saying he had been struck by how little consideration the Council accorded to ensuring that its panels were effective.

Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts

Meetings: 9 February, 14 April, 4 May, 11 May, 8 June, 22 September, 13 October, 12 December.

Resolutions: 2309, 2322.

Presidential Statement: S/PRST/2016/6.

The Security Council's discussions on terrorism focused on the activities of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh), which Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, described on **9 February** as "one of the major challenges of our time to international peace and security". Presenting the Secretary-General's first report on the group, issued pursuant to resolution 2253 (2015), he said its operations had spread across West and North Africa, the Middle East and South and South-East Asia. While primary responsibility for countering the ISIL threat rested with Member States, the United Nations and other international organizations had a critical role to play in supporting their efforts, he emphasized.

Many delegates focused on ISIL during a **14 April** open debate on terrorism, two months before a General Assembly special session on that issue. Several dozen speakers discussed ways to cut off the group's financing, halt the cross-border flow of foreign terrorist fighters and prevent

terrorists from using the Internet and social media to whip up support and enlist fresh recruits. Participants included Syria's representative, who decried the politicization of terrorism by some foreign Governments. Israel's representative noted that the Council had not condemned recent attacks in his country.

The Chairs of three terrorism-related subsidiary bodies of the Council briefed members on **4 May** regarding the activities of their respective panels vis-à-vis ISIL, Al-Qaida, counter-terrorism and sanctions. In a subsequent day-long debate on **11 May**, the Council issued a presidential statement calling for the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee to submit, by 30 April 2017, a proposal for a “comprehensive international framework” to counter terrorist narratives used in recruiting and inciting violent acts. Returning to the Council on **8 June**, Mr. Feltman presented the Secretary-General's second strategic-level report on ISIL, emphasizing that the group had yet to be strategically or irreversibly weakened. Briefing again on **13 October**, he said ISIL could increasingly threaten international peace and security as military operations made progress against the group. While ISIL had suffered battlefield setbacks, its foreign fighters were returning home in growing numbers, it was also asserting itself in cyberspace, he noted.

The Council took action on two terrorism-related texts, with resolution 2309 (2016), adopted on **22 September**, calling on all States to work with each other and with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to continuously adapt measures to meet an “ever-evolving growing threat”. That action followed a briefing by ICAO Secretary-General Fang Liu, who emphasized the importance of reviewing, updating, adapting and instituting international security standards on the basis of current risks and in accordance with the Chicago Convention on aviation security. Resolution 2322 (2016), adopted on **12 December**, underlined the importance of strengthening international cooperation — by investigators, prosecutors and judges, among others — in order to prevent, investigate and prosecute terrorist acts. The text also expressed concern over the use of information and communications technologies by terrorists.

Cooperation with Regional Organizations

African Union

Meetings: 24 May, 17 November, 18 November.

Resolution: 2320.

Presidential Statements: S/PRST/2016/8.

Discussions on a stronger, more forward-looking peace and security partnership between the United Nations and the African Union were further encouraged in 2016 by decisions made within the regional organization. During a day-long open debate on **24 May**, the Security Council issued a presidential statement welcoming the adoption of the African Peace and Security Architecture Road

Map concurrently with the completion of several important United Nations reviews of peace operations. Following a **17 November** debate on modalities of stronger cooperation, the Council adopted resolution 2320 (2016) on **18 November**, expressing its readiness to consider a response to the African Union's proposal to finance 25 per cent of the cost of peace-support operations authorized by the Council by 2020. It emphasized that consultative analysis and joint planning with the United Nations was critical to developing common joint recommendations on the scope and resource implications of peace missions.

European Union

Meeting: 6 June.

During the Council's **6 June** meeting, the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy recounted the common efforts that the regional bloc had carried out with various United Nations agencies around the world in a variety of multilateral formats. Multilateralism would be among the core principles of the European Union's upcoming review of global strategy on foreign and security policy, she said.

Eurasian, Central Asian Organizations

Meeting: 28 October.

Ahead of briefings to the Council by the Secretaries-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon emphasized on **28 October** the commitment of the United Nations to strengthening its partnership with regional organizations in Eurasia and Central Asia on peace and security matters, even though their strategies might sometimes differ. The briefers highlighted the existing cooperation in combating terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime and other threats, including through the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

Organization of Islamic Cooperation

Meeting: 17 November.

Discussing a stronger strategic partnership with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on peace and security, particularly in relation to countering extremist ideology, were the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the OIC's Assistant Secretary-General and others attending the **17 November** meeting. They also stressed the importance of partnership in fighting terrorism, not only through security measures but also through development

initiatives, conflict-resolution measures and the dissemination of voices challenging extremist ideology, including prominent religious voices.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Meeting: 29 February.

During his **29 February** briefing to the Council, the OSCE Chair-in-Office again focused on the situation in Ukraine, voicing deep concern about ongoing ceasefire violations and restrictions on access for the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission. Full implementation of the Minsk Agreements was the only way towards a sustainable political solution in the country, he emphasized.

Thematic Issues

Peacekeeping Operations

Meetings: 10 March, 11 March, 7 November, 10 November.

Resolutions: 2272.

Sexual abuse by peacekeepers, asymmetrical threats to peace operations and police efforts to protect civilians were among the topics the Security Council addressed in discussions on strengthening the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping. Following a **10 March** meeting in which the Secretary-General laid out a number of steps to address "the shameful issue" of sexual abuse and exploitation by "Blue Helmets", the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2272 (2016) on **11 March**, asking the Secretary-General to replace all military or police units from any contributing country that had failed to hold perpetrators accountable.

Ahead of a day-long open debate on asymmetrical threats posed by terrorist groups targeting peacekeepers, the Council heard briefings on **7 November** by the Deputy Secretary-General, the head of the Organization of La Francophonie, the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, and others. Participants considered a range of responses, from proper mandates and equipment to building State security capacity. Following a **10 November** briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, they discussed the huge civilian-protection challenges confronting United Nations police during the Council's annual dialogue on the role of police in peacekeeping.

Post-conflict Peacebuilding

Meetings: 23 February, 27 April, 22 June, 28 July.

Resolution: 2282.

Presidential Statement: S/PRST/2016/12.

The 2015 review of the Peacebuilding Commission, charged with supporting efforts by post-conflict countries to keep from relapsing into turmoil, was the focus of three meetings. On **23 February**, the Chair of the advisory group responsible for the review said it had stressed the need to put conflict prevention at the core of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. Other speakers called for remediation of the fragmentation and lack of coherence among the Organization's key organs in that regard. Unanimously adopting resolution 2282 (2016) on **27 April**, the Council urged closer strategic peacebuilding partnerships among all United Nations units, regional organizations, the World Bank and other stakeholders, and emphasized the need to prioritize a comprehensive approach to transitional justice and security reform. On **22 June**, officials outlined the Peacebuilding Commission's efforts to enhance coherence and accountability in its work.

Meeting on **28 July**, the Council issued a presidential statement underscoring the importance of long-term institution-building for peacebuilding in Africa during an open debate on that subject. Speakers emphasized the importance of addressing the root causes of conflict, the need for predictable and sustainable financing, and the need for closer cooperation with the African Union and other regional as well as subregional organizations. It also emphasized the need to respect the national development strategies of African countries.

Protection of Civilians

Meetings: 19 January, 3 May, 10 June, 28 September.

Resolutions: 2286.

During a **29 January** open debate on civilians in zones of armed conflict, briefers emphasized that their situation remained "grim and bleak" as they were increasingly targeted. Many of the more than 70 speakers also stressed that, following a year of reflection on the Organization's peace operations, 2016 must be a time to turn rhetoric into concrete action to mitigate civilian suffering. During an open debate on **10 June**, the Secretary-General and other speakers described the civilian-protection role of peacekeeping operations as an overarching responsibility involving all critical functions of the United Nations, while also reaffirming the primary responsibility of Governments in that regard.

Strongly condemning attacks against medical personnel and facilities in conflict situations, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2286 (2016) on **3 May**, demanding an end to impunity for those responsible, and that all warring parties respect international law. Before that action, the Secretary-General and the heads of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins Sans Frontières addressed the Council, with the ICRC President reporting 2,400 targeted attacks against medical personnel and facilities in the last three years. The President of Médecins Sans Frontières described regular attacks in Syria, Afghanistan, Central African Republic, South

Sudan, Ukraine and Yemen. On **28 September**, the Council considered hospital bombings in Aleppo, following the Secretary-General's issuance of a number of recommendations intended to protect medical workers. "International law is clear," he said at the meeting's outset. "Medical workers, facilities and transports must be protected" and the sick and wounded must also be spared, he stressed.

Women, Peace and Security

Meetings: 28 March, 2 June, 15 June, 25 October.

Presidential Statement: S/PRST/2016/9.

As the Council held a day-long open debate on implementation of the "Women, peace and security agenda" in Africa on **28 March**, speakers emphasized women's critical role in creating more peaceful and equitable societies. Briefers, including the Executive Director of UN-Women — formally known as the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women — described empowerment initiatives, pointing out that women already carried out crucial, if not visible, tasks. The Council held another open debate on that subject on **2 June**, focusing on human trafficking in situations of conflict-related sexual violence.

The Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict presented a report covering UN-Women's annual activities from 1 January to 31 December 2015. That document was the eighth dedicated account of conflict-related sexual violence, she said, adding that, cumulatively, the reports built a historical record for a crime that had long been omitted from official accounts of war and peace. As outlined in harrowing detail, "we are confronting new and previously unforeseen threats", she said. "Just as we make inroads with national security forces, the problem of sexual violence by non-State actors acquires ever more difficult and disturbing dimensions," she added, describing the situation as "a revival of the slave trade in our own life and times".

While welcoming the adoption of regional frameworks to accelerate implementation of the seminal resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, a presidential statement on **15 June** emphasized, however, that inconsistent levels of political will, resourcing, accountability and gender expertise had often hindered the full and meaningful inclusion of women in conflict-prevention efforts. On **25 October**, during the Council's annual open debate on the resolution's implementation, many of the more than 75 participants called for more action by the United Nations system to recruit women at all levels of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Opening the meeting, the Executive Director of UN-Women emphasized women's importance in countering extremism. The Secretary-General expressed shame over the persistence of atrocities perpetrated against women and girls during conflict, as well as anger over women's continuing political exclusion.

Children and Armed Conflict

Meeting: 2 August.

Participants in the Security Council's day-long open debate on the impact of armed conflict on children noted that young people in hotspots around the globe were still being tortured, maimed and killed, recruited by armed groups and exposed to numerous threats as a result of massive displacement 20 years after a ground-breaking report had brought the issue into focus at the United Nations. The Secretary-General and his Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict opened the **2 August** meeting.

Maintenance of International Peace and Security

Meetings: 15 February, 22 November.

During an open debate on the United Nations Charter, held on **15 February**, nearly 70 speakers differed over the correct balance between State sovereignty and protection of human rights, with some emphasizing the primacy of non-interference in domestic affairs and others stressing the need for action when States were unable or unwilling to protect their citizens, or were themselves the perpetrators of violations. Bringing the promise of the Charter to the most vulnerable must remain the main goal, the Secretary-General said in opening the meeting.

The Council held an open debate on "water, peace and security" on **22 November**. The Secretary-General said management of the world's precious water resources should be promoted as a means to foster cooperation rather than conflict. Briefing members were the Chair of the Global High-level Panel on Water and Peace, and the Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Many of the more than 60 participants described successful models of "hydro-diplomacy", such as the joint mechanism for the management of the Senegal River Basin highlighted by Senegal's Foreign Minister and Council President for that month.

Other Matters

Recommendation for Appointment of Secretary-General

Resolutions: 2311, 2324.

Meeting in private on **6 October**, the Security Council recommended through its resolution 2311 (2016) that the General Assembly appoint António Guterres Secretary-General of the United Nations for a term of office to begin on 1 January 2017 and end on 31 December 2021.

The Council paid tribute to outgoing Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon during a meeting on **14 December**, expressing its deep appreciation in a resolution that acknowledged his contribution to international peace, security and development; his exceptional efforts to resolve international

problems in the economic, social, environmental and cultural fields; and his endeavours to meet humanitarian needs and to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Working methods

Meetings: 29 January, 11 February, 26 February, 31 May, 19 July, 31 August.

During an **11 February** general debate on the working methods of the Council's subsidiary bodies, speakers called for greater transparency in the procedures and practices of committees established to monitor United Nations sanctions and for improved communications with affected countries. With sanctions-affected countries invited for the first time to address the Council, Iran's representative pointed out that the unintended effects of sanctions were often neglected or overlooked.

The Council's own working methods were the subject of an open debate on **19 July**, when speakers emphasized the need to make it easier for Member States to access and understand its deliberations. Some speakers pressed for more restricted use of the veto by permanent members, while others underlined the need for greater consultation with troop- and police-contributing countries.

In addition, the Council held a number of monthly "wrap-up" meetings in which delegates notably underscored the need to promote transparency.

Security Council Missions

Meetings: 29 January, 16 March, 25 May, 23 November.

The Council undertook several missions in 2016 to take stock of developments on the ground in Africa. The first, from 21 to 23 January, took members to Burundi and Ethiopia. It was followed by a mission to Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Senegal between 3 and 9 March, and another to Somalia, Kenya and Egypt from 17 to 22 May. The Council also visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola from 11 to 14 November. Each mission reported its findings during in meetings at Headquarters following each visit.

