

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 10 December 2021 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith an assessment of the work of the Security Council for the month of February 2021 during the presidency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (see annex).

The assessment was prepared by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations. While other members of the Security Council have been consulted, the assessment should not be considered as representing the views of the Council.

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

(Signed) Barbara **Woodward**



Annex to the letter dated 10 December 2021 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (February 2021)

Introduction

In February 2021, under the Presidency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Security Council held 28 meetings, including 17 open meetings by videoconference and 11 closed meetings by videoconference. The Council adopted four resolutions and two presidential statements and issued three press statements.

Thematic and other issues

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

On 17 February, the Security Council held an open meeting by videoconference on the implementation of resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) in which it called for ceasefires in situations of armed conflict in order to facilitate the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) response. The meeting was chaired by the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom, Dominic Raab. The Secretary-General, the Chief Executive Officer of the Gavi Alliance, Dr. Seth Berkley, the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Henrietta Fore, and the Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Jagan Chapagain, gave briefings. The Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Foreign Ministers of China, Estonia, India, Ireland, Mexico, Norway, Tunisia and the United States of America, the Deputy Foreign Minister of Viet Nam and the Minister Delegate for Foreign Trade and Economic Attractiveness of France also participated.

The Secretary-General introduced the meeting by reiterating his calls for solidarity and a global ceasefire in support of the COVID-19 response, and further called for the preparation of a new global vaccination plan overseen by a Group of 20 (G20) emergency task force. Dr. Berkley affirmed COVID-19 vaccination as the biggest test of the multilateral system in a generation and called for investment in global health security. Ms. Fore called on Security Council members to ensure that national vaccination plans reached everyone, to enable humanitarian pauses, and to support restarting wider immunization campaigns. Mr. Chapagain discussed the need to build trust within communities and internationally, including by delivering on promises for equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, to combat misinformation and overcome vaccine hesitancy. He recognized the contribution of 14 million front-line health and humanitarian workers and volunteers, calling for their protection as a priority.

Security Council members called for equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines and set out their efforts to tackle the pandemic.

On 26 February, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [2565 \(2021\)](#), in which it called for strengthened international cooperation to facilitate equitable and affordable access to COVID-19 vaccines. It reiterated its demand for a cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda and demanded a durable, extensive and sustained humanitarian pause to facilitate the equitable, safe and

unhindered delivery and distribution of COVID-19 vaccinations in areas of armed conflict. The Council also reaffirmed that this cessation of hostilities and humanitarian pause did not apply to military operations against terrorist groups which have been designated by the Council. It expressed its intention to review situations brought to its attention by the Secretary-General where hostilities and armed group activities were impeding COVID-19 vaccination and to consider what further measures might be necessary to ensure that such impediments were removed and hostilities paused to enable vaccination.

Maintenance of international peace and security: climate and security

On 23 February, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Boris Johnson, chaired a virtual open debate on the linkages between climate change and security, at which briefings were given by the Secretary-General, António Guterres and Nisreen Elsaïm, a youth representative. Sir David Attenborough provided a pre-recorded video before the debate was called to order, urging leaders to prevent a global catastrophe.

The Secretary-General said that climate disruption was a crisis amplifier and multiplier. Climate change was drying up rivers, reducing harvests, destroying critical infrastructure and displacing communities. Priority actions should include: greater implementation of the Paris Agreement and ensuring a successful twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in Glasgow, United Kingdom; protecting the most vulnerable countries through adaptation and resilience; embracing a concept of security that puts people at its centre; and reinforcing international partnerships. Ms. Elsaïm said that, without urgent action, climate-related security risks would make more countries vulnerable to conflicts. She said that, in 2007, the year the United Kingdom convened the first debate the then Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, had described the conflict in Darfur as the first modern climate conflict. Today, Darfur remained in a state of continuous insecurity. Youth inclusion was key to overcoming these challenges.

Some Security Council members emphasized that, although not a root cause of conflict, climate change could be a conflict multiplier and highlighted the impacts of water scarcity, desertification and declining agriculture in perpetuating conflict dynamics in regions, especially in Africa. Other members highlighted that addressing climate change required a global approach in which the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was the main forum.

Three representatives of global groupings also spoke: Malawi, on behalf of the Least Developed Countries Group, Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Small Island Developing States and Germany on behalf of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

On 10 February, the Security Council held an open meeting by videoconference on counter-terrorism. The Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, Vladimir Voronkov, briefed Council members on the twelfth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) ([S/2021/98](#)). The Under-Secretary-General highlighted the continuing threat posed by Da'esh in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, Da'esh regional affiliates, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, and attacks inspired by Da'esh in Europe. The Under-Secretary-General also briefed Security Council members on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on terrorist trends and on the support of the Office of Counter-Terrorism to States. Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, Michèle Coninsx, added that the Executive Directorate played

a unique role in assessing States' implementation of Security Council resolutions related to counter-terrorism and continued to identify areas for technical assistance, as well as report on terrorist trends.

Security Council members stressed the need to combat Da'esh in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as to tackle emerging threats around the world and in cyberspace. Council members also discussed specific regional threats; ways to address the challenge of foreign terrorist fighters in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic; countering the financing of terrorism; preventing terrorism by addressing its root causes; and the importance of human rights, gender-sensitive approaches, and the role of civil society in effective counter-terrorism.

Africa

West Africa

On 3 February, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement on peace consolidation in West Africa ([S/PRST/2021/3](#)). In the statement, the Council expressed full support for the Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, and for the ongoing activities undertaken by the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS). The Council called for continued national, regional and international engagement in cooperation with the countries of the region in an effort to prevent and address the peace and security challenges that they face.

Sudan and South Sudan

On 11 February, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [2562 \(2021\)](#) extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan until 12 March 2022. The Council requested the Secretary-General, in close consultation with the Government of Sudan, signatories of the Juba Peace Agreement, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and the Panel of Experts, to conduct a review of the situation in Darfur, including: threats to stability, implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement and the National Plan for Civilian Protection, measures to tackle the proliferation of weapons and compliance with the measures on Darfur recalled in paragraph 1 of the resolution. The Council further requested the Secretary-General, in close coordination with the Panel of Experts and in consultation with the Government of Sudan, to provide a report by 31 July containing recommendations for clear and well-identified key benchmarks that could serve in guiding the Council to review the measures on Darfur. In this regard, the Council expressed its intention to establish such benchmarks no later than 15 September, with readiness to consider adjusting measures to respond to the situation in Darfur.

Somalia

On 9 February, the Security Council held a closed videoconference meeting under "Any other business" on the situation in Somalia. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), James Swan, gave a briefing. Members agreed on press elements, in which they called on the leaders of Somalia to resume dialogue and reach consensus on the arrangements for the conduct of inclusive elections.

On 22 February, the Security Council held its quarterly briefing and consultations on Somalia in videoconference format. The Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African

Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Francisco Caetano José Madeira, and the Managing Director for Africa at the European External Action Service of the European Union, Rita Laranjinha. Briefers highlighted growing political tensions due to disagreements over the model for conducting elections. They also highlighted continued insecurity due to Al-Shabaab terrorist attacks and inter-clan violence and documented a deteriorating humanitarian situation due to floods, drought, desert locust infestation and COVID-19. Members welcomed the talks in Dhusamareb on the electoral model but regretted that they had broken down without agreement and called on the leaders of Somalia to resume dialogue.

On 25 February, the Security Council held an open meeting by videoconference on the work of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution [751 \(1992\)](#) concerning Somalia. The Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, Geraldine Byrne Nason, briefed the Council in her capacity as Chair of the Committee.

Also on 25 February, the Security Council adopted resolution [2563 \(2021\)](#) in which it extended its authorization for AMISOM by two weeks, to enable further discussion on the resolution.

Central African Republic

On 24 February, the Security Council held a briefing and closed consultations on the Central African Republic. Briefings were given by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix; the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Smaïl Chergui; the Managing Director for Africa of the European External Action Service of the European Union, Ms. Laranjinha; and a civil society representative, Kessy Ekomo-Soignet. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), Mankeur Ndiaye, briefed the Council in closed consultations.

The Under-Secretary-General said that the security and humanitarian situation was deteriorating rapidly and presented the Secretary-General's recommendation for reinforcing MINUSCA. Mr. Chergui called on the Security Council to condemn acts of violence by armed groups. Ms. Laranjinha expressed the readiness of the European Union to support the Central African Republic towards stronger democratic governance and institutions. Ms. Ekomo-Soignet reported that recent violence had compromised access to education and had increased sexual and gender-based violence, and called for the inclusion of youth and women to ensure a lasting peace. Council members condemned the recent violence in the Central African Republic by all armed actors and criticized those undermining the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic.

Mali

On 12 February, the Security Council issued a press statement condemning in the strongest terms the attack perpetrated on 10 February 2021 against the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission on Mali (MINUSMA) near Douentza, which resulted in one peacekeeper from Togo killed and 27 peacekeepers injured. Council members underlined that attacks targeting peacekeepers may constitute war crimes under international law and stressed that those responsible should be held accountable. They reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 22 February, the Security Council issued a press statement condemning in the strongest terms the attack perpetrated against two vehicles of the World Food

Programme (WFP) in Kibumba, Democratic Republic of Congo, which resulted in the deaths of the Ambassador of Italy to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a Carabinieri policeman of the Italian Embassy and a staff member of WFP. The Council also underlined the need to bring the perpetrators of these acts to justice.

Any other business

On 3 February, the Security Council discussed the situation in Tigray, Ethiopia, under “Any other business” in videoconference consultations. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, gave a briefing.

Middle East

Syrian Arab Republic

On 3 February, the Security Council held a videoconference briefing and consultations on the Syrian Arab Republic (chemical weapons). The Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, gave a briefing to the Council on the latest monthly report of the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and on the implementation of resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#).

The Under-Secretary-General informed the Security Council of the ongoing work of the OPCW Technical Secretariat, including efforts of the Declaration Assessment Team to assist the Syrian Arab Republic with clarifying all outstanding issues in their initial declaration to OPCW. She highlighted the urgent need to identify and hold accountable all those who had used chemical weapons in violation of international law. In addition to Council members, the Permanent Representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey delivered statements to the Council.

On 9 February, the Security Council held closed videoconference consultations on the Syrian Arab Republic (political). The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Geir O. Pedersen, gave a briefing to the Council.

On 25 February, the Security Council held a videoconference briefing on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Syria Response Director for Save the Children, Sonia Khush, gave a briefing to the Council.

The Under-Secretary-General gave a briefing to the Security Council on the economic crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic and the rise in food insecurity, on the need for humanitarian access and on protection of civilians, including attacks on civilians, civilian objects and humanitarian workers. He also provided a briefing on the United Nations strategic framework for the Syrian Arab Republic and its “Parameters and Principles” document at the request of the Russian Federation. Ms. Khush highlighted the severe impact of the 10-year conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic on children.

Security Council members expressed concern about the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, exacerbated by the economic situation and the COVID-19 pandemic. They emphasized the importance of delivering humanitarian assistance and ensuring access to basic services for those in need.

Libya

On 9 February, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement on the situation in Libya ([S/PRST/2021/4](#)). In the statement, the Council welcomed the agreement reached by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum on a new unified interim

executive authority and called on the interim executive authority to agree swiftly on the formation of a new, inclusive government and to make the necessary preparations ahead of national presidential and parliamentary elections planned for 24 December 2021. The Council called for full compliance with the arms embargo by all member States and welcomed steps towards United Nations support for the Libyan-led Ceasefire Monitoring Mechanism with the deployment of a United Nations advance team to Libya.

Iraq

On 16 February, the Security Council held a videoconference briefing and consultations to discuss the situation in Iraq. The Council was given a briefing by Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert. The Special Representative called for action to address the interlinked crises facing Iraq including on COVID-19 and the economy. She confirmed that the registration of candidates and voters was under way but that the Iraqi Parliament needed to finalize the outstanding Federal Supreme Court Law without delay. Many Council members emphasized the importance of delivering free and fair elections, implementing economic reform and combating terrorism. Council members condemned the 15 February rocket attack on Erbil. The Permanent Representative of Iraq said that a United Nations role in elections would enhance trust in the process.

Yemen

On 18 February, the Security Council held a briefing and closed consultations on Yemen, at which briefings were given by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Martin Griffiths; the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, the Head of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) and Chair of the Redeployment Coordination Committee, Lieutenant General Abhijit Guha, and the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [2140 \(2014\)](#), Inga Rhonda King.

The Special Envoy said that the situation had taken a sharp escalatory turn with Ansar Allah's recent offensive on Marib Governorate and repeated calls that the attack on Marib must stop, emphasizing that the only way out of this conflict was through a genuinely inclusive, Yemeni-led political process under United Nations auspices supported by the international community. The Under-Secretary-General outlined a five-point action plan to avoid famine in Yemen, describing measures related to protection of civilians, humanitarian access, funding for the aid operation, support for the economy and progress towards peace. The Committee Chair highlighted recent developments in the Committee, including that members had met and heard presentations by the Panel of Experts on its midterm update and final report ([S/2021/79](#)). Security Council members expressed support for the efforts of the Special Envoy and reiterated the importance of addressing the humanitarian crisis.

On 25 February, the Security Council adopted resolution [2564 \(2021\)](#), in which it reaffirmed its targeted arms embargo and sanctions regime and the relevant provisions of resolution [2140 \(2014\)](#) and resolution [2216 \(2015\)](#), decided to extend until 28 March 2022 the mandate of the Panel of Experts; and imposed sanctions on Sultan Saleh Aida Zabin pursuant to the designation criteria contained in 18 (c) of resolution [2140 \(2014\)](#).

Middle East peace process

On 26 February, the Security Council held a briefing by videoconference on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, at which the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the

Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority, Tor Wennesland, gave a briefing. Two youth representatives also gave briefings: Oren Gian, an Israeli student, and Malak AbuSoud, a Palestinian student.

The Special Coordinator said that Israeli demolitions during the past month in Area C and East Jerusalem had displaced 314 Palestinians, including 177 children. A series of incidents throughout February in the Palestinian Bedouin community of Humsa Al-Baqai'a was particularly concerning. The United Nations urged Israel to cease further demolitions and allow the provision of humanitarian aid. The Special Coordinator welcomed progress by the Palestinian factions towards the holding of elections, reporting that an estimated 93 per cent of eligible voters had registered, of whom 40 per cent were under 30.

Mr. Gian said that his personal experience of peacebuilding programmes bringing together young Israelis and Palestinians had demonstrated the importance of empathy and personal connections as a foundation for negotiations, and more students should be given these opportunities. Ms. AbuSoud said that the success of such programmes depended not only on bringing young people together from both sides of the conflict but also addressing the structural inequalities between Israelis and Palestinians.

Most Security Council members expressed concern regarding the level of demolitions, welcomed progress towards Palestinian elections and reaffirmed their support for a two-State solution. Several Council members called on the parties to cooperate to ensure access to COVID-19 vaccinations. Some Council members highlighted the crucial role of women and young people in building peace.

Europe

Ukraine

On 11 February, the Security Council met to discuss the letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation regarding the situation in Ukraine. The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Heidi Grau, and the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, Halit Çevik, gave a briefing.

The Under-Secretary-General said that the Minsk agreements remained the only framework for a negotiated settlement to the conflict. She expressed concern over the humanitarian situation in the east and said that the conflict continued to exact an unacceptable humanitarian toll, compounded by COVID-19. She stated that humanitarian access along the contact line remained a significant challenge and said that the United Nations continued to firmly support the Normandy process and the lead role of the Normandy Four and Trilateral Contact Group in finding a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

The Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Heidi Grau, welcomed the 22 July 2020 ceasefire agreement and said that the past year had brought a radical reduction in ceasefire violations. She said, however, that without progress on the political and security tracks, the overall situation was fragile. There had been limited movement on disengagement and demining. The Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, Halit Çevik, said that the continued presence of heavy weapons along both sides of the line of contact, as well as the restriction of the Mission's freedom of movement, were evidence of continued challenges to Minsk implementation.

Security Council members underlined that a diplomatic solution remained the only path towards ending the conflict and called for full implementation of the Minsk agreements. They reiterated their respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and expressed concern over the humanitarian situation.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Haiti

On 22 February, the Security Council held a briefing and closed consultations on the situation in Haiti, at which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), Helen La Lime, and a representative from Haitian civil society, Vivianne Roc, gave briefings. The President of Haiti, Jovenel Moïse, addressed the Council.

The Special Representative highlighted the dire humanitarian situation in Haiti. According to United Nations estimates, 4.4 million Haitians would soon be in need of humanitarian assistance. Acute food insecurity was on the rise, exacerbated by COVID-19 and its associated economic impact. The Special Representative called for democratic renewal and the prompt holding of credible, transparent and participatory elections to overcome the country's protracted political crisis.

Security Council members expressed deep concern regarding the protracted political, constitutional, humanitarian and security crises in Haiti and further stressed the primary responsibility of the Government of Haiti to address the underlying causes of instability. They focused on three main issues: the political impasse and elections; the necessity of accountability for human rights violations; and the deteriorating humanitarian situation. Members also expressed grave concern about reports of increased gang violence and kidnappings, urging Haiti authorities to take concrete measures to protect civilians by, inter alia, adopting the draft national strategy for community violence reduction and to allocate the necessary resources for implementation.

Asia

Myanmar

On 2 February, the Security Council held closed videoconference consultations on the situation in Myanmar. Council members were given a briefing by Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar, Christine Burgener.

On 4 February, the Security Council agreed on a press statement on Myanmar. In the statement, it expressed deep concern at the situation in Myanmar following the state of emergency imposed by the military on 1 February and the arbitrary detention of members of the Government, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and the President, Win Myint. It called for the immediate release of all those detained, emphasized its support for the democratic transition in Myanmar and underlined the importance of upholding democratic processes, refraining from violence and respecting human rights and the rule of law. It encouraged the pursuance of dialogue and reconciliation. It called for safe and unimpeded humanitarian access to all in need.

In the statement, the Security Council also underlined its strong support for the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to Myanmar. It reiterated the need to address the root causes of the crisis in Rakhine and create conditions necessary for the safe, voluntary and dignified return of displaced persons. It reaffirmed its strong commitment to the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and unity of Myanmar.