

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
9 November 2021
English
Original: French

Letter dated 8 November 2021 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Please find attached herewith the assessment of the work carried out by the Security Council in July 2021 under the presidency of France (see annex). The assessment was prepared under my responsibility, following consultations with the other members of the Council.

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

(Signed) Nicolas **de Rivi re**



Annex to the letter dated 8 November 2021 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English]

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the Presidency of France (July 2021)

Introduction

In July 2021, the Security Council conducted all of its activities in-person. The Council held 17 formal meetings (2 private meetings and 15 public meetings) and 10 consultations. The Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, Jean-Yves Le Drian, presided over a meeting on Libya, on 15 July, and a meeting on the preservation of the humanitarian space, on 16 July. The Council adopted four resolutions (on the extension of the humanitarian cross-border mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA), the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and the renewal of the Central African Republic sanctions regime) and two statements by the President (on Libya and Varosha (Cyprus)), and agreed on four statements to the press (two on Haiti, one on Colombia and one on Iraq).

Africa

Peace and security in Africa

On 2 July, the Council held a briefing on the situation in Ethiopia. The Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ramesh Rajasingham, underlined the alarming rise in food insecurity and hunger caused by the conflict. He called upon all parties to the conflict to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, including by ensuring unimpeded and safe humanitarian access. The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo called for a permanent ceasefire to be honoured by all parties. She also called for a political dialogue to restore national unity and welcomed the indication by the Government of Ethiopia of its intent to conduct such a dialogue. She stressed the need to respond to humanitarian needs and to ensure accountability for crimes and atrocities committed during the conflict and called for the full implementation of the withdrawal of Eritrean forces.

The Council members welcomed the unilateral ceasefire announced by the Government of Ethiopia and called upon all parties to implement it. Several Council members called for ensuring humanitarian access and fighting impunity. Some members stressed the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia and called for the withdrawal of non-Ethiopian forces. The Permanent Representative of Ethiopia also took part in the meeting.

On 8 July, the Council held a regular briefing under the agenda item entitled "Peace and security in Africa". The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Inger Andersen, briefed the Council on the discussions related to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. They took stock of the state of discussions between Ethiopia, Egypt and the Sudan, presented the efforts of the African Union to facilitate those discussions and expressed their readiness to support them.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, Sameh Hassan Shokry Selim, the Minister for Foreign affairs of the Sudan, Mariam Alsadig Al Sedeeg Al Mahadi, the Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy of Ethiopia, Seleshi Bekele Awulachew, and the Chargé d'affaires of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Paul Losoko Efambe Empole, also took part in the meeting.

The members of the Council encouraged all parties to resume negotiations and seek solutions under the auspices of the African Union.

United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 7 July, the Council held a regular briefing on the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo and on the activities of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of MONUSCO, Bintou Keita, encouraged further efforts by the Government of that country to end an upsurge of violence in the eastern provinces of Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu. She mentioned the new programme of action adopted by the Government on 26 April, the preparation for a transition plan for MONUSCO and progress in the enhancement of its Intervention Brigade. She highlighted an encouraging pattern of reduced political tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours.

The Deputy Head of the Laboratory of Medical Biology at Ngaliema Clinic, in Kinshasa, Ritha Kibambe, drew attention to the particular challenges faced by women in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and urged the international community to facilitate capacity-building in health systems and to bolster education systems with digital technology.

Member States condemned the intensifying unrest in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They welcomed the formation of the new Government and the significant increase in the number of women in the Cabinet. Several Member States underlined the importance of addressing the root causes of insecurity in the eastern part of the country, called for further efforts against the illegal exploitation of natural resources and with regard to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and commended the Government for its prompt humanitarian response to increased needs. Several Member States also welcomed the renewal of the sanctions regime for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel

The Council held a regular briefing on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and Head of UNOWAS, Annadif Mahamat Saleh, briefed the Council on his visits to several countries of West Africa and the Sahel. He highlighted the challenges of the region, including insecurity and conflicts between farmers and herders. He also described actions by UNOWAS to support developments efforts in the region and the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and young people.

The Council also heard a briefing by the President of the Réseau ivoirien pour la défense des droits de l'enfant et de la femme, Chantal Ayemou. She drew attention to the progress achieved in West Africa in terms of gender equality and conveyed recommendations to address the remaining challenges in that field.

Members of the Council welcomed the recent elections in West Africa and the Sahel. They underlined the importance of continuing the fight against terrorism and

stressed that development and education were key objectives for the region. They also raised the issues of maritime security and the fight against COVID-19. Several Member States underlined the importance to promote the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and young people in political processes and to deal with the adverse effects of climate change.

Separately, the members of the Council agreed on the principle of a visit of the Council to the Sahel in the third quarter if the sanitary conditions allowed.

Libya

On 15 July, the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France chaired a ministerial briefing on Libya. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, Ján Kubiš, briefed the Council. The Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Ahmed Aboul Gheit, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Heiko Maas, participated in the meeting (under rules 39 and 37, respectively), as did the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kenya, Raychelle Omamo, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, Othman Jerandi, and the Foreign Secretary of India, Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla. The Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity, Abdulhamid Al Dabiba, represented Libya at the meeting.

All participants took stock of the holding of the Second Berlin Conference on Libya, in June 2021. The Special Envoy warned the Council of the risk of reversing the positive momentum seen in the previous few months. He noted that the situation in Libya was getting more difficult, with status quo forces using diverse tactics to obstruct the holding of elections.

All Council members echoed the call of the Special Envoy for holding parliamentary and presidential elections on 24 December 2021, as agreed in the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum road map, and to fully implement the October 2020 ceasefire agreement, including through the withdrawal of foreign forces and mercenaries without delay, as endorsed by the Council in resolution [2570 \(2021\)](#).

Those messages were reflected in the statement by the President adopted by the Council on 15 July ([S/PRST/2021/12](#)).

African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

On 27 July, the Council held a regular briefing on the drawdown and closure of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), as requested in resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#). The Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, Atul Khare, said that the Secretariat had met the deadline of 30 June 2021 to withdraw all uniformed and civilian personnel formerly deployed. Personnel involved in the liquidation of the mission and those who had constituted a uniformed guard unit would remain in the El Fasher base. The Under-Secretary-General underlined the need for the Government of the Sudan to ensure that facilities and equipment handed over by UNAMID were applied to national imperatives for civilian use.

Council members acknowledged the contribution of UNAMID to peace and stability in Darfur, encouraged continued cooperation between the Government and the United Nations throughout the liquidation phase and called for the implementation of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, with the support of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan.

Central African Republic (sanctions regime)

On 29 July, the Council adopted resolution [2588 \(2021\)](#), by which it renewed the sanctions regime for the Central African Republic for one year. In the resolution, the Council expressed concern that some signatories of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic continued to disregard their commitments, and it urged all signatories to implement the Agreement and all stakeholders in the Central African Republic to engage in dialogue to make further progress toward peace, security, justice, reconciliation, inclusivity and development. The Council took note of the request to lift the arms embargo expressed by the Central African Republic authorities and supported by countries in the region. It renewed the embargo but reiterated its readiness to review it in the light of progress achieved on the key benchmarks. It also extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic and renewed the measures and provisions on asset freeze and travel ban for designated individuals and entities.

Middle East

The situation in the Middle East: Syrian Arab Republic

Humanitarian issues

On 6 July, the Council held consultations on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator called for a renewal of the humanitarian cross-border mechanism for at least 12 months. He reiterated the call of the Secretary-General to use all possible modalities to deliver humanitarian assistance to all people in need. The members of the Council emphasized the need to maintain unimpeded humanitarian access across the country.

On 9 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2585 \(2021\)](#), by which it extended the humanitarian cross-border mechanism in the Syrian Arab Republic. The resolution also contained a number of recommendations with regard to the humanitarian situation in the country, including a decision to extend the decisions in paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution [2165 \(2014\)](#), for a period of six months, that is, until 10 January 2022, only for the border crossing of Bab al-Hawa, with an extension of an additional six months, that is, until 10 July 2022, subject to the issuance of the substantive report of Secretary-General, with a particular focus on transparency in operations, and progress on cross-line access in meeting humanitarian needs.

Chemical weapons

On 12 July, the Council held consultations on the issue of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Council members heard briefings by the Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Thomas Markram, who informed the Council of the work of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The members of the Council strongly condemned the use of chemical weapons under any pretext, anywhere and by anyone.

Political issues

On 19 July, the Council held consultations on the political situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and heard a briefing by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Geir Pedersen. The Special Envoy stressed the need for the full implementation of resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#), including a nationwide ceasefire, confidence-building measures, counter-terrorism efforts and the release of detainees.

He informed the Council of his consultations with the Syrian parties to hold a sixth session of the Constitutional Committee. He also mentioned his discussions with international actors to advocate for a new international diplomacy with regard to the Syrian Arab Republic and for a step-for-step approach.

All Council members welcomed the renewal of the humanitarian cross-border mechanism with the adoption of resolution [2585 \(2021\)](#). They reiterated their support for a political solution in line with resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#) and stressed the need to maintain calm on the ground.

The situation in the Middle East: Yemen

On 14 July, the Council held consultations on Yemen. The Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator reiterated the continued challenges in relation to the protection of civilians, humanitarian access, the lack of funding for humanitarian aid and the lack of progress regarding the *Safer* tanker.

The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs commended the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, and expressed her regrets that the stakeholders had not endorsed the four-point plan, despite the efforts of Oman and the members of the Council.

The Council unanimously adopted resolution [2586 \(2021\)](#), by which it extended the mandate of UNMHA for another year, until 15 July 2022. Some additions were made to the resolution, including a new paragraph on the importance of a well-functioning Redeployment Coordination Committee and a call upon the parties to meet the access needs for the benefit of the Yemeni population.

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#)

On 22 July, the Council held consultations on resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#). In her briefing to the Council members, the Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Joanna Wronecka, stressed that Lebanon was on the verge of a human-made humanitarian disaster. The World Food Programme had reported that nearly one quarter of Lebanese people were now food-insecure, and the United Nations Children's Fund had sounded the alarm over child nutrition and access to health and education. The inability of the political leadership to find common ground for agreeing on a new government in the national public interest was a main concern. The Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, briefed the Council on the situation along the Blue Line in a context of increased tensions over the previous months. The Head of Mission and Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), Stefano Del Col, reported to the Council the actions taken by UNIFIL in that volatile context. All Council members expressed concern about the political deadlock as consultations to designate a new prime minister had once again stalled.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 28 July, the Council held its quarterly open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Lynn Hastings, briefed the Council. She urged the international community to prioritize the reconstruction of Gaza while not losing sight of the broader goal of ending the Israeli occupation and realizing a two-State solution. The Executive Director of the Israeli civil society organization Ir Amim, Yudith Oppenheimer, also briefed the Council. She described the work of Ir Amim for ensuring an equitable, shared and sustainable city of Jerusalem. All Council members reaffirmed the need to preserve the ceasefire in Gaza.

and to allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance. They voiced support for a two-State solution and called upon the parties to avoid any unilateral measures. Most Council members advocated for redoubled diplomacy in support of the renewal of negotiations between the parties. The Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine and the Permanent Representative of Israel participated in the meeting. Non-Council members submitted their interventions in written form.

Cyprus

On 21 July, the Council held consultations on the situation in Cyprus. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cyprus and Head of Mission, United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, Elisabeth Spehar, explained that the efforts of the Secretary-General to facilitate the resumption of the peace talks in Cyprus had not yet succeeded, and she insisted on the need to find ways to rebuild confidence. She also briefed the Council on the announcement by Turkish and Turkish Cypriot leaders in Cyprus on 20 July of the further reopening of a part of the fenced-off area of Varosha. The members of the Council expressed support for the efforts of the Secretary-General to facilitate the resumption of the five-plus-one talks, and strong concern at the announcement regarding Varosha.

In a statement by the President adopted on 23 July ([S/PRST/2021/13](#)), the Council condemned the announcement of 20 July regarding Varosha and expressed its deep regret regarding such unilateral actions that ran contrary to its previous resolutions and statements.

On 29 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2587 \(2021\)](#), by which it extended the mandate of UNFICYP for another six months, until 31 January 2022.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 23 July, the Council considered a draft resolution proposed by China and the Russian Federation on the appointment of the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina. The resolution received 2 votes in favour, with 13 abstentions, and was therefore not adopted.

Asia

United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

On 26 July, the Council held its biannual consultations in the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, Natalia Gherman. She briefed the Council on the activities of the Centre, including its role in promoting dialogue between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. She also focused on water management, women's participation in public life and the fight against terrorism. She highlighted the inclusion of Afghanistan in all activities of the Centre and her concern about the situation in that country. All Council members shared that concern. Most Council members highlighted the importance of water management and the fight against terrorism for peace and stability in the region.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Colombia

On 13 July, the Council held a briefing and heard a presentation by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Colombia and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, Carlos Gabriel Ruiz Massieu Aguirre, on recent developments in Colombia. The Special Representative welcomed in particular the significant progress made with regard to the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition. He also outlined the efforts made and the challenges related to the protection and security of former combatants, conflict-affected communities and social leaders, the sustainability of the reintegration process, the integrated presence of the State in conflict-affected area and the consolidation of dialogue between the parties. The Founder and Director of the Latin American foundation Viva la Vida, Melissa Herrera, briefed the Council and underlined the role that young people and women played in enhancing peace in Colombia.

The members of the Council reiterated their full and unanimous support for the peace process in Colombia and the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia. The Vice-President and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Marta Lucía Ramírez, reaffirmed the commitment of her Government to peace in her country and outlined the steps taken by the Colombian authorities in various areas. A statement to the press was issued on 16 July.

Haiti

A statement to the press was adopted on 1 July.

On 8 July, the Council held a private meeting following the assassination of the President, Jovenel Moïse, and heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, Helen Ruth Meagher La Lime.

The members of the Council condemned in the strongest terms the assassination, unanimously expressed their condolences and called for the perpetrators to be held accountable in a timely manner. They reiterated the essential need to respect the rule of law and to ensure the security of all people in Haiti. The Permanent Representative of Haiti made a statement. A statement to the press was adopted on 8 July.

Thematic and other issues

Protection of civilians in armed conflict: preserving humanitarian space

On 16 July, the Council held a briefing at the ministerial level on the preservation of humanitarian space. The Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, highlighted the need to foster greater respect for international humanitarian law. She announced that the Secretary-General had asked his incoming Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator to appoint a special adviser on the preservation of humanitarian space and access and to strengthen humanitarian negotiations in that context. The Director General of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Robert Mardini, stressed the need to renew consensus around the key tenets of international humanitarian law and ensure that they were respected and implemented. The Delegate Director for Advocacy at Action against Hunger, Lucile Grosjean, further elaborated on the need to preserve humanitarian space and ensure full respect for international humanitarian law. Several members of the Council condemned attacks against humanitarian personnel and called for full respect for international humanitarian law. Some

members stressed the primary responsibility of host States in the humanitarian response.

Maintenance of international peace and security: implementation of resolutions [2532 \(2020\)](#) and [2565 \(2021\)](#)

On 26 July, the Council held consultations on the implementation of resolutions [2532 \(2020\)](#) and [2565 \(2021\)](#) on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in situations of armed conflict. The Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator highlighted the need for increased funding and access to vaccines, tests, protection equipment and treatments, as well as improved communication on the vaccination. The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, presented the United Nations efforts to implement the call of the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire and stressed the coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations to strengthen the coordination of the response to the pandemic. The Council members underlined the need to ensure equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccines, to accelerate the implementation of resolutions [2532 \(2020\)](#) and [2565 \(2021\)](#) and to operationalize the COVAX Humanitarian Buffer.
