



## Security Council

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### Letter dated 27 December 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Malta in April 2024 (see annex). The document was prepared by the Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations following consultations with other members of the Council. However, it should not be considered a consensus document.

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

*(Signed)* Vanessa **Frazier**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations



## **Annex to the letter dated 27 December 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

### **Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Malta (April 2024)**

#### **I. Introduction**

Malta held the presidency of the Security Council in April 2024. During this month, the Council held 30 formal meetings, 29 of which were public and 1 was private. Two were signature events: the briefing on children and armed conflict on the theme “Addressing the consequences of the denial of humanitarian access for children”, held on 3 April; and a debate on the theme “The role of young persons in addressing security challenges in the Mediterranean” under the item “Maintenance of international peace and security”, held on 17 April. The latter was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Affairs and Trade of Malta, Ian Borg.

Of the 29 public meetings, 22 were briefings, 2 were open debates, 1 was a debate and 3 were meetings held to adopt resolutions. There was also a meeting on the admission of new members. Furthermore, the Council held nine consultations of the whole, and one issue was discussed in consultations under “Any other business”.

The Security Council adopted one resolution renewing the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and issued five press statements on: the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; humanitarian workers and the threat of famine in Gaza; the border dispute between Guyana and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of); Colombia; and the Sudan. Another two draft resolutions were considered but not adopted owing to the negative vote of a permanent member.

In accordance with the practice of the United Nations, Malta began its presidency with the presentation of the provisional programme of work of the Security Council for the month, which was adopted during the Council’s consultations on 1 April. On the same day, the President of the Council, Vanessa Frazier, gave a briefing to the press and Member States on the work of the Council.

The Peacebuilding Commission provided written advice for the meeting on the Great Lakes that was held on 24 April.

On 30 April, the President of the Security Council held a wrap-up session (Toledo format) for all Member States on the activities of the Council in April. The Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations, Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, and the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, Barbara Woodward, were also invited to share their views and insights.

#### **II. Africa**

##### **A. Libya**

On 16 April, the Security Council held a briefing and consultations on the situation in Libya. The Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Abdoulaye Bathily. The Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) concerning Libya, Yamazaki

Kazuyuki, gave a briefing to the Council. Libya also participated in the meeting under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General outlined that his efforts in advancing a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process under the auspices of the United Nations continued to face obstacles. His efforts to convene the main Libyan actors to overcome the remaining politically contested issues continued to face resistance. He expressed concern that the political stalemate continued to have a negative impact on the security situation in Libya, and similarly had repercussions on the socioeconomic front.

Council members highlighted the role of the United Nations in advancing a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process and expressed concern about the security situation in the country.

## **B. Western Sahara**

On 16 April, the Security Council convened the first of its biannual consultations on the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, Staffan de Mistura, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINURSO, Alexander Ivanko, gave briefings on the latest developments on the ground.

## **C. Sudan**

The Security Council convened a briefing on the Sudan on 19 April on the occasion of the conflict's one-year anniversary. Security Council members heard briefings from the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo; the Director of the Operations and Advocacy Division, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Edem Wosornu; and the High Representative for Silencing the Guns in Africa and Chairperson of the African Union High-level Panel on the Sudan, Mohamed Ibn Chambas. The Sudan participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

The briefers urged parties to the conflict to end hostilities and to allow the full, rapid and unimpeded access of humanitarian aid across all areas in the Sudan. They outlined the series of regional and international mediation efforts, including recent initiatives by the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, Ramtane Lamamra, and shuttle diplomacy conducted by the African Union High-level Panel on the Sudan. The humanitarian conference on the Sudan, held in Paris on 15 April, was recognized as an important event to mobilize humanitarian aid for the Sudan.

Security Council members expressed deep concern about the continued hostilities, and called for an immediate and sustainable ceasefire. Several of them referred to resolution [2724 \(2024\)](#), called for respect of international humanitarian law and human rights law and unimpeded humanitarian access, and encouraged mediation efforts to include a wide range of stakeholders. Council members also acknowledged the need to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Sudan, and highlighted the consequences of external interference.

The Security Council convened for consultations on 29 April. Council members heard briefings from the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, Martha Pobee; and the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Joyce Msuya. The discussion revolved around escalating tensions in El Fasher, the humanitarian situation, and the illegal flow of weapons into Sudan.

#### **D. South Sudan**

On 29 April, the Security Council convened to adopt a resolution to renew the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan until 30 April 2025. Resolution 2729 (2024) was adopted, with 13 votes in favour and two abstentions (China and the Russian Federation). Explanations of vote were delivered by Mozambique on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council plus one, China and the Russian Federation. South Sudan participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

#### **E. Great Lakes**

On 24 April, the Security Council convened a briefing on the Great Lakes, following the issuance of the Secretary-General's latest report on the implementation of the peace, security, and cooperation framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region.

Briefings to the Council were delivered by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Huang Xia; the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Joyce Msuya Mpanju; and the Coordinator of Women Engaged for Peace in Africa, Pétronille Vaweke.

The Special Envoy underlined that repeated clashes between the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including the rhetoric of confrontation between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda based on reciprocal accusations, continued to rise unabated. He advocated for de-escalation and the easing of tensions to avoid a regional conflagration, and welcomed the political and diplomatic efforts of the President of Angola, João Lourenço.

The Assistant Secretary-General described the Democratic Republic of the Congo as the most food-insecure country in the world. She elaborated on the differences among the three most affected provinces, namely, South Kivu, North Kivu and Ituri, in terms of the presence of internally displaced persons, describing the role played to date by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. She also stated that the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo was one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a woman or a girl today, citing a spike in reported cases of gender-based violence, which had increased from 40,000 cases in 2021, to 78,000 in 2022 and to 123,000 in 2023.

The Coordinator of Women Engaged for Peace in Africa described her experience over the past 25 years as a peacebuilder, describing atrocities that she had witnessed, including the targeting of women's bodies, subjecting them to mutilation, rape and other forms of violence, often perpetrated in the presence of their families. She assessed how nearly 30 years of violence, atrocities and mass displacement, orchestrated by both national and foreign armed groups, combined with the lack of protection for civilian populations, had plunged the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo into a state of chronic insecurity. In that connection, she spoke about the role of women as actors rather than victims.

Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

### III. Middle East

#### A. The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 1 April, the Security Council held consultations on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, at the request of France.

On 5 April, the Security Council convened a briefing. The meeting, which was requested by Algeria, Guyana, Slovenia and Switzerland, was focused on the risk of famine and attacks against humanitarian workers. Briefings were given by the Director of the Coordination Division at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ramesh Rajasingham, and the President and Chief Executive Officer of Save the Children, Janti Soeripto. Council members expressed dismay at a deadly strike on a World Central Kitchen humanitarian convoy in Gaza on 1 April. They stressed that humanitarian personnel and health facilities must be protected, and called for the lifting of all barriers preventing life-saving aid from entering Gaza. Council members also called for the full implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions.

On 17 April, the Security Council held a briefing, requested by Jordan, to discuss the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in the region and in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Philippe Lazzarini, underlined the consequences of attacks on UNRWA and humanitarian staff in Gaza. He also outlined the damaging impact of attempts to politicize the work of the Agency. Council members noted the indispensable, stabilizing role of UNRWA in the region and in responding to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Council members also commended the Agency and the Secretary-General for ensuring swift and detailed investigations into allegations against some UNRWA staff in the wake of the 7 October attacks and the principled nature of the Agency itself. Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

On 18 April and 24 April, the Security Council convened for the quarterly open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The meeting was chaired by the Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade of Malta, Ian Borg. The Secretary-General gave a briefing to the Council and emphasized that an end to hostilities in Gaza would defuse tensions across the region, highlighting the need to advance a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Council members demanded the implementation of resolution [2728 \(2024\)](#) through a ceasefire, the immediate and unconditional release of hostages, and the expansion of the flow of humanitarian aid into Gaza. Council members further called for de-escalation in the wider region and for concerted efforts to realize the two-State solution, with many underlining their support for Palestine to be admitted as a member of the United Nations. Sixty-eight delegations participated.

On 24 April, the Security Council held a briefing to hear updates from the Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza, Sigrid Kaag. She updated the Council on the progress made in establishing an aid facilitation and monitoring mechanism as mandated by the Council in its resolution [2720 \(2023\)](#) to help to scale the flow of aid into Gaza. She detailed recent commitments by the Government of Israel to increase aid volumes through the Erez crossing and Ashdod port. Council members stressed the need for a major and rapid scale-up of humanitarian aid into and throughout Gaza. They also emphasized the need to fully respect the humanitarian notification and deconfliction mechanism and condemned all arbitrary and bureaucratic impediments stalling aid delivery into and within Gaza. Israel participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

**B. Admission of new members: State of Palestine**

On 8 April, the Security Council held consultations on the admission of new members to agree on the way forward with regard to the request by the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of Palestine, in his letter dated 2 April 2024, contained in document [S/2024/286](#), referring to the application of the State of Palestine for membership in the United Nations, contained in document [S/2011/592](#), dated 23 September 2011, and requesting that renewed consideration be given to that application by the Security Council during the month of April 2024. The Council agreed to refer the matter to the Committee on the Admission of New Members.

Later that day, the Council convened for a briefing on the same issue and referred the matter to the standing Committee on the Admission of New Members.

On 18 April, the Security Council convened to consider a draft resolution proposed by Algeria recommending to the General Assembly that the State of Palestine be admitted to membership in the United Nations. The result of the vote was 12 in favour, 1 against and 2 abstentions. The draft resolution was not adopted due to the negative vote of a permanent member, the United States of America. The President of the Security Council sent a report to the General Assembly on the use of the veto on 23 April.

**C. Middle East**

On 2 April, the Security Council held an emergency briefing, called for by the Russian Federation, to discuss attacks on Iranian diplomatic premises in Damascus on 1 April, under the item “Threats to international peace and security”. The Council heard a briefing from the Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, Mohamed Khaled Khiari, who echoed the Secretary-General’s condemnation of the attack and reiterated the inviolability of diplomatic and consular premises. He called for the Council to actively engage with all concerned parties to prevent further escalation that would undermine regional peace and security. Council members spoke to the protected status of diplomatic staff and their premises. They expressed concern at the impact the attack might have on current tensions in the region and called for maximum restraint by the parties. Iran (Islamic Republic of) and the Syrian Arab Republic participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

On Sunday, 14 April, the Security Council convened an emergency briefing on the situation in the Middle East, at the request of Israel, in response to the drone and missile attack on Israel by the Islamic Republic of Iran on Saturday, 13 April. The Secretary-General gave a briefing to the Council and called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and de-escalation in the face of threats to regional and global peace and security, highlighting that the world could not afford more war.

Council members expressed grave alarm at the unprecedented escalations in the region, stressing the need for States to fully comply with their obligations under international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Several Council members also referred to the attack on Iranian diplomatic premises in Damascus on 1 April, and stressed the fundamental need to respect the principle of inviolability of diplomatic premises. They further highlighted that the ongoing war in Gaza continued to spill over across the region, and called for a ceasefire in accordance with Security Council resolution [2728 \(2024\)](#). Representatives of Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic also participated in the meeting pursuant to rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

#### **D. Yemen**

On 15 April, the Security Council held a briefing and consultations on the Middle East (Yemen). The Council heard briefings from the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Hans Grundberg; the Director of the Operations and Advocacy Division, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Edem Wosornu; and the Founder and Chairwoman of Itar Foundation for Social Development, Wameedh Shakir.

The Special Envoy expressed concern for growing divergence between the parties and the escalation of hostilities in the Red Sea. He called for de-escalation and for parties to focus on an intra-Yemeni political process that would result in a sustainable peace. The Director of the Operations and Advocacy Division highlighted the alarming resurgence of cholera and acute food and nutrition insecurity across Yemen, aggravated by access impediments, calling for greater support from the international community. The Founder and Chairwoman of Itar Foundation for Social Development discussed the gendered impact of the humanitarian and economic crises, as well as the impact of the climate crisis on women and girls. She called for the full, equal and meaningful participation of civil society and women in the peace and political process. Council members expressed concern for the dire humanitarian situation and called for de-escalation in Yemen and the Red Sea. Yemen participated in the meeting under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

#### **E. Syrian Arab Republic**

On 25 April the Security Council met to discuss the political and humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. Council members heard briefings from the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Geir O. Pedersen; the Director of the Coordination Division at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ramesh Rajasingham; and the Global Protection Adviser at Malteser International, Helen Hayford. The Special Envoy noted his concern that the conflict in Gaza could further destabilize the region, including the Syrian Arab Republic, and called for restraint and de-escalation by all parties. The briefers from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Malteser International noted the major and protracted humanitarian crises across the country and the need for greater and sustained humanitarian resources and access via all modalities.

Council members detailed their concern for the population and the lack of progress on the political track, calling for the resumption of the ninth Constitutional Committee. Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

### **IV. Asia**

#### **Myanmar**

On 4 April, the Security Council convened a briefing on the situation in Myanmar, pursuant to a request by the United Kingdom. The Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, Mohamed Khaled Khiari, and the Director of the Financing and Partnerships Division, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Lisa Doughten, focused on the escalating violence in the country, in particular in Rakhine State, and raised concerns about its impact on the humanitarian situation and the Rohingya crisis. Council members reiterated their support for the five-point consensus of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and stressed the need to address the humanitarian crisis. A number of Council members raised concerns over ongoing violence against civilians, the

scription law and forced recruitment of Rohingya. Others called for increased Council attention to Myanmar. Other members emphasized the sovereignty of Myanmar and the role of ASEAN, while cautioning against hasty solutions or external interventions.

## **V. Europe**

### **A. Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine**

On 11 April, the Security Council convened a briefing on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine, pursuant to a request by France and Ecuador. Briefings were given by the Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas, Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, Miroslav Jenča; and the Director of the Operations and Advocacy Division, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Edem Wosornu.

The Assistant Secretary-General said that Russian attacks on Ukrainian cities and towns had resulted in an increasing civilian death toll. In March alone, at least 126 civilians had been killed and 478 injured. He condemned the attacks on civilians and on civilian infrastructure, highlighting that they were prohibited under international law. He also expressed concern about the humanitarian consequences, also considering energy and power disruptions. The Director of the Operations and Advocacy Division stated that the scale of humanitarian needs in Ukraine remained vast. She noted the disproportionate impact that the conflict was having on women and children, adding that access to medical care and education had been compromised. She also stated that attacks directed against the wounded and those helping them were prohibited by international humanitarian law.

In the ensuing debate, several Council members reflected on the high toll the conflict had taken on the Ukrainian civilian population and on essential infrastructure in Ukraine. They expressed their concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation.

### **B. Threats to international peace and security**

On 12 April, the Security Council met under the item “Threats to international peace and security” to discuss the increasing arms supplies by Western countries to Ukraine. The meeting was requested by the Russian Federation. Briefings were given by the Chief of the Conventional Arms Branch, Office for Disarmament Affairs, Ivor Fung, and a political commentator, Karen Kwiatkowski.

The Chief of the Conventional Arms Branch referred to reports of States transferring or planning to transfer weapons such as uncrewed aerial vehicles, ballistic missiles and ammunition to the Russian armed forces and noted that any weapon transfer must take place in the applicable international framework. He also mentioned that parties should refrain from any attacks against critical and civilian infrastructure. Finally, he affirmed that uncrewed aerial vehicles and ballistic missiles must not be used in a manner that violated international humanitarian law.

In the ensuing debate, several Council members reiterated their support to Ukraine, as well as to its right to self-defence, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. They also urged the Russian Federation to adhere to international law and the Charter, and to withdraw its armed forces from the territory of Ukraine. Some Council members strongly condemned the transfer by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea of ammunitions to the Russian Federation for their use in Ukraine, and others also expressed concern about the increasing supply of weapons to Ukraine.



On 15 April, the Council met, at the request of the United States and Slovenia, to discuss the situation around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant following the recent attacks at the site, under the item “Threats to international peace and security”. The Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Rafael Mariano Grossi, said that the drone strikes against the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant were grave violations of his five concrete principles and gravely endangered nuclear safety. He urged all Council members to renew support for the International Atomic Energy Agency. The strikes represented the first direct attacks against the plant since November 2022 and all members recognized the grave escalation. Latvia (on behalf of the Baltic States), Poland and Ukraine participated in the meeting under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council and the European Union participated under rule 39.

On 26 April, at the request of the Russian Federation, the Security Council held a meeting under the item “Threats to international peace and security” to discuss the attacks against the Nord Stream gas pipelines in September 2022. Briefings were given by the Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas, Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, Miroslav Jenča; the Chief of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, Office of Counter-Terrorism, Oguljeren Niyazberdiyeva; and a political commentator, Larry Johnson.

The Assistant Secretary-General expressed concern about the attacks. He referred to the letters circulated to the Security Council on the matter, in particular regarding the conclusion of national investigations by Denmark and Sweden, as well as the call by the Russian Federation for an international investigation, and reiterated that the United Nations did not have any further information than what was publicly available. The Chief of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General recalled that the Office of Counter-Terrorism did not have a mandate to investigate the actions of Member States and, in absence of additional information, was not able to confirm or verify any report. The political commentator said that the Security Council should play a role in investigations on the incident. Council members generally condemned the attacks but held diverging positions on the need for international investigations.

**C. Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

On 19 April, the Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade of Malta, Ian Borg, gave a briefing to the Security Council in his capacity as the current Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on the Organization’s activities. The Chairperson-in-Office noted that the multilateral frameworks designed to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war was being rigorously tested in such unprecedented times. He affirmed that OSCE must remain anchored in the principles and commitments that all 57 participating States had agreed to 50 years ago. He referred to the Organization’s commitment to Ukraine, Serbia, Kosovo, the Republic of Moldova, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transdniestria.

**D. United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo**

On 22 April, the Security Council held a briefing on the situation in Kosovo and the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, Caroline Ziadeh, gave a briefing on developments in Kosovo between September 2023 and March 2024. She outlined the events that took place during the six months and detailed the activities and work of the Mission. Council members focused on the role and structure of UNMIK. The President of Serbia, Alexander Vučić, participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council and Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu participated under rule 39.

## **E. Bosnia and Herzegovina**

On 30 April, the Security Council held a briefing on Bosnia and Herzegovina, pursuant to a request by the Russian Federation. Briefings were given by the Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas, Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations Miroslav Jenča; Željka Cvijanović (in her personal capacity); and the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Christian Schmidt. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia also participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council. The Assistant Secretary-General spoke about the latest developments in the country over the past year. He noted positively the opening of European Union accession negotiations and expressed concern about repeated divisive rhetoric in the country. Ms. Cvijanović criticized the role of the High Representative, and the work being carried out on the “International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica” resolution in the General Assembly. The High Representative stressed that the security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was stable, although fragile. He also expressed concern about continued inflammatory secessionist rhetoric that created tensions. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

## **VI. Latin America**

### **A. Colombia**

On 9 April, the Security Council held a briefing and consultations on Colombia. Briefings were given by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Colombia and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, Carlos Ruiz Massieu, and the Executive Director of Colombia Diversa, Marcela Sánchez Buitrago.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General focused on the progress made in and the challenges facing the Colombia peace process. He welcomed that the Special Jurisdiction for Peace is approaching the issuance of its first restorative sentences, called upon the Government to finalize the legal instruments to allow the swift reintegration of former members of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP), and emphasized the importance of State security policies aimed at providing protection and welfare to conflict-affected communities. The Executive Director of Colombia Diversa focused on the impact that the conflict in Colombia had had on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) persons and the opportunities offered by the women and peace and security agenda to address those impacts. She offered the Council recommendations on how to support efforts to include LGBTQ persons in the peacebuilding process in Colombia. Council members welcomed progress made in the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, recalling the visit of the Security Council to Colombia in February. They expressed concern about the security situation, and encouraged ongoing peace talks with armed groups and continued investment, including in rural reform and reintegration. Colombia participated under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

### **B. Haiti**

On 22 April, the Security Council held a briefing on the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of BINUH, María Isabel Salvador, gave a briefing on the Secretary-General’s latest report, highlighting the deteriorating security, human rights

and humanitarian situations. She highlighted developments on the Transitional Presidential Council and urged funding for the country's humanitarian response plan. The Council also heard briefings by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Ghada Waly, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Inter-Agency Standing Committee Principal Advocate for Haiti, Catherine Russell.

Council members acknowledged political developments in Haiti. They expressed concern at the deteriorating security situation and escalating violence against women and girls, discussing options to support Haitian institutions, including through the deployment of the Multinational Security Support Mission to Haiti, pursuant to resolution 2699 (2023), and the implementation of the sanctions regime, including the arms embargo. Council members also discussed the dire humanitarian situation, including acute food insecurity, and called for greater international support for the humanitarian response. The Dominican Republic and Haiti participated in the meeting under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

### **C. Border dispute between Guyana and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)**

On 9 April, the Security Council held a private meeting under the item "Threats to international peace and security" concerning the border dispute between Guyana and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The meeting was requested by Guyana by means of a letter dated 5 April. The Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia, and Americas, Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, Miroslav Jenča, gave a briefing. The representatives of Haiti, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) participated in the meeting under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council. The Council heard statements from the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and from the representative of Haiti, on behalf of the Caribbean Community.

In accordance with rule 51 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, the record of the private meeting was made in a single copy only, in each of the official languages of the Council.

## **VII. Thematic issues**

### **A. Children and armed conflict: addressing the consequences of the denial of humanitarian access for children**

On 3 April, the Security Council held a briefing on children and armed conflict, which was focused on addressing the consequences of the denial of humanitarian access for children, as one of the six grave violations on the children and armed conflict agenda. The Council heard briefings by the Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict, Virginia Gamba; the Deputy Executive Director for Humanitarian Action and Supply Operations at UNICEF, Ted Chaiban; and a civil society briefer from Cameroon, Atim Niger-Thomas.

The Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict stated that the denial of humanitarian access was one of the highest verified violations, and that it was on target to rise further, as would be reflected in the 2024 annual report. She highlighted that restrictive laws, administrative decrees and regulations, increasing control over humanitarian work and workers, restrictions on female humanitarian staff, and high levels of arbitrary impediments and outright denial were worsening the situation. She added that, in response to calls by Security Council members in 2022, her Office was in the process of developing a guidance note on the monitoring and reporting of the denial of humanitarian access. She called upon the Security Council to use all the tools at its disposal to strengthen parties' compliance with their

obligations under applicable humanitarian law. Those included the conclusions of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and the inclusion of the listing criterion of denial of humanitarian access in sanctions regimes.

The Deputy Executive Director for Humanitarian Action and Supply Operations at UNICEF stated that the denial of humanitarian access was a particularly pervasive, multifaceted and complex grave violation that had devastating consequences for children. He emphasized that parties had a legal and moral responsibility to ensure children's access to humanitarian services. He called upon the Security Council to strengthen humanitarian carveouts, to press parties to conflict to prevent and end the denial of humanitarian access to children, and to support the efforts of the United Nations to implement the monitoring and advocacy on the ground in relation to children and armed conflict.

The civil society briefer called for a more harmonized approach towards administrative authorizations for humanitarian field operations. She further recommended that the Security Council: (a) strengthen local data collection; (b) increase engagement through more invitations to civil society organization briefers and by incorporating data from the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict into broader Security Council decisions, reports and resolutions; and (c) help to build the capacity of and increase funding for local humanitarians.

Council members expressed their concern about the high number of instances of the denial of humanitarian access and the grave impacts for children's health and well-being, as well as increased risk of other grave violations. Members underscored that the Security Council must use the tools at its disposal to end and prevent the six grave violations against children.

## **B. Maintenance of international peace and security: the role of young persons in addressing security challenges in the Mediterranean**

On 17 April, the Security Council held a debate under the item "Maintenance of international peace and security" on the theme "The role of young persons in addressing security challenges in the Mediterranean". The Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade of Malta, Ian Borg, chaired the meeting.

The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, emphasized the importance of increasing youth representation in decision-making processes, citing Security Council resolution [2250 \(2015\)](#). She called for youth empowerment through education and economic opportunities, and stressed the urgency of climate action.

The Secretary-General of the Union for the Mediterranean, Nasser Kamel, identified climate change as a threat to the Mediterranean region's future, linking it to poverty, human rights violations and migration. He also emphasized the Strategy on Youth 2030 of the Union for the Mediterranean, which was focused on environment, education and job creation.

The Regional Lead of the Middle East and North Africa Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security, Sarra Messaoudi, underscored the urgent need for a future free from injustice and violence for the millions of young persons in the Mediterranean. She underlined the toll of conflict in Gaza and advocated for enhanced youth participation in peace processes. She urged the Security Council to provide normative guidance on the participation of young persons in peace and security and prioritize prevention and peacebuilding.

During the subsequent debate, Council members and 11 Mediterranean countries, along with the European Union, noted the dual role of young persons as disproportionate victims and agents of change in addressing security challenges. They

discussed progress since the adoption of Security Council resolution 2250 (2015), expressing concern about its slow implementation and the acute threats faced by young people in conflict situations. Delegates highlighted systemic barriers, such as inequalities and lack of employment opportunities, that hindered young persons' full potential. They shared examples of concrete steps taken to improve the youth and peace and security agenda.

**C. Women and peace and security: preventing conflict-related sexual violence through demilitarization and gender-responsive arms control**

On 23 April, the Deputy Prime Minister of Malta, Christopher Fearn, presided over the annual open debate on sexual violence in conflict on the theme "Preventing conflict-related sexual violence through demilitarization and gender-responsive arms control". Briefers included the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten; a Darfur genocide survivor and Founder and President of Darfur Women Action Group, Niemat Ahmadi; and a United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) Goodwill Ambassador, Danai Gurira.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General pointed out that the Secretary-General's report provided a global snapshot of patterns of conflict-related sexual violence across 21 situations of concern, and highlighted the unprecedented level of lethal violence used to silence survivors in the wake of sexual assault. The number of United Nations-verified cases had jumped 50 per cent to 3,888 in 2023, and women and girls accounted for 95 per cent. Between 70 and 90 per cent of sexual violence incidents involved the use of weapons. She called for measures imposed by United Nations sanctions regimes to stop the flow of weapons into violators' hands. She also echoed the calls of the Secretary-General for a humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza to end the suffering of Palestinian civilians, and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages.

The Founder and President of Darfur Women Action Group described rape and other forms of gender-based violence as a defining feature of the current war in the Sudan. She called for the Council to hold perpetrators accountable and to prioritize the creation of a new, well-equipped and stronger United Nations presence on the ground. She called for the enforcement of the arms embargo in the Darfur region and its expansion to the rest of the Sudan and all warring parties. She also urged support for the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of Sudanese women in de-escalation and peacebuilding efforts.

The UN-Women Goodwill Ambassador drew attention to the increasing number of perpetrators of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, the Sudan and other conflict zones, and the role of weapons in those contexts. She called for reduced military spending and an end to impunity.

Member States condemned all sexual violence against women and girls and stressed that the best way to address conflict-related sexual violence was to stop and prevent war. They also focused on the need to stop the flow of weapons to perpetrators and called for the adequate deployment of gender and women's protection advisers. They highlighted the need to address the root causes of gender inequality and violence against women, called for demilitarization and gender-responsive disarmament, and spoke about the need to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Calls were made to harmonize national action plans on small arms and light weapons and women and peace and security, with many urging States to ensure that they met their obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty to assess the risks of arms being used to commit acts of sexual and gender-based violence. Some Member States called for greater coherence between the parties listed in the annual

reports of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence and sanctions designations.

#### **D. Non-proliferation**

On 24 April, the Security Council held a meeting under the item “Non-proliferation” to consider the draft resolution on weapons of mass destruction in outer space proposed by Japan and the United States. The Russian Federation tabled an amendment, sponsored by China, which contained an additional operative paragraph. The proposal received seven votes in favour (Algeria, China, Ecuador, Guyana, Mozambique, Russian Federation and Sierra Leone), seven votes against (France, Japan, Malta, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, United Kingdom and United States) and one abstention (Switzerland), and was not adopted, having failed to receive a sufficient number of votes. The draft resolution as a whole received 13 votes in favour (Algeria, Ecuador, France, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States), 1 vote against (Russian Federation) and 1 abstention (China). The resolution was not adopted due to the veto of a permanent member, the Russian Federation.

### **VIII. Subsidiary bodies**

#### **A. Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict**

On 12 April, the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict convened a formal meeting for the introduction of the reports of the Secretary-General on the situation of children and armed conflict in the Central African Republic and Colombia. The members further discussed the quarterly global horizontal note.

#### **B. Committee on the Admission of New Members**

On 8 April, the Committee on the Admission of New Members convened its 112th meeting to reconsider the application of the State of Palestine, pursuant to the referral made by the Security Council earlier that day pertaining to the request for renewed consideration of the application of the Observer State of Palestine during the month of April 2024. Members of the Committee considered whether Palestine met the specific criteria for admission to membership in the United Nations.

On 11 April, the Committee on the Admission of New Members convened its 113th meeting to continue their consideration of the above-mentioned application. The Committee was unable to make a unanimous recommendation to the Security Council and concluded its consideration.

The report of the Committee was finalized and circulated on 16 April.

#### **C. Military Staff Committee**

On 16 April, the Military Staff Committee convened to discuss the state of United Nations cooperation with host nations and incidents related to the status-of-forces agreement. The Military Adviser for the Department of Peace Operations, General Diop, gave a briefing to Committee members on the current situation and measures being implemented by the Department to address violations.

On 26 April, the Military Staff Committee held a meeting with a working group from the Office of Military Affairs to discuss the withdrawal of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from that country. The Committee discussed the current disengagement phase from South Kivu.

**D. Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism**

On 29 April, the Counter-Terrorism Committee held an open meeting at which it convened a broad range of experts to discuss experiences, identify the latest trends and share best practices on building community resilience to prevent and counter radicalization to terrorism.

**E. Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa**

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa convened on 30 April to discuss the implementation of resolution 2719 (2023), including financing for African Union-led peace support operations. Briefings were given by the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, Martha Pobee; the Assistant Secretary-General for the Department of Field Support, Lisa Bittenheim; the Executive Director of Security Council Report, Karin Landgren; the Director of the New York University Center of International Cooperation, Eugen Chen; and the Director of Amani Africa, Solomon Derso. Several Member States also participated in the briefing.

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